

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER WE DIE?

Part 2: Where Are Those Who Have Died?

"Can you find out the deep things of God?

Can you find out the limit of the Almighty?

It is higher than heaven—what can you do?

Deeper than Sheol—what can you know?" (Zophar the Naamathite, Job 11:7-8)

...therefore, let's not hesitate to say to some questions, "I don't know." There are "secret things" that "belong to the LORD our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever" (Deut 29:29) that we might have hope, and "in this hope we are saved," even as we hope "for what we do not see" and "wait for it with patience" (Rom 8:24-25).

Our September itinerary:

- ◆ September 2: orientation
- ◆ **September 9:** where are those who have died?
- ◆ September 16: the linchpin of resurrection
- ◆ September 23: what can we know about heaven and hell?
- ◆ September 30: your questions (ask via jason.hardin@gmail.com or 614-286-6288)

Where are those who have died? Significant words used in Scripture:

- ◆ *Sheol*: the Hebrew word used in the Old Testament (65 times) to refer to the unseen realm of the dead; literally, "beyond." Examples:
 - Gen 37:35: "I shall go down to Sheol to my son, mourning."
 - Num 16:30: "But if ... they go down alive into Sheol, then you shall know..."
 - 1 Sam 2:6: "The LORD ... brings down to Sheol and raises up."
 - 2 Sam 22:5-6: "...the waves of death ... the cords of Sheol entangled me..."
 - Job 26:6: "Sheol is naked before God, and Abaddon (*destruction*) has no covering."
 - Psa 30:1-3: "O LORD, you have brought up my soul from Sheol..."
 - Psa 139:8: "If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there!"
 - Prov 7:27: "Her house is the way to Sheol, going down to the chambers of death."
 - Isa 14:9-11: "Your pomp is brought down to Sheol..."
 - Hos 13:14: "O Sheol, where is your sting?"

- Amos 9:2: "If they dig into Sheol, from there shall my hand take them..."
- Jon 2:2: "...out of the belly of Sheol I cried, and you heard my voice."
- ◆ *Hades*: the Greek word used in the New Testament (9 times) to refer to the realm of the dead; literally, "unseen," or "unseeable." Examples:
 - Matt 11:23: "[Capernaum] will be brought down to Hades."
 - Rev 1:18: "I have the keys of Death and Hades."
 - Rev 6:8: "Its rider's name was Death, and Hades followed him."
 - Rev 20:13-14: "Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them..."
- ◆ Are Sheol and Hades describing the same "place"?
 - In Psalm 16:10, David wrote of God, "You will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption."
 - In Acts 2, Peter proclaimed that God "raised" Jesus of Nazareth "up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible to be held by it" and quotes Psalm 16:8-11, affirming that David "says concerning" Jesus, referring to David as "a prophet" who "foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption" (2:24-32).

The one use of *Tartarus* in Scripture

- ◆ "For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell (*Tartarus*, Gr.) and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment..." (2 Pet 2:4)
- ◆ The meaning of *Tartarus* is obscure; perhaps a distinct part of Hades since only rebellious angels are mentioned as being there?

The edges of the "puzzle"

- ◆ We noted in Part 1 of this study that those who have experienced the separation of their spirits from their bodies are described throughout the New Testament as having "fallen asleep" (Matt 27:52; John 11:11-14; Acts 7:60; 13:36; 1 Cor 15:6, 18, 20; 1 Thes 4:14-15; 2 Pet 3:4).
- ◆ In 1 Samuel 28:15, Samuel asked Saul, "Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?"
- ◆ Moses and Elijah appeared on the mountain and talked with Jesus about his "exodus" when he was transfigured (Luke 9:28-36).
- ◆ And what to do with Jesus' words in Luke 16:19-31?
- ◆ How profound in view of the assurance he offers from the cross to the crucified thief beside him: "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43).
- ◆ A note on which to end: "Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Blessed indeed," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them!" (Rev 14:13)

Notes: