

Lesson 73

WHERE DO THE DEAD GO

By Darrell Crow

Not So Basic Christianity — Study Guides For Discipleship

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FOREWORD

This release of this article on Easter Sunday seems appropriate for the following:

The significance of Easter is Jesus Christ's triumph over death. His resurrection means the eternal life that is granted to all who believe in Him. The purpose of Easter also means the full confirmation of all that Jesus taught and preached during His three-year ministry.

1 Corinthians 15:13-15 says, "If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised."

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LESSON 73

Not So Basic Christianity:
Biblical Study Guides For Discipleship

By
Darrell Crow

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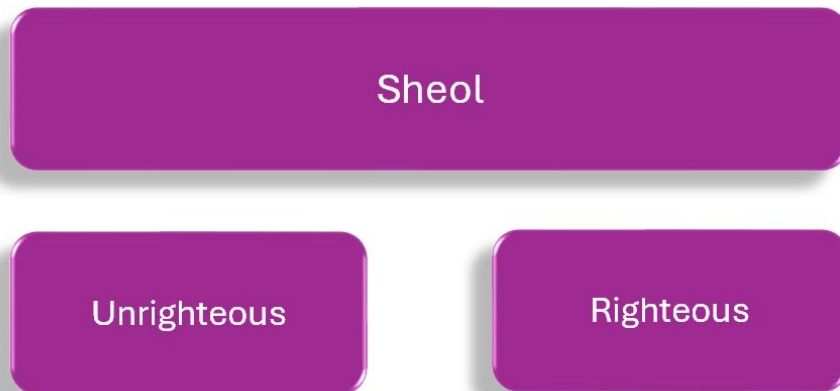
1.0 Where Are The Dead

Death is the greatest problem that human beings encounter. We may want to hide our thoughts of it away in a far corner of our minds, but we cannot completely erase our awareness of our mortality. Each of us know that death is waiting for us.

So what happens to us when we die?

Do we go anywhere or simply disappear into nothingness? No one but Jesus Christ has ever given a credible answer to that question — no religion, no educator, absolutely no one.

That's because no one knows where or how the afterlife will unfold. No one, that is, except Jesus Christ. He has given us the most definitive teaching on this subject, and the chart below is based on that teaching.



A change, which we will discuss later, was made on Easter morning that alters where believers go as New Testament saints. . And that is because Jesus' crucifixion completely paid the penalty for all of man's sins. All sins ever committed, being committed, all future sins by all mankind. All sins, past, present, and future.

In the Old Testament, the souls of all the dead went to Sheol.

When Jesus Christ died on the cross, His soul went into Sheol. But Jesus did not stay there. In Acts 2:31, we read, "he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that He was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh suffer decay."

When Jesus left Sheol on Easter morning He led all of the inhabitants of the "**Bosom Of Abraham**" to Heaven.

And in Matthew 12:40, Jesus Christ says: "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly: so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the HEART OF THE EARTH. "

Apparently the Bible says Hell is inside the earth!

Before we examine what Jesus has said, let's look at what the Bible as a whole says about hell. The Bible uses several terms to identify the various purposes and descriptions of hell. Sheol, Hades, Hell, the Place of Torment, the Abyss, the Bottomless Pit, Tartarus, Gehenna, the Lake of Fire and Outer Darkness are all the names of places of punishment and death originally created for the fallen angels by God.



What do we know about them? Where are they? None of them are visible on the face of the earth, but the Bible does give information about where they are and the purpose of each.

First, note that there is a difference between “hell” and the “lake of fire.” In the Old Testament all dead people went into Sheol. Believers and non-believers were not in the same compartment of Sheol. One compartment was paradise, the other a place of torment. unsaved die they go immediately to a place called hell. Later, the Bible indicates that those in Hell are given up and cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:14).

2.0 Description of Sheol-Hades

In the 39 books of the Old Testament, the world of the dead is called “*Sheol*” 65 times. That word may be translated to mean the “grave,” “hell,” or “death.”

“*Sheol*” must not be confused with either “*the Pit*,” or “*the Lake of fire*,” for it is the place of all of those who have departed this life, both believers and non-believers. Sheol is not the “pit,” “The Abyss,” or “The Bottomless Pit,” or the “Lake of Fire.

