

Heaven and the Afterlife
Lesson 2 - The Hadean World (Part 1)
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Introduction: We need to know clearly that there is life after death for the Christian!

- A. When we know that our bodies are not all that we are and that God has made great promises, then we can live this life with confidence! **(2 Cor 4:16-18)**
 - 1. A Christian can face death with understanding and strength.
 - 2. We can easily give up worldly advantages for the life to come. **(Mt 6:19-21)**
- B. We have to “see the unseen” on purpose. **(Heb 11:6; 24-27)**
 - 1. Moses was able to see a present and future reward by faith.
 - 2. We need to place the unseen before us every day we live. How can we do this?
 - 3. We will look at the realm of the dead from the New Testament first.

I. The use of “hell” in the Bible

- A. In the King James translation there are three Greek words translated "hell."
 - 1. **Hades - (Acts 2:27)** - *Hades* (lit. *an unseen place*); (1) the place of the dead *underworld* **(Acts 2:27)**; (2) usually in the NT as the temporary underworld prison where the souls of the ungodly await the judgment **(Lk 16:23)**
 - 2. **Gehenna**; lit. *the Valley of the Sons of Hinnom*,figuratively in the Gospels for *hell*, a fiery place of eternal punishment for the ungodly dead **(Mt 5:22)**.
 - 3. **Tartarus** – **(2 Pt 2:4)** - the name of a subterranean region, doleful and dark, regarded by the ancient Greeks as the abode of the wicked dead, where they suffer punishment for their evil deeds; it answers to the Gehenna of the Jews.
- B. In the OT there is the word “**Sheol**” - **(Psa 16:10)** - 1) Sheol, underworld, grave, hell, pit 1a) the underworld 1b) Sheol - the OT designation for the abode of the dead.
- C. The bible words "Sheol" and "Hades" describe the place where all the dead go.
 - 1. Jesus after His death went to "Hades." **(Acts 2:27, 31)**
 - 2. This is the same "hell" that will not prevail against the church. How? **(Mt 16:18)**
 - 3. This abode of the dead is temporary and will yield all of its occupants at the judgment day. **(Rev 20:13-14)**
- D. The Bible word "Gehenna" describes the final abode of the wicked and of Satan himself.

II. Old Testament passages describing consciousness in Sheol

- A. When God revealed Himself to Moses at the burning bush he also revealed that men continue to exist after the death of the body. **(Ex 3:6, 15)**
 - 1. God said that “I AM” the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. This tense of verb shows that these men continue to exist. If they went out of existence then God would have said “I was.”
 - 2. Jesus answered the Sadducees who did not believe in an afterlife. **(Acts 23:6-8; Mk 12:26-27)**

3. Can we make reasoned conclusions from a historical narrative about the afterlife?
- B. There are two different places where the body and spirit go after death. (**Ecc 12:7**)
 1. David knew he would later go to be with his departed child. (**2 Sam 12:23**)
 2. Throughout time God's people have known of a conscious existence after death. We have more details revealed of this realm in the New Testament that was previously hidden. (**Mt 13:35; Jn 3:12-13**)
- C. There will be consciousness and a very different existence in Sheol.
 1. Hear about the greeting a wicked Babylonian king received in Sheol. (**Isa 14:9-15**)
 2. This serves as a warning to all men concerning how we live this life. Those who have riches and ease and exploit others will have a rude eternal awakening in Sheol.

III. The account of the rich man and Lazarus

- A. Jesus gave a detailed account of two men and their experience after death. (**Lk 16:19-31**)
 1. Is this an actual historical account or a parable?
 2. **παραβολή** - parable - as a rhetorical figure of speech, setting one thing beside another to form a comparison or illustration; (1) in the Gospels *parable*, *illustration* (Mt 13.3);
 3. A parable always makes comparisons to known things, such as sowing, selling, and other commonly known things.
 4. Jesus said a "a certain beggar named Lazarus." This is specific with a real name mentioned. No parable does this.
 5. What common things are named in this parable when referring to Hades? Consider: 1) "he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue" and 2) "I am tormented in this flame." and 3) "between us and you there is a great gulf fixed" and 4) "that those who want to pass from here to you cannot"
- B. There are two realms in Hades, one for the righteous and the other for the wicked.
 1. The rich man was in torment. That torment involved heat and a flame. (**Lk 16:23-24**)
 2. Lazarus was in "Abraham's bosom" which was a place of good things and comfort. (**Lk 16:23, 25**)
 3. The place and the destiny of each individual are eternally set. The things done in one's "lifetime" determines this destiny. (**Lk 16:25; 2 Cor 5:10; Heb 9:27**)
 4. Angels are involved with the transportation of souls. (**Lk 16:22**)
 5. There is a conscious knowledge and interaction with others.
- C. Consider the truths this account teaches us.
 1. Spiritual things become of great importance to all men in Hades.
 2. Mercy is not to be found for the wicked.
 3. Evangelism becomes very important to the wicked towards those that they love who are still alive.