

The Pathfinder

To Where Shall The Grass And Flower Fall?

Hades — The Unseen
Leading Captivity Captive

and

Wither Have The Dead Gone?

By Ray Prinzing

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“For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away.” *1 Peter 1:24*.

First, a note to say that the word *dead* used in this article is not referring to the true meaning of that which is *DEAD*, except for when the context of the scriptures speak of that which has no response to life whatsoever, such as a *dead body, a corpse*. The body can be very well dead with no life, no sensations of physical feeling, or the brain with no thought impulses sparking through its neurons and is not conscious of anything at all. Such as this is indeed *DEAD!* However, the departed spirit that once energized and inspired its dead body and brain is very much alive and aware of its own existence and surroundings in the realm where they abide. Jesus used the word, sleep, when speaking of Lazarus and an official’s maid. When one sleeps, they are alive but not conscious of the natural world around them. They are dead to the world, but very much alive to what goes on in their world of sleep. Therefore, let us keep in mind that the “*dead*” of which we will notice today is not the cessation from any form of consciousness or spiritual life.

We know by observation that all *grass*, that is, all *flesh* of every kind, race, creed, and religion will someday fall away, unless there is a transfiguration of some at the sound of the last trumpet when the natural is swallowed up by the spiritual. But outside of that, everyone will ultimately give up their bodies to be consumed back from where they came. Most believe also that the human spirits will be consumed and drawn back from where they came, which is back to God who gave them. *Ecclesiastes 12:7* tells us this. There are other views of what happens to the soul and spirit once they depart their bodies. Some believe the person goes immediately into a blissful realm (heaven) to be without pain, sorrow, or suffering where they will remain throughout eternity. Just about all religions teach that there will be grave and terrible punitive judgments to sinners. Some believe these tormenting judgments are vindictive and will be without end; but it is ever so clear that the judgments are designed to correct the sinner and restore him back to God. The belief of Eastern religions of being reborn in several bodies is becoming popular with quite a number, that the person continues to evolve until they reach perfection through reincarnation. Then, there are those who believe that when the body dies, so does the spirit and soul until the time to be resurrected. A few believe such death is forever, that there is never again any life or consciousness. Poor Sadducees....

Many more thoughts and theories about the after-life, or after-death, could be listed; but rather than doing so or delving into the ones mentioned here, we will notice what the Scriptures have to say about it. With this, hopefully, a ray of light can be shed and settle for the most part where we will go after our grass and flower have fallen away. Therefore, we pray that the Spirit of truth guides us and opens to our understanding that which has been hidden from the eye of the unsanctified men and women of the world and those of the world of religion as well.

There are three Greek words in the King James Version of the New Testament that have been translated, ^[1] *hell*, and one Hebrew word in the Old Testament. The Hebrew is *sheol*. The Greek words are ^[2] *hades*, ^[3] *gehenna*, and ^[4] *tartaroo*.

Hades is any place or state of being that cannot be seen by others. This can be the grave, a closet with the door closed, a secluded place away from eyesight, in the realm of spirit beyond the veil of flesh. By definition, it is any place or realm that cannot be perceived or seen. The Greek Septuagint of the Old Testament has the Hebrew word, *sheol*, as *hades*. The words are synonymous.

Gehenna, or *the Valley of Hinnom*, was the place of perpetual burning of Jerusalem's garbage and was also where dead bodies of criminals and the carcasses of animals were thrown and burned. The fires of Hinnom were necessary to purify and prevent the stench of decomposition and the spread of disease.

Tartaroo is used one time in 2 Peter 2:4, which speaks of it being the holding place of the wicked until their time of *judgment*. As rendered in the Concordant Literal translation, "For if God spared not the sinning messengers, but thrusting them into the gloomy caverns of Tartarus, gives them up to be kept for chastening (and) judging." The thought is one of confinement, incarceration, restraint; a condition in which apostates are held, reserved for final judgment. It is much as a prisoner is held captive in a jail awaiting the day of his

^[1] *hell*: primary meaning — the unseen, that which is imperceptible

^[2] *hades*: same meaning as the English "hell" the unseen, imperceptible

^[3] *gehenna*: the Valley of Hinnom

^[4] *tartaroo*: Biblically, away from God's presence; English tartarus

trial.

Except for one instance, each of these words (*hades*, *gehenna*, and *tartaroo*) have been translated as *hell*. It goes without saying that this has caused a lot of misunderstanding and confusion. One word can be translated as two or more words, but only when they carry the same meaning. As an example, the German word, *Verbrecher* could be translated to the English as *criminal*, *crook*, *felon*, or *outlaw*, and regardless of which word is used, we would understand the type of person the *Verbrecher* is. Or the translator could translate each of the English words into the one German word, *Verbrecher*, and the meaning of the words would not be lost. However, a good translator would never translate three English words *jogger*, *dancer*, and *swimmer* as one word, such as a *Spaziergänger* (a *walker*). Each word has to do with a person's movement; but they have their distinct meanings and should be treated in this respect. And it goes the same with the three words we are noticing today, *hades*, *gehenna*, and *tartaroo*. Using one word for three different words that have their own particular meaning is not good practice.