Proverbs 9:18 *But he does not know that the dead are there, That her guests are in the depths of Sheol.* All dead people go to Sheol

Psalms 9:17 *The wicked will return to Sheol, All the nations who forget God.* This verse is very specific in stating that wicked return to Sheol. The only logical conclusion is that all inhabitants of Sheol were removed from Sheol were removed then an event occurred, and only wicked people were returned to Sheol. non-wicked people in Sheol who were not returned from Sheol.

Genesis 44:29 *If you also take this one from me, and harm happens to him, you will bring my gray hair down to Sheol in sorrow.’* Godly Jacob fully expected to go to Sheol. He is praying that he will happily go to Sheol knowing that his new found son would not be harmed.

Psalms 88:3 *For my soul has had enough troubles, And my life has approached Sheol.* David’s life is coming to an end and he fully expects to

go to Sheol.

Psalms 89:48 *What man can live and not see death? Can he save his soul from the power of Sheol? All men die and will go to Sheol.*

In the New Testament the Greek word for the world of the dead is “*hades*,” which appears 47 times.

It is important to note that Sheol and hades are not really hell as the final resting place of the lost, as the King James version or translation of the Bible.

It seems conclusive that both the believers and non-believers go to Sheol immediately after death It is a specific place and seems to be the dwelling place of the soul. The physical body decays after death.

Psalms 49:15 says, “*But God will redeem my soul from the power of Sheol, For He will receive me.*” This clearly denotes that the psalmist in life is looking forward from being rescued from Sheol. One must first be in Sheol in order to be rescued from it.

The most complete description of Sheol-Hades in the Bible comes from Jesus Christ Himself in Luke 16:19-31. Here Jesus tells us that two men died and end up in Hades. It is important to underscore that this is a real story and not a parable. Characters in parables are not given names., rather as a certain man or people.

This story uses real names, Abraham and Lazarus. Both Lazarus and a rich man went to Hades, but different parts. Luke 16:22-23 , *Now it happened that the poor man died and was carried away by the angels to Abraham’s arms; and the rich man also died and was buried. [23] And in Hades he raised his eyes, being in torment, and saw Abraham far away and Lazarus in his arms.*

It appears from Luke 16:19 that Hades is composed of three part.: Abraham’s Bosom, The Great Gulf Fixed, and the Place of Torment.

The most desirable compartment in Hades is naturally Paradise, also called the Bosom of Abraham.. It is a place of joy and comfort. This is the Paradise of the Old Testament, to which the souls of the righteous dead went immediately after death.

Like Lazarus, we can assume that all righteous dead were carried by angels to Paradise. It is also a place of companionship, for he has the joy of fellowship with Abraham. Although poorly treated while alive, he now holds an enviable position by the side of Abraham. This indicates

LIFE

DEATH

SHEOL-HADES

The Place of Torment

The Great Gulf Fixed

Paradise/Bosom of Abraham

that the Old Testament saints could fellowship with all of the millions of saints of God who had previously died.

There is very little details provided about the Place of Torment or the Great Gulf Fixed scriptural. We do know that men may look and converse but not cross from The Pace of Torment to Paradise and vice versa.

We can only conclude that there is a great chasm separating the believers from the non-believers

Once a person dies, he is confined to one chamber of Hades or the other Far more details are given by Jesus about the Place of Torment than the

Some Bible scholars believe the Great Gulf Fixed has no bottom and could well be the bottomless pit of Revelation 20:3 into which the Devil is cast at the glorious appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ

other two compartments. Jesus was concerned and relentlessly warned mankind about this place in order to keep them from going there.

The rich man called Hades a place of torment, indicating that it is a real place, not merely a state of existence, as some would like to believe.. Verse Luke 19:22 tells us that us that rich man died and was buried, and in Verse 23 the rich man lifted up his eyes, being in torment.

There appears to be no intermediate state; the unbeliever immediately to the Place of Torment upon death. Verse 23 also suggests that the rich man is conscious of what he is

missing, for it states, *“And in Hades he raised his eyes, being in torment, and *saw Abraham far away and Lazarus in his arms.*

This indicates that one of the horrible tortures of Hades will be that its inhabitants will be able to look across the Great Gulf Fixed and view the comforts and blessings of the believers in Paradise. The unbeliever will be constantly reminded of what he or she is missing because of their rejection of God.

3.0 Escape From Sheol-Hades

One of the victories wrought by the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ is that the church age believer does not have to go Sheol-Hades.

