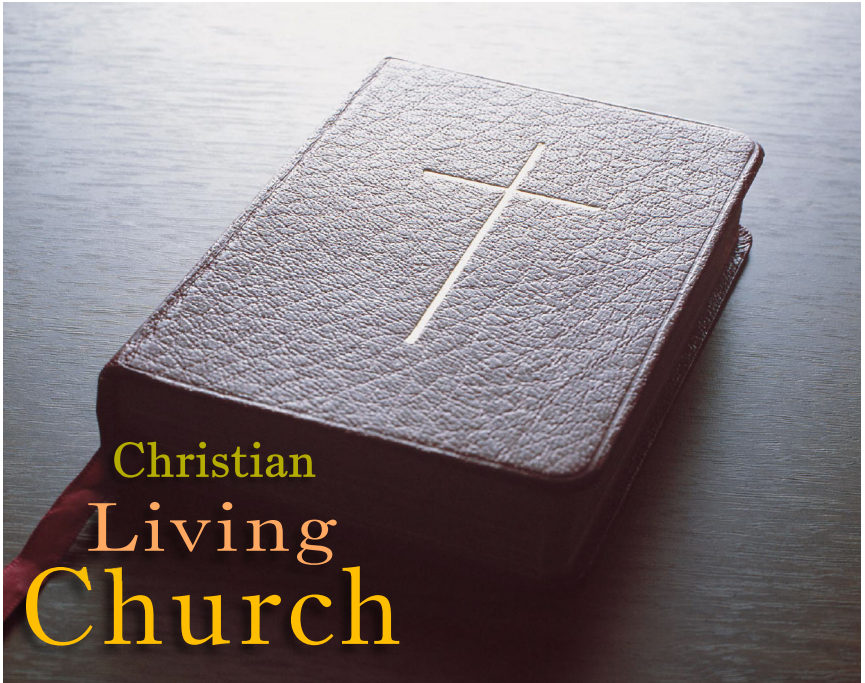


Hell

“He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell (Hades), neither his flesh did see corruption.”



Christian
Living
Church

Hell



This series of lessons has been designed for private study or classroom presentation. The purpose of this foreword is to explain certain conventions utilized throughout the program. The overall concept is to begin with the basic concepts necessary for the new convert to understand and progress toward more complex doctrine. The lessons are numbered in order to maintain the proper sequence of study.

When Scripture references are encountered in the text, various actions are recommended. When in parenthetical bold (**Genesis 1:1**) the verse is to be looked up and read right away. Frequently, the next textual statement will comment on that verse. Reading verse and text in proper order will enhance one's understanding of the verse. Direct quotes from Scripture will be "*bold italicized and contained in quotation marks*" and, unless otherwise noted, will be from the King James Bible. When the reference is in parenthetical non-bold (Genesis 1:1) it is to provide the Scriptural basis for the statement if confirmation is desired. References in blue [Genesis 1:1](#) will be listed in the lesson section entitled **FURTHER STUDY**.

FURTHER STUDY is the "homework" section. Its purpose is to encourage Bible study at home. The referenced verses have a short summation to assist the student desiring more knowledge about a subject to find what they are looking for.

The **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS** section is primarily for classroom use. Open discussion with the exchange of ideas produces growth for all involved. Most of the time the answer is contained in the referenced Scripture but sometimes the question is offered for open discussion. Even in private Bible study, analysis of the question and the search for its answer can be rewarding.

This work is offered to anyone with a desire to better understand God's Word. It is our hope and prayer that the person studying these lessons will come away with a better understanding of God's will and a closer walk with our Lord, Jesus Christ.

With Loving Concern for all those seeking God's Message
The Church of God Rocky Mount
Rocky Mount, Virginia

Key Verse: Acts 2:31



“He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell (Hades), neither his flesh did see corruption.”

Discussion Question:

What does the Key Verse mean to you?

When Peter spoke these words he was quoting Psalm 16:10 in the Old Testament. It reads *“For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell (sheol) neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.”* So, in the OT *sheol* is used and in the NT *hades* is used, undeniable proof that both mean the grave and can be used interchangeably. How do we know? Because Christ did not go to a place of burning torment when He died but was in the heart of the earth 3 days and 3 nights (**Matthew 12:40**). His soul (meaning Christ Himself) was not left in the grave but was resurrected, opening the way

for all of mankind to one day also be raised.

