



MBS107

A MESSIANIC BIBLE STUDY FROM ARIEL MINISTRIES



THE PLACE OF THE DEAD



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*And it came to pass,
that the beggar died,
and that he was
carried away by the
angels into
Abraham's bosom.
Luke 16:22*

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

This subject of the place of the dead will be discussed in five major categories.

I. THE UNSEEN WORLD

The first major category is the unseen world. In the Hebrew Old Testament and the Greek New Testament there are a total of thirteen different terms describing the unseen world. These terms need to be understood to fully comprehend the place of the dead and the unseen world.

A. Sheol

The first term is the Hebrew word *Sheol*.

1. The Scriptures

In the Old Testament, there are a total of sixty-four references to this place, so there is extensive usage of this term. All sixty-four passages cannot be listed here, but its use is spread throughout the Old Testament, and it is not limited only to certain writers nor to a certain period of time. Among the Books of Moses, Sheol is mentioned in Genesis, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. In the historical books, it is mentioned in I Samuel, II Samuel, and I Kings. In the poetic books, it is mentioned in Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon. In the Major Prophets, it is found in the Books of Isaiah and Ezekiel. Among the Minor Prophets, Sheol is mentioned in Hosea, Amos, Jonah, and Habakkuk. Sheol is a place known from the

beginning to the end of Old Testament history.

NOTES

2. The Deductions

From these sixty-four passages where this term is used, six deductions can be drawn concerning what Sheol was.

First, in the Old Testament period, Sheol was a place that both the righteous and the unrighteous expected to go upon death (Ps. 89:48). The righteous ones, the saints of the Old Testament, expected to go down to Sheol in Genesis 37:35; 42:38; 44:29, 31; Job 14:13; Psalm 16:10; and Jonah 2:2. The unrighteous also expected to go down to Sheol in Numbers 16:30, 33; Job 24:19; Psalm 9:17; 49:14; and Ezekiel 32:21.

The second deduction is that it was a place more dreadful for the unbeliever than for the believer. Although both believers and unbelievers went down to Sheol in the Old Testament, it was far more dreadful for the unbelievers than it was for the believers (Job 24:19; Ps. 9:17; 49:14).

The third deduction is that there are different levels or compartments in Sheol. The fact that there are references to *the lowest Sheol* teaches the fact that there are different levels in Sheol or there are different compartments in Sheol (Deut. 32:22; Ps. 86:13).

The fourth deduction concerning Sheol is that the direction of Sheol was always downward. When people talked about Sheol, it was a place that was downward (Gen. 37:35; 42:38; 44:29, 31; Num. 16:30, 33; I Sam. 2:6; I Kg. 2:6, 9; Job 7:9; 11:8; 17:16; 21:13; Ps. 30:3; Prov. 5:5; 7:27; 15:24; Is. 5:14; 14:9; Ezek. 32:21; Amos 9:2).

The fifth deduction is that Sheol was a place of consciousness. Those who went down to Sheol were in a state of consciousness (Is. 14:9-10; Jon. 2:2).

The sixth deduction concerning Sheol is that Sheol was not removed from God's jurisdiction (Job 26:6; Ps. 139:8; Deut. 32:22).

Thus, Sheol was a major term for the unseen world.

B. Hades

The second term for the unseen world is the Greek word, *Hades*, and therefore is only found in the New Testament.

1. The Scriptures

Hades is mentioned in ten New Testament passages.

Matthew 11:23: *you shall go down unto Hades.*

Matthew 16:18: *the gates of Hades.*

Luke 10:15: *you shall be brought down unto Hades.*

Luke 16:23: *in Hades he lifted up his eyes.*

Acts 2:27 quotes Psalms 16:10: *you will not leave my soul unto Hades.*

Acts 2:31: *neither was he left unto Hades.*

In Revelation 1:18, the Messiah is said to *have the keys of death and Hades.*

Revelation 6:8: *his name was Death; and Hades.*

Revelation 20:13: *death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them.*

And Revelation 20:14: *death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire.*

2. The Deductions

From these ten references on Hades in the New Testament, seven deductions can be drawn.

First, Hades is the same as Sheol. Hades is the Greek term for the Old Testament Sheol, so everything that is true of Sheol is automatically true of Hades. This is evident from the fact that while Psalm 16:10 used the term Sheol, when that verse is quoted in the New Testament (Acts 2:27, 31), it is called Hades. So Sheol and Hades are one and the same, Sheol being the Hebrew term and Hades being the Greek term.

The second deduction is that it was a place for both the righteous and the unrighteous. In Luke 16:19-31 the unrighteous rich man is in Hades. But the Righteous One, Yeshua (Jesus), was also in Hades according to Acts 2:27, 31.

Third, Hades had two main compartments (Lk. 16:19-31). The section for the unbeliever was Hades proper, and the section for the believer was known as *Abraham's bosom*. More will be said about this later in this manuscript.

The fourth deduction is that, although both believers and unbelievers went down to Hades, it was especially severe for the unbelievers (Mat. 11:23; Lk. 10:15; 16:19-31).

The fifth deduction is that the direction of Hades was always downward, never upward (Mat. 11:23; Lk. 10:15).

The sixth deduction is that it was a place of consciousness, not a place of unconsciousness (Lk. 16:19-31).

The seventh deduction is that Hades is a temporary state. It is not the eternal state, but only a temporary state (Rev. 20:11-15).

C. Abbadon

The third biblical term for the unseen world is *Abbadon*. This is a Hebrew word that means "destruction." Being a Hebrew term, all but one verse is found in the Old Testament.