Psalm 16:10, as quoted by Peter in Acts 2:25-31 establishes the fact that Jesus is not in Sheol-Hades.

Psalm 16:10 For You will not abandon my soul to Sheol; You will not allow Your Holy One to undergo decay.

Acts 2:25-31 25 For David says of Him, 'I saw the Lord continually before me, Because He is at my right hand, so that I will not be shaken. [26] Therefore my heart was glad and my tongue was overjoyed; Moreover my flesh also will live in hope; [27] For You will not abandon my soul to Hades, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to undergo decay.[28] You have made known to me the ways of life; You will make me full of gladness with Your presence.'

Whereas the location of Hades is spoken of as “down,” we know from Acts 1:9 the Lord Jesus was “*And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were watching, and a cloud took Him up, out of their sight.*”

In 2 Corinthians 5:8 but we are of good courage and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord. In other words, every since the resurrection the believer at death has gone not to Sheol Hades, but to be present with the Lord, who dwells in heaven.

In fact, Jesus is presently standing at the right hand of God the Father, Almighty (Acts 7:55—*But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, looked intently into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God;).* Consequently, when a current day believer dies, he no longer goes to Sheol-Hades, but his soul proceeds immediately to heaven to be with God’s Savior, Jesus Christ.

When did the change take place?

We know that the Savior went to the Paradise for in Luke 23:43 Jesus told the thief on the cross who cried

out for salvation, “*Today you shall be with me in Paradise.*” Therefore we know that Jesus immediately went to the Paradise compartment of Sheol-Hades.

What’s more Ephesian 4:8-10 reveals that Paradise is no longer in Sheol-Hades, but was taken by Christ up into Heaven. This indicates that at death now, all believers go straight to heaven, where he is now joined with all of the dead Old and New Testament saints.

This means the Paradise section of Sheol-Hades is now empty.. It is also very possible that in this transition that Jesus snatched the very keys of Sheol-Hades and death directly from the hand of Satan. Revelation 1:18 says “*and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.*”



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This leads to another question. Why were the Old Testament saints sent to Paradise in the first place? Why couldn't they have gone directly to heaven?

The answer is rather simple.



The Angel gathering a believer upon their death

The penalty for sin had yet to be paid. Mankind was essentially still legally in their sins. Although Jewish required the sacrifice of animals as a sin offering for the forgiveness of sin, it was a temporary fix Throughout the year, practicing Israelites had to sacrifice animals as a sin covering.

Hebrews 9:9-10 [9] which is a symbol for the present time. Accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make the worshiper perfect in conscience, [10] since they relate only to food, drink, and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until a time of reformation.

In the Old Testament sins were temporarily covered by the blood of a lamb. But an animal's blood was not sufficient to permanently cleanse their sins. Animal sacrifice was an exercise of obedience in which people trusted by faith that God would someday provide a permanent cleansing from sin through the sacrifice of His Son.

When Jesus cried from the cross, “It is finished!” Jesus was saying that the final sacrifice for man's sin was paid.

God in human flesh could accomplish what no animal sacrifice could ever do: atone for the sins of whole world, past, present and future.

After releasing His soul, Jesus descended into Sheol-Hades and led all of the Old Testament believers, held captive until sin was finally atoned for, up into heaven, where they are presently with Him.

4.0 Purgatory Simply Doesn't Exist.

Purgatory is a concept that exists in various religious traditions such as Roman Catholicism. Purgatory is considered an intermediate state after physical death. It serves as a temporary holding place of purification with temporary punishment for souls. The purpose of purgatory is to prepare these souls for their eventual entry into heaven.

This concept is totally absent from the Bible. In fact it flies in the face of all Christian doctrine. The difference between the Biblical teaching on the present state of the dead and this false teaching is that there is no indication whatsoever in the Bible that those in the Place of Torment section of Sheol-Hades or those in heaven will ever be anywhere but where they are for all eternity.

We have already discovered that those in the Place of Torment can never bridge the Great Gulf Fixed and enter Paradise. On the contrary, all who are in presently in the Place of Torment will eventually be cast in-



to the Lake of Fire because they have not accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and their names are not written in the Book Of Life.

Revelation 20:12-15 says, "12 And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. 13 And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them; and they were judged, each

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."

The suggestion that those in the Place of Torment today will be granted a later opportunity to be saved contradicts Scripture.

Isaiah 38:18 For Sheol cannot thank You, Death cannot praise You; Those who go down to the pit cannot hope for Your faithfulness.