Since there are different words translated hell and since translators have not consistently translated the Hebrew word *sheol* or the Greek word *hades* as hell or the grave, we must take into account the Bible's teaching on other subjects dealing with what happens at death in order to get the true meaning of what is being said in Scriptures containing those words. If we truly believe the Bible, we know that it is impossible for the dead to be literally tormented. Read **Ecclesiastes 9:5 and 10**. In this scripture, *sheol*, the Hebrew word for hell, is translated grave. The Bible teaches there is neither suffering nor knowledge there.

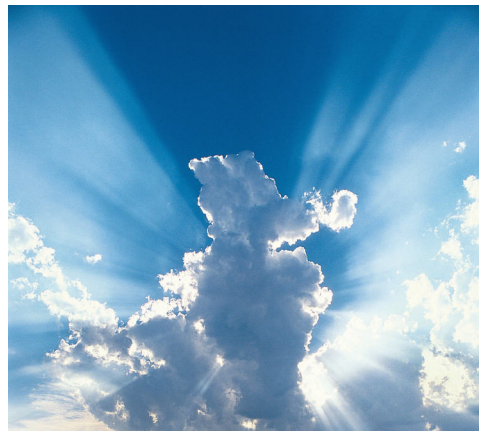
Another point to consider is

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that both good and bad people go to the Biblical hell. It might be good to note here that the English people used to "hell" potatoes. That involved putting them in a hole beneath the ground to preserve them for use during the winter. This was the meaning of hell when the KJV translation was authorized by King James of England. Hell meant a hole in the ground. Now let's compare 3 scriptures where *sheol* is used, (**Psalm 9:17; Genesis 37:34-35; Job 14:13**). In the first scripture the Hebrew word *sheol* is translated as hell. In the second and third scriptures it is translated as the grave. Again, had the translators consistently translated *sheol* as grave it would have been easy to see that mankind, whether he was wicked or righteous, would go to *sheol* (the grave) at death. The first says the wicked and all nations that forget God will be turned into *sheol* or the grave. Also

Jacob and Job, righteous men, recognized that *sheol* was the grave. Neither Jacob nor Job was requesting to go to a place of fiery torment. They knew that *sheol*, to which both the good and the bad go at death, is the grave. Jacob was so grieved by the death of his son that he said he would be weeping until he joined him in the grave. Job was asking to be hid in the grave until the resurrection. Only when the Hebrew word *sheol* is consistently translated the grave is the true meaning made clear. Please study all the scriptures listed under further study dealing with *sheol* and *hades*.



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Read them using a Bible concordance and where you find the Hebrew word *sheol* or the Greek word *hades* substitute the word grave and the meaning will begin to become clear. All of them will be associated with death and the grave and none of them will be associated with fire or the living. The OT *sheol* and the NT *hades* mean the grave and should have been translated so. Hell and the grave are one and the same.

Now let's go to another Greek word translated hell. It is *Gehenna*. It is associated with fire (**Mark 9:43-44**). So, clearly this word translated hell is different from *hades* or *sheol*. What is the meaning of the word *Gehenna*? The New Funk and Wagnall's Encyclopedia (New York: 1950, volume 15, page 5576) says of *Gehenna*: "*The Valley of Hinnom near Jerusalem where Solomon built an high place for Moloch. Because*

some of the Israelites sacrificed their children to Moloch there, the valley came to be regarded as a place of abomination. In a later period it was made a place for the dumping of refuse, and perpetual fires were maintained to prevent pestilence."

Also, Smith's Dictionary of the Bible (Boston: 1889, volume 1, page 879) says regarding *Gehenna*: "*It became the common laystall of the city, where the dead bodies of criminals, and the carcasses of animals, and every other kind of filth was cast.*" Are we beginning to get the picture? There was, near Jerusalem at the very time Jesus was speaking, in the Valley of Hinnom, which is what *Gehenna* literally means, a place where garbage and filth were discarded. Dead criminals, *thought too vile for a resurrection*, were cast there. It was a garbage dump, where fires were kept burning to get rid of the filth. Only garbage

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and dead bodies were placed there. People of that day clearly understood what Jesus was saying. He did not expect them to literally cut off an arm or a leg but they knew they must get rid of anything in their life that was filthy. They must rid their lives of anything that would cause them to be permanently destroyed. Anything thrown into **Gehenna** would be permanently destroyed. If the fire didn't take care of it then the worms (maggots) would. So, **Gehenna** refers to the final destruction of the wicked by fire.

This place became a type of what the Bible refers to in Revelation as the "lake of fire." What does the lake of fire symbolize (**Revelation 20:13-15**)? This Scripture is connected with the final judgment of mankind. Could it be any clearer? Hell (*hades*, meaning the grave) is to give up the *dead* in it. Notice that only

dead people are there. Then there is going to be a resurrection from that "hell" (the common grave where the dead are located) and a casting into a different hell, the lake of fire, *which means "second death."* But before being transferred from one to the other, people will be given the opportunity to reform and then judged. Only those who did not change and do good works will be permanently destroyed in the lake of fire.