1. The Scriptures

It is used a total of seven times in Scripture.

Job 26:6: *Abbadon has no covering*

Job 28:22: *Abbadon and death say.*

Job 31:12: *a fire that consumes unto Abbadon.*

Psalms 88:11: *Shall your loving kindness be declared in the grave? Or your faithfulness in Abbadon?*

Proverbs 15:11: *Sheol and Abbadon are before Jehovah.*

Proverbs 27:20: *Sheol and Abbadon are never satisfied.*

And Revelation 9:11 calls *the angel of the abyss* by his Hebrew name, *Abbadon*, and also gives his Greek name, *Apollyon*. The Greek word means the same as the Hebrew word: Destruction.

2. The Deductions

From these seven usages, one can make three deductions. First, in three of the seven usages, it is paralleled with Sheol (Job 26:6; Prov. 15:11; 27:20). All of the six Old Testament references were from poetical books. Hebrew poetry is not based upon rhythm or rhyme, but upon parallelism. Hence, in these three cases, Sheol is paralleled with Abbadon or Abbadon is paralleled with Sheol.

The second deduction is that the term is used only negatively. There is not a single positive reference to Abbadon; all of them have a negative connotation.

The third deduction is that Abbadon is a Hebrew name for the unbeliever's side of Sheol or Hades. It has been pointed out that Hades consists of two major compartments: a side for the righteous and a side for the unrighteous. The term Abbadon was a Hebrew name for the unrighteous' or the unbeliever's side of Sheol or Hades.

D. The Pit

The fourth term for the unseen world is the expression the pit. This is also an Old Testament name for the unseen world.

1. The Scriptures

All together, there are twenty-three references to the pit. Not all of them will be listed here, but the books where it is mentioned are: Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Isaiah, and Ezekiel, with most of the references being in Ezekiel.

2. The Deductions

From these twenty-three references, three deductions can be made. First, like Abbadon, it is always used in negative terms. There is never anything positive about the pit, but only negative.

Second, the direction is always downward, never upward.

The third deduction is that the term the pit is a descriptive term for the unrighteous' portion of Sheol or Hades and so the term the pit is synonymous with Abbadon. The latter is the proper name and the former a descriptive name.

E. The Abyss

The fifth term for the unseen world is the word *abyss*. The word abyss has at its root such concepts as “netherworld” or “bottomless.” Abyss is a Greek word, and therefore only found in the New Testament.

1. The Scriptures

This word is found in nine passages, and of these nine, seven are in Revelation.

Luke 8:31: *not command them to depart into the abyss.*

Romans 10:7: *Who shall descend into the abyss?*

Revelation 9:1: *the key of the pit of the abyss.*

Revelation 9:2: *he opened the pit of the abyss.*

Revelation 9:11: *the angel of the abyss.*

Revelation 11:7: *the beast that comes up out of the abyss.*

Revelation 17:8: *The beast is about to come up out of the abyss.*

Revelation 20:1: *the key of the abyss.*

And Revelation 20:3: *and he cast him into the abyss.*

2. The Deductions

From these nine references to the abyss, three deductions can be made.

The first deduction is that the direction is always downward.

Secondly, it is never associated with human beings; it is always associated with fallen angels with the exception of the Antichrist. Since the Antichrist will be conceived by the power of Satan, he is connected with angelic beings and therefore also with the abyss.

The third deduction that can be made about the abyss is that the abyss is that section of Sheol or Hades, which is a temporary place of confinement for fallen angels. When demons are cast out of people, they sometimes spend a temporary period of time in the abyss and then they are released. So it is always a temporary place of confinement. Satan will be confined in the abyss, but even for him it is temporary, for 1,000-years' duration (Rev. 20:3).

F. Tartarus

The sixth term that speaks of the unseen world is the Greek word *Tartarus*.

1. The Scripture

It is found in only one passage of Scripture, II Peter 2:4: *For if God spared not angels when they sinned, but cast them down to hell, and committed them to pits of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment..*

2. The Deductions

Out of this one verse, five deductions can be made. First, it is called the *pits of darkness*, so it is given a negative flavor.

Secondly, it is a place for fallen angels.

Thirdly, it is connected with fallen angels in connection with Noah. Whereas the abyss is in connection with fallen angels in general, Tartarus is connected with fallen angels somehow related to the time of Noah.

The fourth deduction is that the angels mentioned in this verse are obviously the same angels mentioned by Jude 6-7. Because of the connection between II Peter 2:4 and Jude 6-7, these angels are the same as the *sons of God* of Genesis 6 who intermarried with human women to try to corrupt the seed of the woman.

The fifth deduction is that Tartarus is that portion of Sheol or Hades that is a permanent place of confinement for those fallen angels who sinned in Genesis 6. While the abyss is a temporary place of confinement for fallen angels, a place where fallen angels or demons come and go for periods of time, Tartarus is different; it is a permanent place of confinement. These angels will never be released, from this confinement, but will eventually go from Tartarus to the Lake of Fire. These angels will never be free again. The reason these fallen angels are kept in a special place, Tartarus, instead of the abyss, is because of the special nature of their sin. These are the ones who in Genesis 6 took on male form and intermarried with human woman in order to corrupt the *seed* of the woman of Genesis 3:15. What they produced was a grotesque race. It is because of the existence of that grotesque race that the evil of man reached its epitome necessitating a world wide flood to destroy all humanity with the exception of one family, the family of Noah.

So then, Tartarus is that portion of Sheol or Hades that is a permanent place of confinement for those angels who sinned in Genesis 6.