The place of Torment is strictly a place of suffering and is void of the teaching of truth. Therefore, any who enter that place cannot hope for escape.

Believers go immediately to paradise in heaven upon their death. Limbo or Purgatory simply doesn't exist.

Reject God & Christ's Work On The Cross

SHEOL – HADES
THE PLACE OF TORMENT



Accept God & Christ's Work On The Cross

HEAVEN
PARADISE

A man winds up in Hades not because he is rich or poor, or because he is a murderer, or a thief or immoral, or any kind of sinner. A man is sent to Hades because he is an unbeliever. That is one who has never accepted Jesus Christ as his Savior. ("The one who believes in Him is not judged; the one who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. John 3:18)

God in human flesh could accomplish what no animal sacrifice could ever do: atone for the sins of whole world, past, present and future.

After releasing His soul, Jesus descended into Sheol-Hades and led all of the Old Testament believers, held captive until sin was finally atoned for, up into heaven, where they are presently with Him.

5.0 Ensuring Your Destination Is Heaven

According to John 3:18 The one who believes in Him is not judged; the one who does not believe has already been judged, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. “

Both those who go to Paradise and those who end up in Hades are sinners.. Those in Sheol-Hades died in their sins, while those who reside in Paradise were forgiven of their sins sometime during their life. The Bible says all men deserve to go to hell.

Jesus, Himself, gave us clear directions on how to obtain admittance to Paradise when He said, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me. (John 14:6)

Only by Jesus Christ, then, can we gain access to the Father, who is in heaven (where Paradise is now located). Jesus shows us how

Romans 6:23, “For the wages of sin is death, but the gracious gift of God

is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

John 1:12 says But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name,

Romans 3:23-24 [23] for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, [24] being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus,

Romans 10: 13 for “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

Romans 10:9-10 [9] that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; [10] for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.

Titus 3:4-6 [4] But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, [5] He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we did in righteousness, but in accordance with His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, [6] whom He richly poured out upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior,

Ephesians 2:8-9 [8] For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; [9] not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

6.0 Names of Hell

We have given a thorough discussion of Sheol and Hades.

By now you realize that in Old Testament times all dead people went to Sheol. Sheol consisted of three compartments: Place of Torment, Great Gulf Fixed, and the Bosom of Abraham (Paradise). Unbelievers went to the Place of Torment and Believers went to the Bosom of Abraham which was also called Paradise.. When Jesus arose from the dead He led all Paradise to Heaven. Today dead unbelievers still go the Place of Torment in Sheol. However the Greek word for Sheol is Hades. Dead believers do not go to Hades since Paradise is now in Heaven.

Hebrew word Sheol, and the Greek words Hades both refer to the same temporary place, whereas Hell is a permanent abode of punishment that lasts forever.

The word “hell” is used to describe the place where the fallen angels were cast to await judgment (2 Pet 2:4). *[4] For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits (chains of darkness) of darkness, held for judgment;*

However, the Greek word is not “Hades,” which is translated as “hell.” It is a different Greek word, “Hades,” and it is differentiated from the place of torment referred to as Hell.

Even though Hell and the Lake of Fire seem to be different places, the inhabitants are the same and the punishment is the same. The place of judgment for the unsaved is called the Great White Throne and the lake of ire follows it.

Everyone without Christ will enter the first punishment, and no one who enters the first hell can escape entering the Lake of Fire which follows.

7.0 Tartarus

Tartarus appears only once in the entire Bible in 2 Peter 2:4 (For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment;). As you can see in this reference, Tartarus is also in Hades and therefore we can only conclude that it is also a temporary imprisonment to hold a spe-

cific group of angels until their final judgement. Bible scholars equate Tartarus with the deepest abyss of Hades.

It would then appear these evil demons do not wander about tempting man. This is more a subjective conclusion than fact, as basically God has revealed very little of Tartarus and its inhabitants.

8.0 Gehenna

Gehenna is the New Testament word for the permanent place of the dead, used by Jesus Christ Himself 11 times. James also once used the word. The word “Gehenna” is the Greek transliteration of the Hebrew Gehinnom, meaning “Valley of [the sons of] Hinnom.”

This valley south of Jerusalem, was where some of the ancient Israelites “passed children through the fire” (sacrificed their children) to the Canaanite god Molech (2 Chronicles 28:3; 33:6; Jeremiah 7:31; 19:2–6).

