

BCC Course on Biblical Eschatology

Week 9 = Sheol & Hades

I.) Sheol and Hades Scripture Preparation

Read: Psalm 139; Luke 16:19-31

II.) Sheol

- A.) Sheol occurs 66 times in the Old Testament
- B.) Evenly distributed throughout the Old Testament
- C.) Sheol Defined: the destiny of both the righteous and unrighteous; the realm of the dead; a dark, a shadowy existence under the earth that contains both the righteous and the unrighteous.

NOTE: Some think *sheol* means "grave" with no hint of consciousness after death.

But *sheol* probably includes some aspect of conscious existence.

- D.) Contrast with *Qeber*
 - 1.) The most common term for grave in the Old Testament is *qeber*. (67 times)
 - 2.) *Qeber* is translated "grave," "tomb," "sepulchre"
 - 3.) *Focus is on the burial of the body after physical death*
 - 4.) *Qeber* focuses on the grave of bodies while *Sheol* seems related to shadowy existence after death
- In the New Testament, *Hades* will be used of *Sheol*, and *Hades* involves consciousness after death.
- People go "down to *Sheol*" (15x in OT)
 - Then all his sons and all his daughters arose to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted. And he said, "Surely I will go down to *Sheol* in mourning for my son." So his father wept for him. (Gen. 37:35)
 - But Jacob said, "My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he alone is left. If harm should befall him on the journey you are taking, then you will bring my gray hair **down to Sheol** in sorrow." (Gen. 42:38)
 - "When a cloud vanishes, it is gone, So he who goes **down to Sheol** does not come up. (Job 7:9)
 - "They spend their days in prosperity, And suddenly they go **down to Sheol**. (Job 21:13)
 - What man can live and not see death? Can he deliver his soul from the power of **Sheol**? (Psalm 89:48)
 - I said, "In the middle of my life I am to enter the gates of **Sheol**; I am to be deprived of the rest of my years." (Isaiah 38:10)
- Place of Punishment for the Wicked
 - "But if the Lord brings about an entirely new thing and the ground opens its mouth and swallows them up with all that is theirs, and they descend alive into **Sheol**, then you will understand that these men have spurned the Lord." (Num. 16:30)
 - The ground that was under them split open; ³² and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, and their households, and all the men who belonged to Korah with *their* possessions. ³³ So they and all that belonged to them went down alive to **Sheol**; and the earth closed over them, and they perished from the midst of the assembly. (Num. 16:33)
 - "Let death come deceitfully upon them; Let them go down alive to **Sheol**, For evil is in their dwelling, in their midst." (Psalm 55:15)
- *Sheol* for the King of Babylon
 - "**Sheol** from beneath is excited over you to meet you when you come; It arouses for you the spirits of the dead, all the leaders of the earth" Isa. 14:9

- 'Your pomp *and* the music of your harps Have been brought down to **Sheol**; Maggots are spread out *as your bed* beneath you And worms are your covering.' (Isaiah 14:11)
- "Nevertheless you will be thrust down to **Sheol**, To the recesses of the pit. (Isaiah 14:15)
- God Will Save Righteous from Sheol
 - For You will not abandon my soul to **Sheol**;
Nor will You allow Your Holy One to undergo decay. (Psalm 16:10)
 - But God will redeem my soul from the power of **Sheol**,
For He will receive me. *Selah*. (Psalm 49:15)
 - For Your lovingkindness toward me is great,
And You have delivered my soul from the depths of **Sheol**. (Psalm 86:13)
 - The cords of death encompassed me
And the terrors of **Sheol** came upon me;
I found distress and sorrow.
Then I called upon the name of the Lord:
"O Lord, I beseech You, save my life!" (Psalm 116:3-4)
 - "Shall I ransom them from the power of **Sheol**? Shall I redeem them from death? O Death, where are your thorns? O **Sheol**, where is your sting? Compassion will be hidden from My sight." (Hosea 13:14)
 - "and he said, "I called out of my distress to the Lord, And He answered me. I cried for help from the depth of **Sheol**; You heard my voice." (Jonah 2:2)
 - If I ascend to heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in **Sheol**, behold, You are there. (Psalm 139:8)
- Two Compartments of *Sheol* Theory
 - A blissful place for the righteous (Abraham's Bosom)
 - A place of torment for the unrighteous
 - The righteous dead in the OT did not go to Heaven but the good part of Sheol. After Jesus' death He went and released the saints so they could go to Heaven.

E.) Hades

In the Gk. translation of the OT, *Hades* is used for the Hebrew term *Sheol*.

- Sheol (OT)  Hades (NT)
Key term in New Testament
 - Hades 10 times in NT: translated "Hades" and refers to a place where departed spirits go.
 - Taphos 7 times in NT: "tomb," "grave," "sepulchre"
 - Mnēmeion 40 times in NT: "tomb," "grave," "sepulchre"
 - Hades contains the spirits of the unrighteous dead in this age before the final judgment.
 - But Hades is not a permanent existence. Those in Hades will be placed in the Lake of Fire
 - **Rev. 20:13-15**
"And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and **Hades** gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of *them* according to their deeds. ¹⁴ Then death and **Hades** were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. ¹⁵ And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire."
 - **Matthew 11:23** (NASB): "And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to

heaven, will you? You will descend to Hades; for if the miracles had occurred in Sodom which occurred in you, it would have remained to this day."

Matthew 16:18 (NASB): "I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.

Luke 10:15 (NASB): "And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You will be brought down to Hades!"

Acts 2:27 (NASB): "Because You will not abandon my soul to Hades, nor allow Your Holy One to undergo decay."

Acts 2:31 (NASB): "he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that He was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh suffer decay."

Revelation 1:18 (NASB): "and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of **Hades**."

Revelation 6:8 (NASB): "I looked, and behold, an ashen horse; and he who sat on it had the name Death; and **Hades** was following with him. Authority was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by the wild beasts of the earth."

Revelation 20:13-14 (NASB): "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and Death and **Hades** gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. Then Death and **Hades** were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire."

- Hades in Luke 16
 - Rich man died and was in conscious torment in Hades.
 - "and the rich man also died and was buried. ²³ In Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and *saw Abraham far away and Lazarus in his bosom. ²⁴ And he cried out and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus so that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue, for I am in agony in this flame.'" (22-24)
- Two Compartments of Hades View
 - Some believe that before Jesus' resurrection that Hades had two components:
 - = A blissful side for the saved
 - = A fiery place of torment for the wicked
 - But after Jesus' resurrection the souls of the saved were taken to the third Heaven to be with God.
 - Thus, after the resurrection, Hades only refers to the holding place of the unsaved until they are transferred to the Lake of Fire.
- Comparing *Sheol* and *Hades*
 - In the OT both the righteous and unrighteous go to *Sheol*, although the righteous have hope of deliverance from it.
 - In the NT, the righteous are not said to go to *Sheol*. They go to Heaven.

III.) Sheol and Hades Discussion Questions

- A.) What are your thoughts about Sheol and Hades after watching the video?
- B.) Do you believe the Old Testament discussed conscious life after death?
- C.) What we can learn about *Hades* from the account of the Rich Man & Lazarus in Lk.16:19-31?