Hades is an unseen, imperceptible place or realm, and our English word, *hell*, is the same. Although there can be torment in any imperceptible place or realm, that is not the meaning or implication of the word. *Hell* is a derivative of the Anglo Saxon *hillan*, or *helan*, and is akin to *holl*, a *cavern*. Those of ancient times referred to it as *the concealed* or *unseen* place of the dead in general; but it speaks on a wider margin. For instance, a common term for burying potatoes covered with straw in the side of a hill to preserve them through the winter is called, "*helling the potatoes*," not roasting or tormenting them. In Ireland when roofers are putting shingles on the roof, the process is called "*helling the roof*." When this happens, not one flame of fire is applied to it. It is simply *covered* with shingles. Also, when a young Irish man is ready to take his girlfriend into a secluded place we might hear him say, "*I'll be taking my darling into hell tonight*." Upon returning from that imperceptible realm he might say with a smile upon his face, "*I've been to hell and back with my sweet lass*," and he certainly would not be implying that he had taken her into a place of torment.

With this, we can also see how languages and meanings of words can change. **Hell** once stood for an unseen realm or place, as we have been noticing; but now, by indoctrination and popular usage, it has come to mean in many minds a place of torment, and for some it even incorporates the thought of a lake of fire that burns forever. Our longtime friend, Mark Toohey, said this about it in his article, *The Christianity Of Babylon* [https://www.godfire.net/MarkToohey/Christianity Of Babylon.html](https://www.godfire.net/MarkToohey/Christianity%20Of%20Babylon.html) :

"Given the extent of Catholic doctrinal corruption still so prevalent in the minds of the translators of the 1611 King James Bible, and the imagery of hell so inculcated in their belief system, it is little wonder that the pagan concoction of purgatory would be carried over into the reformed church and passed down through the Authorized Version to modern Christendom. The doctrine of hell has been embellished as the domain of Satan, the modern incarnation of the fire-god, Moloch; and Satan himself has been exalted to the stature of a once-mighty archangel, 'Lucifer,' now cast out of heaven into the pit of hell, a notion borrowed from John Milton's 1667 work of fiction *Paradise Lost*. The idea stuck, and with the misapplication of a verse or two of Scripture, it is now proclaimed as 'truth' to the gullible masses. It would appear that Christianity's sacred article of faith is, in reality, pure myth and fantasy born out of pagan tradition and Christian fiction."

Hades — The Unseen

Let us take a few moments to consider the word **hades** with hopes of learning more about where the dead go. It is an age-old question; for most folks their ideas of what the afterlife holds are largely influenced by their cultures, traditions, families, and churches.

Although some believe that when the spirit of life ebbs from a person that they are unconsciously dead until they are resurrected and stand before the judgment seat of Christ, to the best of our understanding from reading the scriptures, we believe that the dead do not pass from consciousness as the heart renders its last beat and the body is consumed back to its base elements of dust. The body returns to the dust from where it came while the spirit returns to God from where it came. It goes back to the One who gave it.

The spirit enters *the unseen, imperceptible realm, or the state of hades*. Although *hades is unseen and unknown* to the natural eye and mind, departed spirits have not passed out of existence. Man is more than a body of clay. He is also soul and spirit. When the spirit of man passes from his tabernacle of flesh, it goes back to God from where it came, and if the soul is possessed by the spirit, as the apostle encouraged those in Christ to do ([Luke 21:19](#)), they together as one enter a realm unseen by the eyes of mortal beings. Let us keep in mind that this *unseen realm, this hades, this hell* has nothing to do with torment.

Concerning his son by Bathsheba, who died, David said, *"I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."* The apple of God's eye knew there was an unseen realm wherein he would join the spirit of his beloved son, and we cannot imagine him thinking that this unseen, imperceptible, *hadean realm* that is called *hell* in the KJV would be a place of torment. On the contrary, it would be a place and time of great rejoicing.

Hades occurs eleven times in the Bible. Ten of those occurrences, it is translated as **hell**. One time as **grave**:

- 1) "O death, where is thy sting? O **grave**, where is thy victory?" [1 Cor. 15:55](#) 2) "And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to **hell**..." [Mat. 11:23](#).
- 3) "...upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of **hell** shall not prevail against it." [Mat. 16:18](#)
- 4) "...And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be thrust down to **hell**." [Luke 10:15](#).
- 5) "And in **hell** he lift up his eyes..." [Luke 16:23](#).
- 6) "Because thou wilt not leave my soul in **hell**..." [Acts 2:27](#).
- 7) "He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in **hell**..." [Acts 2:31](#).
- 8) "...I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of **hell** and of death." [Rev. 1:18](#).
- 9) "And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and **Hell** followed with him..." [Rev. 6:8](#).
- 10) "...and death and **hell** delivered up the dead which were in them..." [Rev. 20:13](#).
- 11) "And death and **hell** were cast into the lake of fire." [Rev. 20:14](#).

Since our Lord has the keys to death and hell, why fear either of these unknown states of being? There is no reason to, whatsoever. At one time we, along with the rest of the world, felt apprehension and dread

of facing this *mysterious kingdom that swallows all living*; but now that we know Christ reigns supreme over it all, the *unseen/hell/hades*, we should rest assured and have perfect peace by knowing that all is well, and all will be well.