The place is called “Tophet / Topheth” in Isaiah 30:33. In later years, Gehenna continued to be an unclean place used for burning trash from the city of Jerusalem. Jesus used Gehenna as an illustration of hell, a permanent place of punishment.

God so despised the false god Molech that He explicitly forbade the Israelites from having anything to do with him in Leviticus 18:21. He even warned them of the impending judgment He would send their way if the Jews didn't keep their attention and worship directed toward Him.





To punish Judah for their disobedience,, God brought Babylon against them, and that pagan nation carried out His judgment against Judah's idolatry and rebellion. It wasn't until after 70 years of exile that the Jews were allowed back into Israel to rebuild.

Upon their return the Valley of Slaughter was re-purposed from a place of infanticide to an ever-burning rubbish heap (2 Kings 23:10). Child sacrifice and other forms of idol-worship ceased in Israel. Gehenna became a place where corpses of criminals, dead animals, and all manners of refuse were thrown to be destroyed and a n always burning fire was their during Jesus' time..

The Gehenna Valley was thus a place of burning sewage, burning flesh, and garbage. Maggots and worms crawled through the waste, and the smoke smelled strong and sickening (Isaiah 30:33). It was a place utterly filthy, disgusting, and repulsive to the nose and eyes.

Gehenna presented such a vivid image that Christ used it as a symbolic

depiction of hell: a place of eternal torment and constant uncleanness, where the fires never ceased burning and the worms never stopped crawling (Matthew 10:28; Mark 9:47-48).

Because of Jesus' symbolic use of Gehenna, the word Gehenna is sometimes used as a synonym for hell. In fact, that's how the Greek word is translated in Mark 9:47: "hell." The occupants of the lake of fire/ Gehenna/hell are separated from God for all of eternity.

GOD IS NOT WILLING THAT ANY
SHOULD PERISH

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Creation

- Lesson 8: Heaven
- Lesson 9: Angels
- Lesson 10: Hell
- Lesson 11: Satan And Demons
- Lesson 12: Earth And Man

Foreknowledge, Election, Predestination

- Lesson 13: God's Foreknowledge
- Lesson 14: God's Election
- Lesson 15: Predestination

The Elect

- Lesson 16: Election Of Man
- Lesson 17: ELECTION Of Angels
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Lesson 43: Seven Bowls and Seven More Interludes

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Lesson 45: Israel, Tribulation Saints

Lesson 46: Marriage

Lesson 47: Pre-Millennial &The Millennial Kingdom

Lesson 48: The Final War and Judgement

Lesson 49: New Heavens & New Earth

Lesson 50: Restored



In a lay-leader class at Medway Community Church of Medway, MA a few years ago, I was challenged to defend my faith and the doctrines I held dear. I found myself embarrassed as it was quickly apparent that I was ill equipped to either defend or explain my beliefs.

Less than two weeks passed and I was again challenged in a local Men's Bible study. To my discredit, I once again was unable to defend my beliefs.

I resolved to correct this deficiency and set out to thoroughly study the Scriptures and document my findings on salvation and Jesus' teachings in an organized fashion. My original objective was to put together a short "white paper" to define and support my position and beliefs on predestination. God wanted me instead, to become His disciple in a life long pursuit of truth. I quickly found myself asking more and more questions that compelled me to constantly research, study and document. My goals expanded broader and faster. This study required me to put aside all my biases, read God's word freshly and intently, discuss with scholars and read numerous documents on Christian doctrines. I lost track of time, so involved were my studies. It has now been over a decade since I first undertook the quest to write a simple white paper.

God has been especially gracious in guiding my study of His revealed word. This study has been a true joy. The more I studied, the more in awe of our Almighty God I became. I was compelled from within to continue worshipping, studying, fellowshiping, and serving Him.

Quick Notes About the Author

- Married, father of three children, four grandchildren and two great grandchildren.
- Saved in 1974 at FBC Church, San Jose, CA
- Tutored by lay leaders, ministers, authors, teachers, scientists and philosophers
- Currently member of FBC Bellingham, MA under the ministry of Pastor Rodrigues
- Challenged in 2 bible studies by my lack of understanding biblical doctrines. I resolved to correct this deficiency and committed myself to becoming a disciple of Christ
- These study guides summarize God's teachings and chronicles God's plan to restore Man for eternal fellowship with Him.