G. Hell

1. The Origin of the Word

The seventh term is "Hell." The English word "Hell" comes from a Teutonic root which means "to hide" or "to cover." There is no special Hebrew or Greek term for the word "Hell" in Scripture. That probably was not the best term to come up with, but that is the term with which the English-speaking world is familiar, so it must be used. But again, neither the Hebrew or the Greek have a singular term that means "Hell." The concept of Hell is included in some of the concepts of Sheol and Hades, and are totally found in the concepts of Abbadon and the pit. So while the Scriptures do not actually use a special term for "Hell," the concepts of Hell are definitely biblical. What people call "Hell" is what the Old Testament calls Abbadon or the pit, the unrighteous side of Sheol or Hades.

Based upon what has already been stated about the unrighteous side of Sheol or Hades, and what has been stated about Abbadon or the

pit, this Hell contains unsaved humans only. It does not include fallen angels, because fallen angels are in two other places, the abyss or Tartarus. While Hell contains certain concepts of Sheol or Hades and totally the concepts of Abbadon and the pit, it excludes the concepts of the abyss and Tartarus, for these places are for fallen angels only.

2. The Conditions in Hell

Based upon what is known of Abbadon or the pit, one can determine the conditions of those in Hell.

First, they exist as shades, merely shades with no more reality than that. Indeed, when the Bible describes the people already in the unrighteous side of Sheol, it describes them by using a Hebrew term that means “shades” (Prov. 9:18; Is. 14:9).

Second, they are in torment (Lk. 16:23-25).

From what is known about Abbadon and the pit, three things can be said about Hell. First, there is a total absence of righteousness. Secondly, it is a place that is separated from God. Thirdly, it is a place of judgment.

H. Gehenna

The eighth term for the unseen world is the word *Gehenna*, which is a Greek term. Three things should be mentioned about this place.

1. Origin of the Concept of Gehenna

The first thing concerns the origin of the concept. Although the term Gehenna is Greek, the origin of the concept is from the Hebrew. It is actually a combination of two Hebrew words. The first word is *Gei* and the second word is *Hinnom*; *Gei Hinnom* means “the Valley of Hinnom,” a valley outside the walls of Jerusalem. The Valley of Hinnom circles Jerusalem along the west side of the wall around to the southern side, where it meets another valley known as the Kidron Valley, coming down from the east side of the city.

In the Old Testament, the Valley of Hinnom was a place where some of the wicked kings of Israel practiced human sacrifice. The practice of human sacrifice meant that it was a place for the burning of humans (II Kg. 23:10; II Chr. 28:3; 33:6; Is. 30:33; Jer. 7:31-32; 19:1-15). So the origin of the New Testament Gehenna comes from the Hebrew words *Gei Hinnom*. The Old Testament concept of the burning of humans physically moves into the New Testament concept with the word *Gehenna*, and describes the unseen world and the eternal burning of humans.

2. The Scriptures

The second thing about Gehenna is the Scriptures. There are twelve references to Gehenna. Eleven of these references are in the Gospels and one is outside of the Gospels.

Matthew 5:22: *You fool, shall be in danger of the Gehenna of fire.*
 Matthew 5:29: *not your whole body be cast into Gehenna.*
 Matthew 5:30: *not your whole body go into Gehenna.*
 Matthew 10:28: *fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna.*
 Matthew 18:9: *to be cast into the Gehenna of fire.*
 Matthew 23:15: *a son of Gehenna.*
 Matthew 23:33: *how shall ye escape the judgment of Gehenna?*
 Mark 9:43: *having your two hands to go into Gehenna.*
 Mark 9:45: *having your two feet to be cast into Gehenna.*
 Mark 9:47: *having two eyes to be cast into Gehenna.*
 Luke 12:5: *Fear him, who after he has killed has the power to cast into Gehenna.*
 And James 3:6: *and is set on fire by Gehenna.*

3. The Deductions

The third thing about Gehenna is that from these twelve references in the Greek New Testament, four deductions can be drawn.

First, Gehenna is the eternal abode of the lost, both angels and men.

The second deduction about Gehenna is that the punishment includes both soul and body. That is why Gehenna must not be translated as “Hell” nor should it be equated with Hell. Hell, as will be shown, is a temporary place and it is for the soul only, but Gehenna is an eternal place and it includes both the soul and the body.

The third deduction is that it is an eternal torment. Hell is temporary, but Gehenna is going to be eternal.

The fourth deduction is that Gehenna is associated with fire, and fire is the source of torment.

1. The Lake of Fire

The ninth term for the unseen world is *the lake of fire*.

1. The Scriptures

It is found in four passages of Scripture, all of which are in Revelation. Revelation 19:20, which speaks of *the beast* and *the false prophet* are cast into *the lake of fire*.

Revelation 20:10, states that Satan is thrown into the lake of fire.

Revelation 20:14: *death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire.*

And Revelation 21:8, which states that *the lake of fire* is called *the second death*.

2. The Deductions

From these four references in Revelation, one can make four deductions.

First, the *lake of fire* is the eternal abode of all lost ones, both angels and men.

Secondly, the punishment includes both the soul and the body. Both death and Hades are cast into the *lake of fire*. Death refers to the material part of man, the body; Hades refers to the immaterial part of man, the soul and spirit. The *lake of fire* is a punishment for both of these.

The third deduction is that the *lake of fire* is the same as Gehenna. Gehenna is one term and the *lake of fire* is another term that both refer to the same thing.

The fourth deduction is that the lake of fire is associated with fire and brimstone as the source of torment.