His presence permeates every realm. Whatever happens to take place in the *unseen* realm of *Hades* will be brought to light and according to the sure will of our Father. The plain truth of the matter is that there is nothing outside the range of Jesus Christ's dominion. Although we cannot see into this *unseen realm* with our natural eyes, all will be as it is with Him—open, laid bare, and understood. Until then, we know that everything, whether seen or unseen, is in good hands.

Hades, in reference to our topic, is simply the invisible world of departed spirits, and there are two primary regions to this imperceptible realm. One is the *positive* and the other is the *negative*. Jesus spoke of the positive realm while upon the cross, which would be called *paradise*. "And Jesus said unto him: "Today shalt thou be with Me in paradise." *Luke 23:43*.

The negative realm is *tartarus*. "God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to *hell* [Grk, *tartaroo*, Eng., *tatarus*], and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment." *2 Peter 2:4*.

Death is a transition from one form of life to another. It detaches us from the mortal realm of the flesh so that we can enter the next one; that is, *the state of the unseen*, or *hell*, if you will. We remain in this *hell*, the state of *hades*, until resurrection life lifts us out from among the dead, that is, until we ascend from that realm into a greater realm as we take on and are robed experientially in our new bodies. Paul talked about this in his first letter to the Corinthians: "But someone will say, How can the dead be raised? With what [kind of] body will they come forth? You foolish man! Every time you plant seed, you sow something that does not come to life [germinating, springing up, and growing] unless it dies first. Nor is the seed you sow then the body which it is going to have [later], but it is a naked kernel, perhaps of wheat or some of the rest of the grains. But God gives to it the body that He plans and sees fit, and to each kind of seed a body of its own." *1 Corinthians 15:35-38* (Amplified).

So please know, regardless how attached we might be to our mortal bodies, the scriptures do not support the thought of us being in the unseen realm with these bodies of flesh wherewith we are presently clothed. Nor does it suggest that these will be our bodies when we are manifested sons of God in the earth. You see, after Jesus' resurrection He was manifested in a body no longer subjected to this world's natural laws of physics. If He had been, He could not have appeared behind bolted doors or instantly vanish from sight. The heavenly body upon which He was clothed was far beyond the earthy one that walked the streets of Jerusalem and hung helplessly upon the cross.

Leading Captivity Captive

"Wherefore he saith, When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. Now that He ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things." *Ephesians 4:8-10*. "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: By which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison..." *1 Peter 3:18-19*. And, praise God, "Having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it." *Colossians 2:15*.

Leading captivity captive is *subduing kingdoms* and freeing those held as slaves. It is capturing the enemy, taking dominion over them. The armies of those conquered are captured and led captive to the victor's homeland. The *captivated* prisoners are paraded through the city for all to see. Everything that is captured is made an open show. It is a testimony of the great victory over the enemy.

This is what is meant in Ephesians 4:8 when Jesus entered hades and *led captivity captive*. He conquered totally the powers therein. By His sacrificial death on the cross, *He went into the strong man's house; He conquered and spoiled principalities and powers; He took the treasures of darkness; He made an open show of them; He triumphed over them; He led captivity captive; He led those He subdued captive!*

Through the power of His death, and also His resurrection, our victorious Lord broke the prison bars of Satan and all pertaining to him. Jesus swung wide the gates of hell. He made a way for man's heart to flow freely and joyfully back to his Creator, the Father of all. And that is not all. He *gave gifts!*

"And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." **Ephesians 4:11-12.**

After conquering the enemy, subduing the adversary, leading every vestige of captivity captive, *and having destroyed the works of the devil (1 John 3:8)*, He began to build up. His focus was on reconciling, restoring, and delivering everyone from bondage. In His triumph, He divides the spoils with His own. What a wonderful King!

Jesus not only went into the state of hell, that realm of the dead, He conquered the principalities and powers therein. They were utterly vanquished and could not hold Him. Their first defeat since Adam brought open shame to their power, especially when He returned and unselfishly gave unto us the spoils of that marvelous victory. And now, as with Him and through Him, we can also prevail. It is as the apostle said: "We are more than conquerors through him that loved us." **Romans 8:37.** So that we will be able to be His body that will build up the Church into His full triumph, even into the fullness of His own stature. That is, "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." **Ephesians 4:13.**

Our Lord retrieved from the enemy everything that was taken from man due to the deceit of the serpent, and what a tragic loss it was! By the slight of tongue, the father of lies caused man to turn everything of worth over to him as well as all the dominions which God has entrusted to him. But, praise God, we now know that this was not the end of the story. The Savior of the world conquered that strong one of darkness and death, and He came back, returning to man that which was stolen plus much more! But will we with extended chests and proud looks brag about who we are and what we will be doing? The answer was given many years ago in one of Ray Prinzing's Daily Overcoming Devotionals:

"Yet God forbid that I should boast about anything or anybody except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, which means that the world is a dead thing to me and I am a dead man to the world.' (Gal. 6:14, Phillips).

