

In search of...



Truth & Right

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Where Are the Dead?

"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the

archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

This passage addresses the fear that was expressed by some of the Christians in Thessalonica, that those who died in Christ, before His return, would miss

going to Heaven when He did return. This fear came from the mistaken belief that Jesus would return before that current generation of Christians died. Paul addressed and soothed that fear by teaching that those Christians who have already passed away will be resurrected from the grave and “we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air...” (1 Thessalonians 4:17). With this teaching they could “comfort one another...” (1 Thessalonians 4:18)

This teaching clearly and concisely answers the question of what will happen at the resurrection with those who have passed away before the Lord’s return. Yet it also raises other questions: Where are the dead now? Where do the souls of men go after death while awaiting the Lord’s return? What about the souls of those who are lost; where do they go while awaiting the judgment?

Let us begin with a reminder that there will be a DAY in which all men, righteous and unrighteous, Christian and Non-Christian, saint and sinner will be judged and will receive their eternal reward or condemnation. (Matthew 25:31-46; 2 Peter 3:10; Revelation 20:12-15) All of humanity will be judged at that time. So where are the souls of the dead?

There is a “place”

somewhere in the spiritual realm where the souls of men await the coming Day of Judgment. This place is referred to in the New Testament as “Hades.” The Word “Hades” is not found in the King James Version; instead it is translated as “hell.” Other version such as the American Standard Version of 1901 and the New King James Version transliterate the Greek word “Hades” directly into English.

So then, what is Hades? Strong’s Bible Dictionary calls it “the place (state) of departed souls.” It refers to “that which is out of sight.” (Easton Bible Dictionary) The name is taken from Greek mythology and the “god” of the nether region known as Hades. The Greek word Hades corresponds with the Hebrew word “Sheol.” Sheol is translated in the King James Version as “the grave.” Again it represents that which is hidden from sight – the place of departed spirits. Another related term used in the New Testament is the Greek word “Tartarus.” It is found only one time in the Greek New Testament, in 2 Peter 2:4. It refers to the place where God has cast the “angels that sinned” to await the judgment.

A description of Hades is found in Luke 16:19-31. Jesus, in the relating of that story describes a “place of torment”

(Luke 16:28) and a place referred to as "Abraham's bosom" (Luke 16:22). The righteous beggar Lazarus, upon his death, was carried into this place of rest, while the unrighteous rich man was in "torment." The spirits of each of these men were in Hades (the grave), yet they were separated by a great impassable gulf (Luke 16:26). From this we can understand that there are two regions of the Hadean realm (Hades): "Abraham's bosom" (Luke 16:22) or "Paradise" (Luke 23:43) and the "place of torment" (Luke 16:18) or the place where the angels who sinned and were "delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment." (2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6)

Hades and hell do not refer to the same "place". According to Thayer's Greek Definitions, "Hell is the place of the future punishment called "Gehenna" or "Gehenna of fire". This was originally the valley of Hinnom, south of Jerusalem, where the filth and dead animals of the city were cast out and burned; a fit symbol of the wicked and their future destruction." Hades refers to the place where the souls of departed men await the resurrection. Hell refers to the place of eternal torment where the wicked will be cast on the Day of Judgment. Jesus said in John 5:28-29 "Marvel not at

this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." From this passage we see that those who are in the graves (literally in the tombs; i.e. the dead) will hear the voice of the Son of God (John 5:25) and they will be bodily resurrected for the judgment; the righteous will receive the resurrection of life and the unrighteous the resurrection of damnation. In Revelation 20:13-15 we are granted a glimpse of what the Judgment will be like, "The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire." (NKJV).

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Caught In Sin

N T B A Q Y L N E I T H E R O M S H B Y
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F R N B Y P F U K I L I C P G C G P D P
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- Early in the morning Jesus left the Mount of Olives (John 8:2)
- He came to the temple and taught the people (vs. 2)
- The scribes and Pharisees came in (vs. 3)
- And brought a woman who had been caught in adultery (vs. 4)
- "in the Law of Moses commanded us to stone such..." (vs. 5)
- Jesus bent down and wrote on the ground (vs. 6)
- He said for the one without sin to throw the first stone (vs. 7)
- Then again He bent down and wrote with His finger (vs. 8)
- They all went away, and Jesus was alone with the woman (vs. 9)
- He said "Has no one condemned you?" (vs. 10)
- She said no, and Jesus said, "neither do I condemn you;" (vs. 11)
- And He said "from now on sin no more." (vs. 11)