J. Abraham's Bosom

The tenth term is *Abraham's bosom*.

1. The Scripture

While in the rabbinic writings this is a very common term, in the Scriptures it is found only in Luke 16:22-23. *And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and that he was carried away by the angels into Abraham's bosom: and the rich man also died, and was buried. And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and sees Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.*

2. The Deductions

Although it is found only in these two verses, nevertheless six things can be deduced from these two verses.

First, Abraham's bosom is for righteous ones only; there are no unrighteous ones in Abraham's bosom.

Secondly, it is located adjacent to Hell. It is not in Hell, but is located adjacent to Hell, so that those in Hell, like *the rich man*, are able to see what is going on in Abraham's bosom, though they have no way of getting there.

The third deduction is that, while Hell and Abraham's bosom are next to each other, they are separated by an impassable gulf. Although each side can see the other and those in them can converse with each other, they can not cross over from one to the other.

The fourth deduction is that Abraham's bosom is that portion of Sheol or Hades which was a place for the righteous, whereas Hell was the place for the unrighteous humans.

The fifth thing about Abraham's bosom is that the term is a figure of speech describing a guest at a feast, reclining on the breast of his neighbor. Just as in the Gospel of John, John was reclining at Yeshua's bosom at the Feast of Passover, this is what Lazarus was doing in

Abraham's bosom. This is a figure of speech of a guest at a feast, reclining on the breast of his neighbor or his host.

The sixth thing about Abraham's bosom is that it symbolized blessedness after death. While Lazarus did not do well when he was living as far as the material world was concerned, after death he was indeed in a state of blessedness.

K. Paradise

The eleventh term concerning the unseen world is *Paradise*. The Greek word and its Hebrew equivalent means “a royal park” or “a garden.”

1. The Scriptures

It is a New Testament term only, and it is found in three passages. The first is Luke 23:43, where Jesus said to the other person dying on the cross: *Today shall you be with me in Paradise.*

A second passage is II Corinthians 12:4, which states that Paul was caught up into Paradise.

The third passage is Revelation 2:7, which speaks of the future: *the tree of life* will be in the Paradise of God.

2. The Deductions

From these three passages, four deductions can be made concerning Paradise.

First, it is a term describing the abode of the righteous ones, no matter where that abode may be at any point in time. In Luke 23:43, it is the same as Abraham's bosom because, at that point, all the righteous *ones* went down to the righteous side of Sheol or Hades, known as Abraham's bosom or Paradise. Until the death of Jesus, Paradise was in Abraham's bosom.

Secondly, according to II Corinthians 12:4, Paradise today is in Heaven. After the Ascension of Jesus, Abraham's bosom was eliminated. Believers no longer descend down to Abraham's bosom, but now go directly into Heaven. Today the believer's abode is Heaven, and so now, Paradise is in Heaven.

The third passage, Revelation 2:7, speaks of the future, when Paradise will be in the *new Jerusalem*, which means that the abode of Paradise will change again. As the new Jerusalem on the new earth will be the abode of all believers after the Messianic Kingdom, even so, Paradise is going to be in the new Jerusalem.

To summarize, from Adam until the Ascension of Jesus, Paradise was in Abraham's bosom. From the Ascension of Yeshua until the end of the Millennium, Paradise is in Heaven. Then after the Millennium and for all eternity, Paradise will be in the new Jerusalem on the new

earth.

NOTES

L. Heaven

Another term for the unseen world is “Heaven.” Heaven will be discussed in three points.

1. The Distinctions

The first point is that the Bible speaks of three different heavens. Not all three are concerned with the unseen world. The first heaven is the atmosphere, because that is the heaven where birds are flying (Gen. 1:20, 26; Jer. 4:25; Hag. 1:10; Mat. 8:20; 13:32; Acts 10:12; 14:17).

The second heaven is what is called “space.” This is the heaven where the sun, moon, and stars are said to be located (Gen. 1:14-18; 22:17; 26:4; Mat. 24:29; Heb. 11:12; Rev. 6:13). The first and second heavens are not part of the unseen world; they are visible.

However, it is the *Third Heaven*, which is part of the unseen world. It is the abode of God; it is where God dwells (II Cor. 12:1-4).

2. The Scriptures

The second point about Heaven is that there are a total of thirty-nine passages of Scripture that speak about the Third Heaven. In the Old Testament, it is found in the Books of Genesis, Deuteronomy, I Kings, II Kings, II Chronicles, Job, Psalms, Ecclesiastes, Isaiah, Daniel, and Amos. In the New Testament, the Third Heaven is found in the Books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, II Corinthians, Ephesians, Colossians, I Thessalonians, Hebrews, and I Peter.

3. The Deductions

From these thirty-nine references to the Third Heaven, one can make a total of eight deductions.

First, the existence of the Third Heaven, the abode of God, has been testified of by eyewitnesses, for there are eyewitnesses who have seen the Third Heaven. Yeshua, who came from there, testified to its existence (Jn. 6); Paul was caught up to the Third Heaven to receive special revelation (II Cor. 12:1-4). The Apostle John saw a vision of the Third Heaven, and was even told to come up there to be shown things to come (Rev. 4:1). He witnessed things in Heaven and wrote about them throughout the Book of Revelation. So its existence has been testified to by eyewitnesses.

The second deduction concerning the Third Heaven is that it is the abode of God; it is where God lives.

The third deduction is that it is also the abode of the elect angels. This is where the good, elect, holy, unfallen angels reside as well.

The fourth deduction is that Heaven is a real and definite place.