"One translation reads, 'Because of that cross my interest in all the attractive things of the world has been killed long ago.' The world can no longer interest you, for you do not belong to its realm, you are not of its kind, your citizenship is in another kingdom, God's. So you are ignored, passing through unnoticed, as if you do not exist. Why then try to seek for its applause?' No need to put on a grandstand play for the dead corpse of the world, it will not rise to applaud you. When He causes the world to be crucified to you, it is time to forget it, and go on to find your new life in Christ, in Him alone 'is fullness of joy, and pleasures for evermore.' (Ps. 16:11).

"But there is also another side to this crucifixion, for 'I am a dead man to the world.' The world's interest in me is over. I am a misfit in their circles, and they do not want to know what God is doing in me. It hurt to be among

acquaintances, perhaps even friends and relatives, and find they had no interest in what was happening in my life. And inwardly I wept, if only they would give a casual interest. Then the Spirit spoke this truth, 'you are dead to the world.' They cannot find interest in you, for to them you are nothing, and why talk to nothing? Yes, they ask about the family, the natural things, discuss the weather, the political action, but your real inner life is foreign to them. But the more we are crucified with Christ, the less it hurts to be ignored, shunned, and esteemed of no report.

“And though we wonder why a stranger we become
To all the world around, and even dead to some,
It is because in Christ, we, too, are crucified,
The world to me, and yes, unto the world I died.
We cannot pine again for things that used to be,
The old must pass away – now is reality.”

— End quote

This is a very real working part of our Lord's cross in our lives that will help to bring us in due time the manifestation of His dominion over all. However, for the present we will be reminded that, "...now we see not yet all things put under Him," although we could be drawing very near to that hour when victory on every front will begin to be openly manifested. I do think many will agree, that we are nearing the end of this present age; for surely we are in the transition period of moving from one age to another. At the dawning of the new age, there will be manifestations of Christ's power and glory, and exponentially, we will find Christ's dominion and power ruling over all, yet in such love and peace. All that He has secured for man while in the unseen *hades* is going to finally become a reality. It will be more than what anyone had ever hoped for or thought or imagined. As Paul said: "... Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." **1 Corinthians 2:9.**

Now that we are seeing a little about what hell is and what it is not, and that Jesus went into its depth and led captivity captive, and also we can and will do the same. let me pose a question: **Who wants to go to hell with me?**

Those of you who know your calling to sonship, which is to be a part of reconciling the world, the whole world, and on both sides of the veil, will be eager to join me. Others, perhaps not.

Hopefully we are seeing more clearly about what hell is and what it is not. For one, we have noticed that Jesus went into hell's depth and led captivity captive. He did not go into a flaming lake of fire that some imagine hell to be, but into the imperceptible realm where all the dead have gone and will go. It was as Ronald Moore in Coldwater, Michigan wrote: "He ministered to those who were disobedient before the days of Noah... 'When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive [**He led a train of ^[5]VANQUISHED FOES**] (former enemies of God) and He bestowed gifts on men' (Amplified Bible). The wicked of those days were born-again, and those now in that realm can and will be ministered to by the manifested sons of God. The gates of Hell did not prevail against Him, just as they will not prevail against His unlimited glorious church when they are manifested."

^[5] Matthew Henry, Commentary on the Holy Bible: "He conquered those who had conquered us—such as sin, the devil, and death."

Those held in that place can be in torment; but it can be otherwise as well. It became clear that the definition of hell does not carry the thought of it being a place of fiery brimstone, a place of torment, or a prison where the devil is the warden with his demonic minions carrying out his evil fantasies. It is simply *the place that hides things or people from view. It is the unseen!*

And those who are called to sonship are very instrumental in reconciling those of that unseen world, as well as those of the seen world on this side of the veil. Therefore, we should be eager to go into either and start leading captivity captive regardless of which side of the grave they are on. The vanquished foes are to be our captives, and for their own good.

We also saw that sinners do not go straight to a tormenting hell when they die, and neither do the saved go straight to the third heaven upon taking their final breath. One of our departed friends wrote something about this, and for the most part, the remainder of this study is devoted to his insight:

Wither Have The Dead Gone?

By Ray Prinzing

Departed Saints Are Still In Hades

That the saints do not go into the highest heavens immediately upon death to the physical body, is borne out by Acts 2:34, "For David is not ascended into the heavens but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool."

This verse is found in the message that Peter was giving unto the people on the day of Pentecost, when he was speaking of the glorious resurrection of the "Son of God." He was preaching of the One who walked those lonely shores of Galilee, the One who was "a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders which God did by Him in the midst of you." [Acts 2:22], the One whom the rulers of the people demanded should be crucified and hung on a tree; but, Peter went on, He arose from the dead, and is now seated at the right hand of God where HE shall sit until His enemies are made His footstool. Yet note - Peter said that "David is not ascended into the heavens."

