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to the underworld itself. This is not an endorsement of their gods, but an inspired commandeering of their word in much the same way *“Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron”* (2nd Kings 1), a Philistine idol, became *“Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons”* (Matthew 12:24), referring to Satan. Sheol, the Pit, is Hades.

Hades is where Jesus visited but did not remain when He died: *“concerning the resurrection of the Christ... His soul was not left in Hades”* (Acts 2:31). Hades, which literally means “unseen”, is the immediate destination of all who die, composed of two distinct realms. Jesus told the thief on the cross, *“Today you will be with Me in Paradise”* (Luke 23:43). Because it is known He had been in Hades while dead (Acts 2:27, 31), it is right to conclude that Hades contains Paradise, which is also referred to as *“the third heaven”* (2nd Corinthians 12:2-4). Accordingly, it is accurate to say the blessed go to heaven immediately upon death, even if that is not *“the highest heavens”* (Daniel 10:14).

While Hades does contain Paradise, there is more to it. Jesus preached, *“The beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. Then he cried and said, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.’ But Abraham said, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us’”* (Luke 16:22-26). The rich man went to Hades (23) where he was tormented in flame (24). His destination was on the opposite side of *“a great gulf”* (26) from a certain man named Lazarus who received comfort (25) in Abraham’s bosom (22-23).

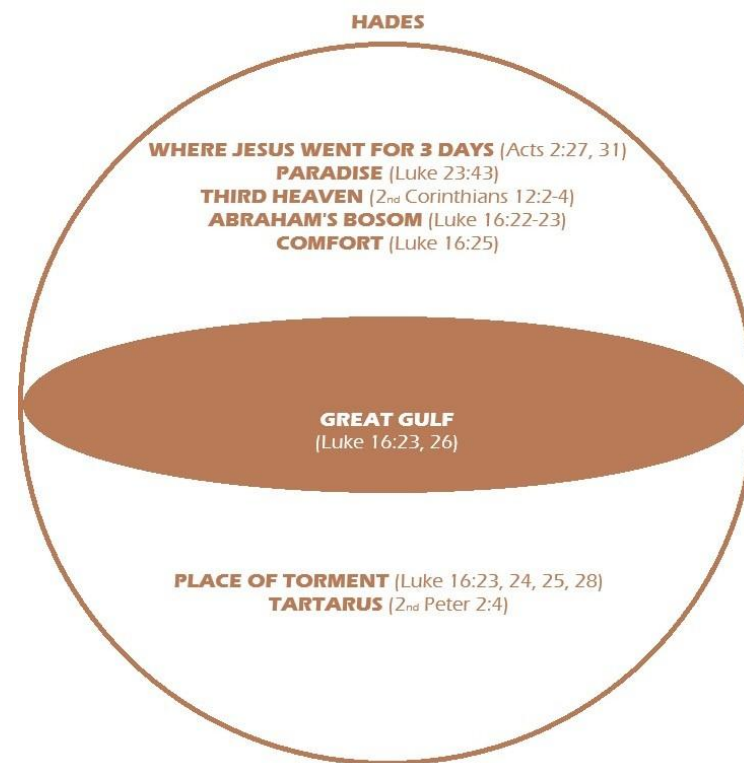
A deeper area of the torment side of Hades, or possibly below it, is Tartarus. This is another word describing the hereafter that inspiration co-opted from Greek mythology, referring to the place where not mere mortals but the Titans themselves were punished. This term appears only once in Scripture and is unhelpfully translated as “hell” though it is a very different Greek word than the one ordinarily translated that way. It is written, *“God did not spare the angels who*

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sinned, but cast them down to hell [Tartarus] and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment” (2nd Peter 2:4). Wicked angels are already being punished in Tartarus, yet they await their final judgment. In the ultimate judgment (Matthew 25:31), cursed men and cursed angels will share the same abode (41). Whether that commonality will commence only at the last day or is already underway is uncertain.

Hades is not permanent for every soul. John wrote, *“I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. 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”* (Revelation 20:12-15). When comes the judgment of the dead, the place where they have been waiting will be cast into the same Lake of Fire, the Second Death, where the damned will suffer eternally (Revelation 21:8).



"WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?"

ACTS 16:30

LEARN THE GOSPEL

John 6:45; Romans 10:17

BELIEVE IN CHRIST

Hebrews 11:6; John 3:16

CONFESS CHRIST

Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 3:19; 17:30

BE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST

Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-6

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

"THE ASSEMBLING OF OURSELVES TOGETHER"

HEBREWS 10:24-25

SUNDAY

Worship @ 10:00 a.m.

Studies @ 11:45 a.m.

WEDNESDAY

Studies & Worship @ 7:00 p.m.

75 Sherrod Boulevard
Belén, New Mexico

Seekers Welcome.
Members Expected.

"IF A MAN IS OVERTAKEN IN ANY TRESPASS... RESTORE SUCH A ONE"

GALATIANS 6:1

CONFESS TRESPASSES

James 5:16; 1st John 1:9

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 8:22

PRAY FOR FORGIVENESS

Acts 8:22

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

"A WORD FITLY SPOKEN"

PROVERBS 25:11

"It is better to love with severity
than to deceive with
gentleness."

– Augustine of Hippo

GIVE ME THE BIBLE

KDNF 840AM

Sunday @ 9:00 a.m.

"WHOLE COUNSEL"

ACTS 20:27

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THE UNDERWORLD

Bryan Matthew Dockens

"At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth" (Philippians 2:10). That there are souls *"under the earth"* speaks to the existence of an underworld, what the Old Testament called *"Sheol"*, for this realm of the dead is always referred to as being downward, as Isaiah prophesied of Nebuchadnezzar, *"You shall be brought down to Sheol, to the lowest depths of the Pit"* (Isaiah 14:15). It is described as *"Sheol beneath"* (Proverbs 15:24) and its depths are contrasted to heaven's heights (Isaiah 7:11).

Sheol is often referred to as equivalent with death or the grave (1st Samuel 2:6; Proverbs 30:3) and is thus a place to avoid (Proverbs 23:14). However, it is not exclusively a place of punishment. Jacob knew he would eventually go to Sheol (Genesis 37:35; 42:38; 44:29, 31), and Jesus affirmed that Jacob would be *"in the kingdom of heaven"* hereafter (Matthew 8:11); therefore, it is correctly understood as the immediate destination of all who die, righteous and unrighteous alike.

What the Old Testament, written in Hebrew, identifies as *"Sheol"* (Psalm 16:10), the New Testament, written in Greek, translates as *"Hades"* (Acts 2:27), borrowing the term from Greek mythology that applied as both the name belonging to the lord of the underworld and

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