The fifth deduction is that Heaven is always upward. It is above the earth, it is above the sky, it is above space. It is above the earth, above the first heaven and above the second heaven.

The sixth deduction is that it is also the place from where God rules.

This is where God rules providentially, rules by sovereignty; every aspect of His rule is from the Third Heaven.

The seventh deduction is that this is the place where God receives worship.

And the eighth deduction is that it is now the home of departed saints. No longer, do believers go down to Abraham's bosom; they now go directly into Heaven. It is the home of the departed saints.

M. The New Jerusalem

The thirteenth term used to describe the unseen world is the *New Jerusalem*.

1. The Scriptures

The New Jerusalem is mentioned in three passages. The first is Galatians 4:26, where it is stated that the Jerusalem that is above is free, unlike the Jerusalem on earth that is in bondage.

The second passage is Hebrews 12:22-24, which speaks of the *heavenly Jerusalem* as being the abode of God, the elect angels, and redeemed men.

The third passage is Revelation 21:1-22:5, which teaches that the new Jerusalem will be on the new earth and gives some detailed descriptions of what the new Jerusalem is going to be like.

2. The Deductions

These are the three main passages of Scripture on the New Jerusalem, from which one can draw six deductions. First, it is now above the earth; it already exists and it is now in the Third Heaven.

The second deduction is that it is the abode of the whole Triune God; it is the abode of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit.

The third deduction is that it is also the abode of the elect angels; it is where the unfallen angels live.

The fourth deduction is that it is also the abode of redeemed saints; it is where the redeemed saints are now.

Fifth, the New Jerusalem is synonymous with Heaven; they are one

and the same. One could also say that the New Jerusalem is now in Heaven, but either way they are in the same locale and are more or less synonymous.

The sixth deduction is that in that future time when the new earth is created, Heaven or the New Jerusalem will come down upon the new earth. The eternal abode of the Triune God, the elect angels, and the redeemed men will be in the New Jerusalem on the new earth. If one distinguishes between Heaven and the New Jerusalem, then one can say that believers now go to the New Jerusalem in Heaven, and eventually the New Jerusalem will be placed on the new earth, when the new earth is created after the Messianic Kingdom.

These are the thirteen terms that are used to describe the unseen world. One must be familiar with all thirteen words and know how to distinguish and relate them to each other to get a full comprehension.

N. Conclusions

1. The Terms Sheol and Hades

First, Sheol and Hades are one and the same. Sheol is the Hebrew term and Hades is the Greek term for one and the same thing. The location of Sheol or Hades is in the center of the earth and can be seen in three ways. First, in the Old Testament it was called the “nether parts of the earth” (Ezek. 26:20; 31:14, 16, 18; 32:18, 24). Secondly, in Ephesians 4:9-10, Hades was called the lower parts of the earth. So the Hades in the lower parts of the earth corresponds to the Sheol in the “nether parts of the earth.” Third, in Matthew 12:40, Hades is said to be in the heart or in the “center” of the earth. So as far as location is concerned, Sheol or Hades is located in the center of the earth. That is one of the reasons why Sheol or Hades is temporary, because when this earth is done away with at the end of the Messianic Kingdom, Sheol or Hades will no longer exist.

The second thing about Sheol or Hades is that it has two primary compartments. One primary compartment was for the righteous ones, and this righteous side was known as Abraham's bosom. Between Adam and the Ascension of Jesus, Paradise was located in Abraham's bosom. The second primary compartment was for the unrighteous ones, both angels and humans. This second compartment has three parts. As far as humans are concerned, they are located in Hades proper, better known among believers today as Hell. This first part is also known by two other names: Abbadon and the pit. The two other parts in the unrighteous side are for fallen angels. One of these is the abyss, which is a temporary place of confinement for fallen angels. The other is Tartarus, which is the place of confinement for those angels who sinned in Genesis 6. So Sheol or Hades had two primary compartments. The righteous side was known as Abraham's bosom. The unrighteous side had three divisions of its own: for humans it is Hades or Hell, also known as Abbadon or the pit; and for the fallen

angels, the abyss and Tartarus.

2. The Terms Gehenna and the Lake of Fire

The second conclusion to be drawn is that the terms Gehenna and the lake of fire refer to one and the same place. It is the final abode of the unrighteous ones, both angels and men. It should be kept in mind that Sheol or Hades is a temporary place, regardless of one's condition. The righteous side of Sheol or Hades has already been eliminated with the Ascension of the Messiah. The unrighteous side is also temporary, because the eternal abode of the unrighteous ones will not be Hell nor the abyss nor Tartarus, but will be Gehenna, the Lake of Fire.

3. Heaven

Heaven is the abode of God; it is the abode of the elect or good angels; it is the abode of believers who have passed away; and it is the abode of the dead saints. It is the present place of Paradise. At one time Paradise was located in Abraham's bosom, but now Paradise is in Heaven. Heaven is either the same as the New Jerusalem or the New Jerusalem is in Heaven.

II. THE PLACE OF THE DEAD IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

A. The Scripture

The second major category is the place of the dead in the Old Testament. Perhaps the best single passage that clearly pictures what the situation was before the death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Yeshua is Luke 16:19-31. It is the story of the *rich man* and *Lazarus*. It should be noted that this is not a parable. Yeshua did not call it a parable. Parables do not have proper names. It is a real story that Jesus told.