Now, if Christ, as some suppose, had led out from that unseen world, Hades, all the saints, then surely David would have been released from that realm; but he was not, for that was not His capture. He subdued all that belonged to the realm of the satanic principality and power. David is still in his place—a good place we call Paradise. Might we say that it is a lot better there, than here where we are subjected to our mortal bodies, with all their limitations, pain and travail. Thus, people have dreams and visions of their loved ones in places so beautiful that they are hard to describe in words. MUCH OF THESE DREAMS AND VISIONS ARE IN HARMONY WITH THE SCRIPTURES, for believers are in the unseen world, Hadean Paradise. And furthermore, as God would minister unto a sorrowing heart, and grant such a vision, it would have to be a vision or dream accommodated in the comprehension of the one receiving it, and what they can understand as a place of rest and peace. But this does not mean that we dare base our doctrines upon "visions." We need to be firmly settled in the Word of God; Dreams, visions, experiences, were never meant to be the foundation of our faith. Upon His Word alone we stand! But we do

praise God for the way He can condescend to men of low estate, and express to us in ways and means that we are able to grasp, to give us glimpses of greater realities.

Thus, only Christ hath ascended into the heavens; "Whom the heaven must receive until the time of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began." [Acts 3:21].

Now we turn to John 3:13, and bear in mind this gospel was written by the apostle John after the Christ had ascended to the right hand of God. This one verse we are quoting was not spoken by Christ, but was inserted by John in his record of the time when Jesus was visited by Nicodemus. Quote: "And no man hath ascended up to heaven, BUT HE THAT CAME DOWN FROM HEAVEN, EVEN THE SON OF MAN WHICH IS IN HEAVEN."

No man hath yet ascended into heaven, writes John, but the Lord Jesus Christ, who first came down and took on Himself the form of a servant, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. The same did conquer death and come forth victorious, and now has gone back to heaven again.

This becomes even plainer when we remember that Christ Himself did not ascend into heaven immediately after His physical death, but after His resurrection. Jesus died and went into the Hadean state where He manifested His victory, was acknowledged as SOVEREIGN LORD, and He spoiled principalities and powers. Finishing His work in that Hadean realm, by resurrection power He returned in a new body to this earth, and then went on to appear in heaven. It was as He was returning from Hades, that He appeared first unto Mary in the garden. And when she recognized her Lord, before she could begin to touch Him, "Jesus saith unto her, Touch Me not; for I am not yet ascended to My Father: but go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God." [John 20:17].

How we love those words of Jesus, "My Father, and your Father; My God, and your God." Tell the brethren about it. Tell them that I am going to ascend to our Father, and then I am coming back to see them. Tell them that they should prepare to see Me in the place where I appointed them to go. (See, Matthew 28:16).

"Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you." [John 20:19]. Between the time of being seen first by Mary, and then later by the disciples, we note that Christ ascended to His Father and presented Himself as the Lamb that had been slain, and now is alive forevermore. Then He came back to meet with His disciples to declare to them how that He was indeed LORD OF HADES - having conquered death, proving that one could die and live again by the power of God. Yes, He told them to even touch Him so that they might know it was He.

He stayed a while, - "being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." [Acts 1:3]. But the thought we are after right now, is that Jesus ascended AFTER His resurrection, AFTER conquering death. Thus, we daresay, a resurrection change will have to be wrought out in us before we'll ever stand before the throne of the Father. But this doesn't mean that we shall all have to die physically first, for Paul states that some shall be alive and remain until the time of the end of this age, when He appears again. The Word tells us that Jesus Christ is going to appear, and "we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." [1 John

3:2]. Then you will experience a resurrection change beyond anything that you can comprehend at this present time. We will have a resurrection indeed! It won't bring us out of some grave, if we are not physically dead at that time, but it will release us from this present corruptible body, and He will "change our vile body so that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subject all things unto Himself." [Philippians 3:21].

Weeping and Waiting In Hades

The full harvest of joy cannot come until the "age of the ages" when He makes ALL THINGS NEW. But this does not detract from the fact that Paradise is a blessed state; nor that Tartarus is a place where the wicked are further disciplined and corrected. But after all resurrections, then shall all men enjoy the glorious AGE OF THE AGES, the JUBILEE when all things are restored into His life and glory. However, there are resurrections prior to this ultimate, both for the righteous and unrighteous. Those who are fully surrendered to His Lordship, with all iniquity purged out, shall advance into new dimensions of His life, while those who need still further purging and correction will advance into those operations - some even to go through the "lake of fire" prepared for that specific purpose. But it will be a fuller state, either as greater measures of discipline upon the condition when each comes forth in their respective resurrection.

Nor does the fact that there are orders of resurrection change the complete overall picture. But to be in the first resurrection is to enjoy the good things of God sooner, and a guarantee that "on such the second death hath no power." [Revelation 20:6]. Even so, there is a greater blessing yet involved for those who have part in the "better resurrection," [Hebrews 11:35], for they shall share in the glorious work of reconciling the world to God, that He might be ALL IN ALL.

And the rest-- those who do not come up in this first resurrection, will wait out their time in the "Hadean" state until after the Kingdom age is over - "For the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." [Revelation 20:5]. And we might state that there will be some "weeping" while many wait out that time in the Hadean state, realizing that had they obeyed the truth they would not have had the door into the "kingdom" closed to them. But we can press the point even farther, for those who learn their lessons during that time of "Hadean life", and fully yield unto the Lordship of our Saviour, at the end of those years He will bring them forth - wipe all tears from their eyes, and they too, shall enjoy the life of the age of the ages. For God's purpose is progressive in the life of every man, and the Hadean state does not hinder any of this progress. We'll ponder more of this later.

