

The Pathfinder

#265.15

To Where Shall The Grass And Flower Fall?

(Part 1)

Hades — The Unseen

Leading Captivity Captive

“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

^[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*

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 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> :

“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 Corinthians 15:55*
- 2) “And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to **hell**...” *Matthew 11:23*.

- 3) "...upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of **hell** shall not prevail against it." *Matthew 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." *Revelation 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..." *Revelation 6:8*.
- 10) "...and death and **hell** delivered up the dead which were in them..." *Revelation 20:13*.
- 11) "And death and **hell** were cast into the lake of fire." *Revelation 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. Even so, until next time, be blessed by the riches of God’s Kingdom that resides right now in each of us!

To be continued...

Elwin R. Roach

The Pathfinder • PO Box 4004 • Alamogordo NM 88311-4004