What is described in Luke 16:19-31 is the situation beginning with Adam until the Ascension of Yeshua. When speaking of the place of the dead in the Old Testament, it does not mean Old Testament history only, but includes Old Testament history all the way through gospel history until the Ascension of Jesus. The dividing line between what is true concerning the place of the dead for the Old Testament saints and the place of the dead for the New Testament saints is the Ascension of Yeshua into Heaven.

B. The Conditions From Adam to the Ascension of the Messiah

Four things can be pointed out concerning the place of the dead until the Ascension of Yeshua from Luke 16:19-31.

First, every person who died, whether they were righteous or unrighteous went down to Sheol or Hades, which, as was noted, is in the center of the earth.

Secondly, the righteous went into Abraham's bosom, where Paradise was located at that time. While the animal blood sacrifices were

sufficient to keep the Old Testament saint out of Hell, they were not sufficient to get them into Heaven. The Old Testament saint was saved the same way believers are saved today, by grace through faith. In both cases, however, there was the element of blood. Until the death of Jesus, the blood sacrifice that was necessary was that of the animal blood and the sacrificial system of the Mosaic Law. Because this was animal blood, the blood sacrifices only “covered” the sins of the saints, but did not remove them. As Hebrews 10:1-4 emphasizes, *it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats* [the blood of animals] should take away sin. The reason the blood sacrifices, while sufficient to keep the Old Testament Saints out of Hell, but were not sufficient to get them into Heaven, is because the blood sacrifices only covered sin, but they did not remove it. Nevertheless, Abraham's bosom, where Paradise was located, was a place of bliss for the immaterial part of the Old Testament saint or the soul of the Old Testament saint.

The third thing concerning the place of the dead in the Old Testament concerns the unrighteous. The unrighteous went into Hades proper, better known as Hell or Abbadon or the pit. Unlike Abraham's bosom, Hades proper or Hell, was a place of torment.

The fourth thing to point out about the place of the dead in the Old Testament is that there was an impassable gulf between the two sides of Sheol or Hades. It was possible to see across this gulf, it was possible to converse across this gulf, but it was impossible to cross over from one side to the other. Obviously, if it were possible, all of the crossing would be in one direction only as no one in Abraham's bosom would want to go to Hell, but those in Hell would definitely desire to enter into Abraham's bosom. This was the situation from the time of Adam until the Ascension of Yeshua.

III. THE PLACE OF THE DEAD TODAY

The third major category is the place of the dead today. We will study this in relationship to the believers and the unbelievers.

A. The Believers

Concerning the believers, the work of the Messiah changed the whole situation for believers. In particular, three acts of the Messiah effected that change.

1. The Death of the Messiah

When Yeshua died, He died for all our sins. He also died for all the world's sins of all time, those committed before His death and those committed after His death. It was also the death of Jesus that removed the sins of the Old Testament saints.

2. The Descent of the Messiah

When Yeshua died, His soul, His immaterial part, descended into the

righteous portion of Sheol or Hades. In Matthew 12:40, Yeshua predicted that He must go down into the heart of the earth where Sheol or Hades is located. Ephesians 4:9 states that Jesus descended into the lower parts of the earth.

I Peter 3:18 -19 points out that, in His spirit, Jesus *preached unto the spirits in prison*. These spirits were the unrighteous ones in Hell. Some have misunderstood this verse and taught that since He preached, He preached the gospel to them and gave them a second chance to be saved. However, the Greek word that is used here is not the Greek word that means, “to preach the gospel,” but it is a Greek word that simply means, “to make a proclamation.” What happened when Yeshua descended is that His spirit made a proclamation that the His death guarantees the judgment of the unsaved. Yeshua made the proclamation to those in Hell. Because of this, some assumed that Yeshua descended into Hell and this He did not. He told the dying thief on the cross that on that very day, the both of them would be in Paradise, not in Hell. When Jesus died, His spirit descended to the righteous side of Sheol or Hades, Abraham's bosom. As has been noted, if one were in Abraham's bosom, he could see those in Hell and converse with those in Hell. So the spirit of Yeshua descended into Abraham's bosom and He made the proclamation that the death of the Messiah guaranteed their future judgment. Those who were to benefit from the death of Jesus were the souls of Abraham's bosom only, not the souls of Hell.

3. The Ascension of the Messiah

When the Messiah ascended into Heaven, He took the souls of the Old Testament saints with Him; *he led captivity captive* (Eph. 4:8-10). Those who had been captured within the confines of Abraham's bosom were now taken out of Abraham's bosom. All the righteous souls who had died before the death of Yeshua ascended with Jesus into Heaven. As a result, Abraham's bosom, the righteous side of Sheol or Hades, has been eliminated and Paradise is no longer in Abraham's bosom. Paradise is now in the Third Heaven (II Cor. 12:1-4).

As the result of these three acts of the Messiah, the souls of saints today go immediately into Heaven. No longer is there a temporary “holding pattern.” The moment a believer dies, he goes immediately into the presence of God. II Corinthians 5:6-8 teaches that to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord, and the Lord is in the Third Heaven. Philippians 1:21-23 states that to depart in death is to be with the Messiah, and the Messiah is in the Third Heaven, seated at the right hand of God the Father.

B. The Unbelievers

As far as unbelievers are concerned, nothing has changed for them. What happens to unbelievers today is a continuation of what was true before the Ascension of Yeshua. The souls of unbelievers still go down

to Hades Proper or Hell.

IV. THE PLACE OF THE DEAD IN THE FUTURE

NOTES

The major fourth category of the place of the dead in the future will be divided into two parts: the future of the believers and the future of the unbelievers.

A. The Future of the Believers

The study on the future of the dead for believers will be divided into two time spans.