The Spirit Continues To Work in the Unseen Realm

We know that the Spirit of Christ is daily ministering unto mankind in this present life, for He daily loadeth us with His mercies, goodness, grace, and love. With abundant compassion for all of His creation.

And, we believe that the Spirit of God also continues to work in the next state, where the departed spirits go, for we read of Paul's desire, in Philippians 1:23, "For I am a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ; which is far better..." And yet again, 2 Corinthians 5:8, "Willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."

Some have supposed that as soon as you die, if you are a Christian, that you go to be with Christ, right into the highest heavens where He is, but, we have already pointed out by the

scripture that no man has yet ascended into heaven. But you do go into a greater realm than this one, and there Christ will manifest Himself in an even further working. The release from this bondage of vanity, and this corruptible body, can prove to be just a progressive step, as one moves in yieldedness to the Spirit. Thus Paul desired to go on to the next state, realizing that it would be far better than this one of present travail. Hold with us a moment and we shall add further comment to that thought. But first take a look at the word "depart," which Paul desired to do, for in the Greek it means: TO LOOSE UP (as an anchor). That makes me wonder how much are we anchored to the things of this world's system, so that we have no burning desire to enter into a closer state of union, where our Lord is more real to us?

But we are willing rather to be absent from this body, and present with the Lord. The word "present" is also very interesting. According to Young's Concordance, it means: "to be among one's own people." (the Lord's saints)," IN PARADISE. How much it means to just be released from the filth of this world which man has so corrupted, and to get into that blessed company of Paradise. Quite a thought, isn't it? Perhaps that is what a lot of people feel would be heaven, though perhaps more correctly we could term it a "haven until." For even the Hadean state of Paradise is not the final goal for which we are striving, it is only an intermediate state where the departed spirits dwell until God's own plans and purposes have been wrought out, and then all progresses into that which lies ahead according to His purpose of the ages.

The record concerning Moses gives us more insight into the realm beyond, as a progressive place of development. For in Deuteronomy 32:48-52, we read how Moses was sent up unto Mount Nebo, to "behold the land of Canaan, which I will give unto the children of Israel for a possession." But he himself was not allowed to go in, "Because ye trespassed against Me among the children of Israel at the waters of Meribah..." when he smote the Rock twice, rather than just speaking to the Rock, while the Lord provided the water for the people. Therefore, "thou shalt see the land before thee; but thou shalt not go thither..." Yet about fifteen hundred years later, when Jesus took Peter, James, and John, up into a high mountain, and was transfigured before them,

"Behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with Him." [Matthew 17:3].

Now, we have to conclude one of two things: Either God had lowered the standard and qualification, so that now Moses was able to appear IN THE LAND, or else, there had been a progressive purging in Moses so that now he was duly qualified - brought up to God's standard, and able to appear there. Since God does not change His standard of holiness, we must conclude that MOSES WAS CHANGED. A spiritual work had taken place in him, sin was blotted out - "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered." [Psalm 32:1]. And now Moses was able to appear and commune with Christ concerning His "decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem." [Luke 9:31]. But the point for now, Moses was there, on the mount with our Lord.

We glean a thought from the passage in Revelation 6:9-11, concerning the fifth seal. There we find the souls under the altar (not up with Christ, sharing His glory and throne), and what are they doing? Waiting and crying out, "How long, O lord?" That lets us know that you have emotions in the next world, with the departed spirits....They...questioned how long it would be before the end would come to their waiting there...and it reads on, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth." ...and they were ministered unto, for white robes were given unto them. New degrees of righteousness, deeper

love, more forgiveness, ever more to be like HIM. Though they were anxious for some more progress, perhaps even longing for resurrection's dawning hour, they were told to rest yet for a little season; for there were still some others that would become martyrs. However, to cheer them up, to bless them, they were ministered unto, becoming evidence of the Spirit's enrichment in the Unseen realm....

Brother Eby also said something of the fifth seal which merits notice at this point:

"We are the souls under the heavenly, spiritual altar who are crying out to the Lord, asking Him to bring forth true and righteous judgment, to vindicate through us and because of us, the mighty work He has wrought in our lives in preparation for the glorious manifestation of our sonship. Most all Bible students have misunderstood the cry of these souls from under the altar because of the faulty translation of the Greek word *ekdikeo* as *avenge* — that is, *retaliate with vengeance*. The first and primary meaning of the word, however, is '**validate**.' In every language words carry various shades of meaning, they do not generally mean just one thing in one way. Let us always remember that it is usage that best determines the meaning of a word!