There is another word translated hell in the Bible. It is the word **tartarus** which is used only of spirit beings and their judgment.

What then about the Parable of the Rich man and Lazarus? Many have used this to say **hades** is a place where people go and burn after death. But a proper understanding of the above disproves this. In a future lesson you will learn that the dead are unconscious and

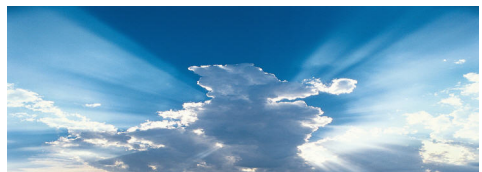
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have no memory, so it is impossible for them to be tormented in a fire until after they are raised from the dead. So the rich man could only have been tormented in the flame *after being raised from the dead* if the parable is literally interpreted. It should be noted that Jesus gave parables to hide the meaning from those whose heart condition was bad and to reveal the meaning to others who had the right condition of the heart. Most are not to be taken literally. This parable is discussed more fully in another study but the above points will help in understanding it.

In brief then, when men die (whether good or bad) they go to the common grave (the Greek *sheol*, the Hebrew *hades*). There they rest until the resurrection. Those in the first resurrection will be judged according to how they lived their lives in this present age since they responded to

God's call. Those in the second resurrection will be judged according to their works after being raised since they were not called of God in this present age. Christ will be the final judge and one will receive either everlasting life in God's Kingdom, or everlasting (second) death in *Gehenna*, or the lake of fire. Death will be permanently destroyed along with *hades* (or the grave) at that time. It will be as if death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. No more will people die or be buried in graves. What an awesome God we have!!! Surely His teaching, when seen in the proper light, will give comfort to those who have lost loved ones in death, and bring judgment upon those who misrepresent Him as a cruel God waiting to burn forever those who have not been called in this present time.



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Discussion Questions:

Please refer to the Lesson for the Answers.

1. Who goes to hades when they die? Explain your answer.

2. What is the definition of sheol and hades when translated consistently?

3. What was the meaning of Gehenna in Jesus' day according to Funk and Wagnall's Encyclopedia and Smith's Bible Dictionary?

4. **True or False:** Those in the 1st resurrection (those called of God in this age) will be judged based on works they do in this life. **1 Peter 4:17**

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5. **True or False:** Those in the 2nd resurrection (those who are not called of God in this age) will be judged based on works they do in this life.

6. **Yes or No:** Will death or hades exist any longer after the final judgment?

7. Where will death and hades be cast after the final resurrection?

8. Is the fire mentioned in the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus imposed on people before or after the resurrection?

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FURTHER STUDY:

THE WORDS TRANSLATED HELL OR GRAVE AND WHERE THEY ARE FOUND IN THE BIBLE:

The common grave as opposed to individual graves:

SHEOL

Genesis 37:35; 42:38; 44:29, 31

Deuteronomy 32:22

Numbers 16:30, 33

1 Samuel 2:6

1 Kings 2:6, 9

Job 7:9; 11:8; 14:13; 17:13, 16; 21:13; 24:19; 26:6

Psalms 6:5; 9:17; 16:10; 18:5; 30:3; 31:17; 49:14, 15; 55:15; 86:13; 88:3; 89:48; 116:3; 139:8; 141:7

Proverbs 1:12; 5:5; 7:27; 9:18; 15:11, 24; 23:14; 27:20; 30:16

Ecclesiastes 9:10

Song of Solomon 8:6

Isaiah 5:14; 14:9, 11, 15; 28:15, 18; 38:10, 18; 39:18; 57:9

Ezekiel 31:15, 16, 17; 32:21, 27

Hosea 13:14

Amos 9:2

Jonah 2:2

Habakkuk 2:5

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HADES

Matthew 11:23; 16:18

Luke 10:15; 16:23

Acts 2:27, 31

Revelation 1:18; 6:8; 20:13, 14

A literal place in the Middle East:

GEHENNA

Joshua 15:8; 18:6

2 Kings 23:10

2 Chronicles 18:3; 33:6

Nehemiah 11:30

Jeremiah 7:31, 32; 19:2, 6; 32:35

Symbolic of the Lake of Fire or second death:

GEHENNA

Revelation 19:20; 20:10, 14, 20:15; 21:8

A place of darkness and restraint for spirits:

TARTARUS

2 Peter 2:4

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