1. The Messianic Kingdom

John describes the saints who are to take part in the Millennial reign of the Messiah in Revelation 20:4-6.

Concerning the Church saints, in verse 4, those to whom *judgment was given* will be resurrected at the Rapture. The *judgment* spoken of here is the Judgment Seat of the Messiah, the judgment of the believer's works, which determines their position in the Kingdom. The Church saints will then return with Yeshua at the Second Coming and they will co-reign with Him on earth for the 1,000 years of the Kingdom.

The Tribulation saints, those who *had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus* will also be resurrected after the Second Coming. They will also co-reign, like the Church saints, with the Messiah for 1,000 years.

As for the Old Testament saints, they will be resurrected only after the Second Coming (Is. 26:19; Dan. 12:2), and they will be inside the Promised Land during the Kingdom. The Old Testament saints will inherit all of the Promised Land.

2. The Eternal Order

The second phase of the future of the believers will be the Eternal Order or the Eternal State, which will be in the New Jerusalem. The New Jerusalem, which is now in the Third Heaven, or is the same as the Third Heaven, will come down upon that new earth that God will create after the Messianic Kingdom (Rev. 21:1-22:5). At that point, Paradise will be in the New Jerusalem upon the new earth (Rev. 2:7).

The future of the believers, ultimately in the Eternal State, will be in the New Jerusalem upon the new earth, which God is going to create at that time.

B. The Future of the Unbelievers

Concerning the state of the dead unbelievers in the future, six points will be made.

1. The Eternal State

The unbelievers are going to remain in Sheol or Hades until the end

of the 1,000-year Messianic Kingdom. It is only at the end of the 1,000 years that the souls of the unbelievers will be taken out of Hades or Hell (Rev. 20:11-15). This removal of the souls out of Hell is known as the Second Resurrection because all the bodies of the unbelievers will be resurrected, and all the souls of unbelievers will be removed from Hell so, at this point, Hell is going to be eliminated.

After the Second Resurrection, in which the souls of Hell are removed and the bodies of the unbelievers are resurrected and reunited with those souls, all of these unbelievers will then stand before the Great White Throne Judgment. The purpose of the Great White Throne Judgment is not to determine whether they were saved or unsaved; that is determined forever upon death. The purpose of this Great White Throne Judgment is to determine the degree of punishment, because some will suffer more severely than other.

After the Great White Throne Judgment will come the final abode of all unbelievers, which will be Gehenna or the Lake of Fire.

2. The Scriptures

The second point concerns the Scriptures. The passages concerning Gehenna and the lake of fire were discussed earlier. From these passages, it was determined that the eternal abode of the unbeliever is the lake of fire.

3. The Descriptive Phrases

The third point on the place of the unbelieving dead in the future is to note certain descriptive passages that describe this eternal state. There are nine phrases that describe the eternal state of the unbeliever.

First is “the Gehenna of Fire” (Mat. 5:22; 18:9).

Second is “the judgment of Gehenna” (Mat. 23:33).

Third is the *outer darkness*. As over against the place of light, this is the place of outer darkness (Mat. 8:12; 22:13; 25:30).

Fourth is *unquenchable fire*. The lake of fire burns forever, so this is the unquenchable fire (Mat. 3:12; Mk. 9:43; Lk. 3:17).

Fifth is *the eternal fire*. It emphasizes the eternality of the Lake of Fire (Mat. 25:41; Jude 7).

Sixth is *the eternal destruction* (II Thes. 1:9). Again, it is a view of a continuous, eternal, unending destruction; it is a place of torment indeed.

Seventh is *the furnace of fire*. Often the term fire is the issue, since that

is the means of torment (Mat. 13:42, 50).

Eighth is *the blackness of darkness*, again emphasizing the opposite of light (II Pet. 2:17; Jude 13).

And ninth is *the second death*. The first death is physical death and the second death is eternal, spiritual death in the Lake of Fire (Rev. 2:11; 20:14; 21:8).

4. The State of the Unbeliever in the Lake of Fire

The fourth point concerning the place of the unbelieving dead in the future is the state of the unbeliever in the Lake of Fire. It is *a smoke of..torment* (Rev. 14:10-11). It is a fire that is not quenchable (Mk. 9:48). It is a state of *weeping and gnashing of teeth* (Mat. 8:12; 13:42, 50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30; Lk. 13:28). It is a place of unholy associations (Rev. 21:8; 22:15). It is a state of suffering the wrath of God eternally (Jn. 3:36).

5. The Deductions

Eight deductions can be drawn concerning the place of the dead in the future for the unbeliever: first, it is a total deprivation of divine favor; secondly, it is an endless disturbance of life; thirdly, it is a time of pain in body and in soul; fourthly, there are pangs of conscience; fifth, it is anguish; sixth, it is a place of despair; seventh, it is torment; and eighth, it is an eternal state of consciousness.

6. The Duration

The duration of this kind of torment is eternal (Rev. 14:11). It carries the same duration as the eternal bliss for the saints (Mat. 25:46). It is stated that “their worm never dies” (Mk. 9:48).

The eternal state of the believer is the negative aspect. As one sees what the Bible says about the eternal state of the unbeliever, one should be so much more joyful about what Jesus has saved the believer from by means of His own death.

V. FALSE VIEWS CONCERNING THE PLACE OF THE DEAD

The fifth major category is the false views concerning the place of the dead. There are two main false views and both of these originated primarily with Roman Catholicism.