"Now let me ask you. Have you ever felt yourself to be in the beautiful presence of Christ? Have you ever seen anyone in the spirit of the Christ who so loved the world, who gave Himself for the world, who reconciled the world, have you seen anyone in the spirit of that Christ threaten their tormentors with judgment, wrath, and personal revenge? Does the Christ who prayed in the agony of Calvary, '*Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do,*' now threaten vicious retaliation against those who oppose and persecute us? The very thought is an absurdity! It is Jesus Himself who taught us to love our enemies, bless them that hate us, and pray for them which persecute us. That is the spirit and law of the kingdom! And now — shall those whose self-life has finally been completely slain within them by the very testimony of Jesus Christ pray for Him to ***avenge their blood*** on them that dwell in the earth realm? **I don't think so!** In the light of these great truths it should be clear to every spiritual mind that the Greek word *ekdikeo* must carry here its primary meaning of **VINDICATE**.

"Let us now consider some synonyms of the word 'vindicate.' It means to exonerate, justify, substantiate, confirm, authenticate, attest, and validate. Vindication is the proof of the value of ones innocence, cause or correctness. Vindication is furthermore a validation! What these souls under the altar are crying out for is not revenge, but for God to make the price they have paid worthwhile, to show to those who dwell in the earth realm the true value and meaning of their lives, to validate their call, attainment, and place in God **BY MANIFESTING THROUGH THEM THE POWER AND GLORY OF CHRIST TO DELIVER AND TRANSFORM CREATION**. 'Validate our *blood* on them' is the heartfelt cry of their hearts! Blood stands for life, for the life is in the blood. ***Validate our lives on them*** — let there be a transforming manifestation and ministry of life out from us by which all men will see and know that we have paid this price to truly be sons of our Father in order to be the salvation of God unto all the ends of the earth!" — End quote and continuing with "***Whither Have The Dead Gone***":

...But there is still further proof in the Word of God as we turn to 1 Peter 3:19-20, "By which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometimes were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water."

1 Peter 4:6, "For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit."

So again we see there has been quite a lot of activity in the Hadean state. When Christ died upon the cross, and went into the unseen world, He went to both parts, Tartarus and Paradise, for He said to the believing man on the cross, "This day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise," but He also entered the strong man's domain and broke his grasp upon the souls of men, then making an open shew to all of His triumph. He was able to declare Himself as the Lamb of God, slain for the sins of the whole creation, and now the great Redeemer, the One who would ULTIMATELY bring every one and everything back into harmony with the Godhead again.

Therefore we can state-- Christ not only manifests in this life of His love and mercy, but also in the next realm. And of a truth, we believe that after the great times of judgment have passed, and all sin is conquered completely, then in radiant glory God will reign supreme in the age of the ages, while we fellowship with Him in that blessed harmony. So we see that the present Hadean state is only a step toward greater manifestations of glory, when we shall come sinlessly into the age of the ages.

Life in the Unseen World

Physical death therefore can only separate us from an earthly body, we die out to this life, but we become more alive to the next state, the Hadean state. This next state will be one of two things, either becoming a place for further discipline, the process of judgment, or it can become a place of further growth and development into spiritual perfection.

No doubt many of those in Tartarus will have learned their lesson by the hour of the judgment before God's great white throne, and they will have accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour, and won't need any further discipline. Others will need additional and severer correction, and so will pass on to the lake-of-fire experience for their additional purgings.

The day of Christ cannot fully consummate until that hour when all has been subdued and fully reconciled to God, so, until that time when the Godhead shall become all in all, Christ is still the Mighty Saviour, yesterday, today, and for the ages. And, "He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." [Philippians 1:6]. Yes, He that has begun a good work in you will continue until it is brought to perfection, and a death to the physical body cannot thwart progress, since Christ holds the keys of death and hades, and HE is Victor over them both.

1 Peter 4:6, "For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead..." This word "preached" is the same as the word used when Paul declared, "We preach Christ crucified..." Thus, also, the good news was heralded to those spirits in prison. For what purpose? That they might be judged according to men in the flesh. There was a judging taking place which He preached. What a revival that must have been - and it was successful, for we read that while they were judged according to the flesh, "they were QUICKENED according to God in the spirit." So, you say, that must be a doctrine of second chance? NEVER! Salvation is never by chance, not first chance or second chance, it is only, and always, by the grace of GOD. God's gifts are never by chance. It was not chance that nailed Him to the cross. It was LOVE that foreordained the whole plan of redemption, and is now working it out to its glorious completion.

But consider also, though love will eventually subdue and conquer all, what a heat and fire some will have to endure before they finally yield to the love of the Saviour. Does not the same thing portray itself even in people today? The same boys that never darkened a church door in peace time suddenly find themselves crying out for mercy from God while they huddle in a foxhole on the battle front. What brought all of this about? Might we infer that the Lord brought a little pressure to bear on them, until they would turn and surrender to Him? Truly we serve a God who has specially designed His "ways and means committees" that can gain their attention, put a bend in their pathway, and draw them unto Himself. And we find that He is a mite difficult to ignore, when He is applying the pressure. He said He would "Draw all men unto Me." [John 12:32]. The Greek word for "draw" is "helko", which Strong's Concordance gives to mean: TO DRAW. Resistance might make for dragging, but surrender will come, and then we are simply drawn unto Him. "Draw me, we will run after Thee." [Song of Solomon 1:4]. Praise God!