A. The Teaching Concerning Limbus Infantum

The first false view is known as Limbus Infantum. This has to do with those who die in infancy. The word *limbus* is a Latin word, which means “edge.” In Catholicism, the Limbus Infantum is a place at the edge of Hell; it is a place where unbaptized infants go. If an infant dies in an unbaptized state, he will not go to Hell because he was an infant, but neither will he go to Heaven because he was not baptized.

Rather, they teach that there is a special place at the edge of Hell where an unbaptized infant goes. He suffers no punishment, but he is excluded from the blessings of Heaven.

This is one false teaching concerning the place of the dead and it might be criticized in two points. First, this entire view is based upon another false doctrine known as Baptismal Regeneration, meaning that, by means of water baptism, one can be saved. They believe that if an infant is baptized, those few drops of water save the infant spiritually. Because they believe in Baptismal Regeneration, because they believe that baptism saves the infant but a lack of baptism does not, they came up with a place that infants can go which is neither Heaven nor Hell, but a place at the edge of Hell.

The second point to make by way of critique is that the Bible nowhere speaks of such a place. Nowhere in Scripture is such a place known. It is purely a tradition and one should not develop one's theology from church tradition. The Bible is the only authority for all matters of both faith and practice.

B. The Teaching Concerning Purgatory

The second false view concerning the place of the dead is the teaching concerning Purgatory. This is a more common false position. This will be dealt with in three parts.

1. The Concept of Purgatory

The word “purgatory” comes from a Latin term that means, “to purge.” Purgatory, according to Catholicism, is a place of purification for those who are not bad enough to go to Hell, but not good enough to go to Heaven. So one spends a duration of time in Purgatory and then finally he can go to Heaven.

“But how long must they stay in Purgatory?” The answer given is that it varies according to the needs of individuals. Time in Purgatory can be shortened by prayers, by good works, by attending Mass, by penance, and by the purchasing of indulgences.

2. The Attempted Support for Purgatory

“What is their support for this teaching?” They try, first of all, to support this teaching from Scripture. There are six passages, which they use.

Isaiah 4:4 speaks of the blood of Jerusalem being purged.

Micah 7:8: *when I sit in darkness, Jehovah will be a light unto me.*

Zechariah 9:11: *set free your prisoners from the pit.*

Malachi 3:2: *for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap.*

I Corinthians 3:13-17, speaks of *the fire* at the Judgment Seat of the Messiah.

And I Corinthians 15:29, speaks of the baptism for the dead.

These are the six “evidences” from Scripture that they use to try to prove the doctrine of Purgatory. In reality, however, none of them actually teach any such concept of Purgatory.

Actually, their main support is apocryphal. The key proof comes from the Apocrypha, not from Scripture. The particular passage that they use in the Apocrypha is II Maccabees 12:41-45:

“All men therefore praising the Lord, the righteous judge who had opened the things that were hid betook themselves to prayer and besought him that a sin committed might wholly be put out of remembrance. Besides that, noble Judah exhorted the people to keep themselves from sin for so much as they saw before their eyes the things that came to pass for the sins of those that were slain. And when he had made a gathering throughout the company to the sum of two thousand drachmas of silver, he sent it to Jerusalem to offer a sin offering doing therein very well and honestly, in that he was mindful of the resurrection. For if he had not hoped that were slain should have risen again, it had been superfluous and vain to pray for the dead. And also in that he perceived that there was great favor laid up for those that died Godly, it was a holy and good though whereupon he made a reconciliation for the dead that they might be delivered from sin.”

This is the main evidence that the Roman Catholic Church actually uses to teach the doctrine of Purgatory. This is why they have chosen to make the books of the Maccabees part of Scripture, though it was never accepted by the Jews and, in the time of Yeshua, the books of the Maccabees were never classed among that which was known as Scripture.

3. A Critique of the Doctrine of Purgatory

Three criticisms can be leveled against the Doctrine of Purgatory. First, none of the six passages of Scripture that they cite actually teach that there is any such place as Purgatory. Isaiah 4:4 talks about the forgiveness of the sins of Jerusalem at the end of the Tribulation. Micah 7:8 is a spiritual truth that, even when the believer is forced into a place of *darkness*, God will be *light* unto him. This passage is not saying that that person is in Purgatory. Zechariah 9:11 is speaking of a future resurrection and not Purgatory. Malachi 3:2 speaks of the judgments of the Great Tribulation and not Purgatory. I Corinthians 3:13-17 speaks about the Judgment Seat of the Messiah after the Rapture in Heaven, not Purgatory. As for I Corinthians 15:29, whatever the baptism for the dead may actually mean, it does not even hint of a place of refining in Purgatory. So none of the Scriptures cited actually teach that there is any such place as Purgatory.

The second critique is to point out that the apocryphal citation, which was quoted above, actually proves far too much for the Catholic Church, because the specific sin in that passage was the sin of idolatry.

And yet idolatry is one of the “seven deadly sins” in Catholicism for which there can only be Hell, not Purgatory. So even when they use the citation from the book of the Maccabees, it proves too much because the sin was idolatry, and even in Catholicism that is not solved by Purgatory, but by Hell.

The third criticism is that the concept of Purgatory is a very clear denial of the finished work of the Messiah. Yet the teaching of the New Testament is that when Jesus died on the cross it was a finished work and the finished work of the Messiah means that the sins of the believer have once and for all been purified.

The believer does not need to go through a period of purging and purifying in Purgatory (Titus 2:14; Heb. 1:3). The work of the Messiah is finished, and that includes the total forgiveness of sins, so that the believer need not go through a temporary period of purging in Purgatory before he can enter into Heaven.✠

NOTES

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