Believers Become Ministering Spirits

"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them. [Revelation 14:13]. Those who "die in the Lord" obviously refer to those believers which have yielded their life to Christ, their will is His, and they acknowledge Him as sovereign LORD of their life. Total allegiance, they belong to Him! Then there are two words to be noted: labours" and "works," for they rest from their labours, but their works do follow them. The Greek word for "labours" used here is "kopos" meaning: a beating, wearying out work; and bespeaks of the toil of our earthly pain and travail. While the word "works" is "ergo" which means: acts, deeds, doings; and bespeaks of one's ministry as well. Thus we see that physical death releases us from all the toil and pain of the body, but the true call upon us, that ministry which He has imparted to us, FOLLOWS US into the realms beyond, where, at His direction, we might continue to serve Him, in a greater expression, to His glory.

Hebrews 1:14 speaks of His messengers, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?"

As John received his tremendous revelation concerning things to come, "When I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel (messenger) which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow servant, and OF THY BRETHREN the prophets, and of them which keep the saying of this book: worship God." [Revelation 22:8-9].

We know that we are "compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses..." [Hebrews 12:1], those whom the Lord uses to encourage and strengthen us. There is that blessed communion and fellowship of the saints - however, we do not worship them, nor idolize them, for we would look only "unto Jesus the Author and the Finisher of our faith," [Hebrews 12:2], and let Him provide the help we need through whomever He chooses. Yet it is a tremendous comfort to know that these godly men and women who have gone on before us, are also used in our upbuilding, that we might follow on to know the Lord in His fullness.

Conclusion

We are now living in a time of pressure unparalleled in all history. Yet may the Lord use this to draw many closer to Himself, before more heat is turned on, more pressure applied. May He speedily perfect that which concerneth us. Yet if it so be, that He does call us to Himself by the way of the grave, we know that this is not a hindrance to our progressive development into His likeness, for beyond the veil the work continues. We know not the hour of His appearing - it may be soon enough that many of us will not have to enter that Hadean realm, if we are looking for Him, waiting for Him. He will appear unto His own, and change their mortal bodies, fashion them anew like unto His glorious body, bringing them into immortality, incorruption, the fullness of LIFE. He holds the keys of both death and Hades - HE is conqueror over all, may He indeed be "LORD OF ALL" in our personal life, so that we might enter into the next age with Him, rejoicing in His purpose and plan for the Kingdom.

However, if He tarries, and we, or our loved ones do go by the way of the grave, we know that this does not hinder our progression, and when He does return, He will bring all of us with Him, and together we shall serve Him. Truly, IN HIM IS LIFE, and we need not fear death any longer. Amen!

THE RADIANCE OF HIS LIGHT

By Ray Prinzing

Beyond the veil of mortal frame
The radiance of His light,
Doth now the glorious truth proclaim
He conquers all our night.
And the shadows of the present
Can never dim the view,
Since Christ, the veil in two did rent,
And light came shining through.
And so although we walk the path
That leads beyond the veil,
We rest secure in Him who hath
The power to prevail.
For Christ, the Light illumines the way
Of holiness so pure,
Empowering us to take the prey
Which darkness would obscure.
And so it matters not even now

Which side the veil we stand,
The Light eternal doth endow
His own to understand.
And walking in the way He leads
Grows brighter day by day,
Since light the darkness supersedes, Forevermore to stay.
And if it be that Paradise
Shall be my stepping-stone,
In faith I'll rest until the hour
I stand before His throne.

— End quote

We pray that **To Where Shall The Grass And Flower Fall?** has served to bless and brought a greater understanding to all who read it.

Some may still fail to see that hell can be either bliss or torment. We know, of course, that the religious persuasion of “*HELL*” is so ingrained into our minds that it is almost impossible to see that is in itself neutral. It is like a vessel made of sand that can hold a number of things. The vessel of sand is simply a container, a holding place, a retainer and has no will or power of itself. It is subject to whoever has power over it, and the *Lord* of that pitcher can fill it with things like cool drinking water, muddy water, sand, food scraps, salt, pepper, flour, or anything else the owner chooses. Or it can be left empty. Regardless of its contents, or lack thereof, the vessel can be called *hell* or *hades*; for its holdings cannot be seen. However, if the vessel of sand was heated to 3,200 degrees Fahrenheit or more, its sides will become transparent glass, and everything inside thereafter can be seen by all. Therewith, the vessel would no longer be called *hell/hades*. Everything is seen.

And so it is with a spiritual revelation, the manifestation of the sons of God, or the resurrection. Each can reveal everything hidden in the *hades*.

Aren't we glad that death and hell are cast into the lake of fire so *there will be no more death, no more tears, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, and all the former things pass away as all things are made new in that wonderworking lake that burns with judging, purifying, consuming fiery, transforming brimstone—Godfire?* Isn't this a much greater ending than Jesus losing 98% of the 100% of humanity that was given to Him to eternal torment in a manmade, fictitious hell?

Yes we are glad! We are so very glad! So be it according to Him and His living word of truth that makes us free!

Elwin R. Roach

To Where Shall The Grass And Flower Fall?

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