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Jesus' Death, The Resurrection, and Everything In Between

Jesus died for the sins of the whole world on the Passover Day and HE took away the death penalty from us.

Romans 6:23 (NKJV)

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

1 Corinthians 15:55–57 (NKJV)

“O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?” The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Revelation 1:18 (NKJV)

I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.

Jesus never made a comment about the having keys of death until He was resurrected.

What is Hell?

The Greek word used here for “hell” is “GEENA” (equals “GE-HENNA”) (Strong’s Concordance), and it represents the Hebrew word “GE-HINNOM,” which means “the valley of Tophet” (Vine’s Expository Dictionary).

Isaiah 30:33 (NLT)

Topheth—the place of burning—has long been ready for the Assyrian king; the pyre is piled high with wood. The breath of the Lord, like fire from a volcano, will set it ablaze.

Jeremiah 7:31 & 19:6 & 14 (NLT)

They have built pagan shrines at Topheth, the garbage dump in the valley of Ben-Hinnom, and there they burn their sons and daughters in the fire.

So beware, for the time is coming, says the Lord, when this garbage dump will no longer be called Topheth or the valley of Ben-Hinnom, but the Valley of Slaughter.

Then Jeremiah returned from Topheth, the garbage dump where he had delivered this message, and he stopped in front of the Temple of the Lord. He said to the people there.

This is a valley just outside Jerusalem where fires burned refuse continually. Israelite kings also reared up altars in this valley and burned their children to the pagan god Molech. This received harsh rebukes and prophecies of judgment were spoken by Prophet Jeremiah in 7:31–33 and 19:6–14, and therefore the valley of Hinnom began to symbolize eternal judgment and damnation, or hell.

GEHENA is used twelve times in the New Testament (Matthew 5:22, 29–30, 10:28, 18:9, 23:15, 33; Mark 9:43, 45, 47; Luke 12:5; and James 3:6). Jesus used the term eleven times, and ten of those times were in reference to eternal punishment of the wicked.

Jesus referred to it being a place of fire (Matthew 18:9; Mark 9:43–48; and Luke 16:24), and where the worm would not die (Mark 9:44, 46, and 48), and a place of torment (Luke 16:24–25). Jesus also taught in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus that there is no escape from hell once a person has been placed there (Luke 16:26). The Greek word used for “hell” in that parable, as well as nine other times in the New Testament (Matthew 11:23, 16:18; Luke 10:15, 16:23; Acts 2:27, 31; Revelation 1:18, 6:8, and 20:13–14), is “HADES,” which means “the region of departed spirits of the lost” (Vine’s Expository Dictionary). It corresponds directly with the Old Testament Hebrew word “SH@’OWL” (or Sheol) (Vine’s Expository Dictionary) that has been translated as follows:

- “hell” in Psalms 9:17
- “the grave” in Genesis 37:35, and
- “the pit” in Numbers 16:30 and 33.

Jesus passed the gap and preached the Gospel to the people in bondage in Hades.

Luke 16:26 (NKJV)

And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.’

Luke 16:22 (NKJV)

So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s bosom. The rich man also died and was buried.

Abraham's bosom is a symbolic term designating a place of comfort for the righteous dead. Luke 23:43 refers this as "paradise." It was located in the heart of the earth (Matthew 12:40 and Ephesians 4:9) in the same region as hell was located, which is where the ungodly dead go. The Old Testament referred to this entire region as "Sheol."

Jesus preached to the people in the first world, seen between Genesis 2 and 8.

1 Peter 3:18–20 (NKJV)

For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water.

Genesis 9 to Malachi is the second World; people who were called saints are met by Jesus. Some of them were raised to life.

Matthew 27:52–53 (NKJV)

and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many.

Hebrews 9:14–15 (NKJV)

how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

Psalm 16:9–10

Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will rest in hope. For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.

In between the crucifixion and the resurrection, Jesus went into the heart of the earth for three days and three nights.

Acts 2:25–32, 25 (NKJV)

For David says concerning Him: 'I foresaw the Lord always before my face, For He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken. Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad; Moreover my flesh also will rest in hope. For You will not leave my soul in Hades, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. You have made known to me the ways of life; You will make me full of joy in Your presence.' "Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses.

The above verses show very us clearly that this was actually hell that Jesus descended into. The word used for "hell" in Acts 2:27 corresponds directly with the Old Testament Hebrew word "SH@'OWL" (or Sheol) (Vine's Expository Dictionary).

Sheol was divided into two parts, one part being a place of torment and the other a place of blessing, with a great gulf between the two (Luke 16:26). Jesus led the spirits of the godly dead out of this region at His

resurrection (comparing Psalms 68:18 with Ephesians 4:8–10), leaving only the wicked dead in this place of torment, which we call hell. At the last judgment, death and hell will deliver up the dead that are in them, and then they will be cast into a lake of fire where they will be tormented forever (Revelation 20:11–15).

Jesus met and witnessed to those under the new covenant who believed.

Luke 23:40–43 (NKJV)

But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, "Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong." Then he said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom." And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."

Heaven has three parts – the lower, middle and higher.

Hebrews 4:14 (NKJV)

Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.

Ephesians 4:10 (NKJV)

He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.

2 Corinthians 12:2–4 (NKJV)

I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago—whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows—such a one was caught up to the third heaven. And I know such a man—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows—how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

The Hebrew word for “heavens” is *shamayim*, which is in plural form, meaning “heights,” “elevations” (Genesis 1:1 and 2:1).

Psalm 102:25

Of old You laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands.

The Bible teaches us that in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth; he did not make another heaven after this time. The phrase “heavens and earth” are used to indicate the whole universe (Genesis 1:1; Jeremiah 23:24; Acts 17:24). According to the Jewish tradition from the Bible, there were three heavens. All are attributed to God as the creator.

There are several other words used in the Hebrew – the word *marom* is also used (Psalms 68:18; 93:4; 102:19, etc.) as equivalent to *shamayim*. Hebrew *galgal*, literally a “wheel,” is rendered “heaven” in Psalms 77:18 (RSV, “whirlwind”). Hebrew *shahak* is translated “sky” (Deuteronomy 33:26; Job 37:18; Psalms 18:11), plural “clouds” (Job 35:5; 36:28; Psalms 68:34, “heavens”), referring to the firmament. The first being our immediate atmosphere, the second is outer space as far as it stretches, and the third is the place where God himself dwells – what Jesus called the “Father’s house.”

First Heaven: The firmament, Earth's atmosphere – which is the immediate sky, where we have the “fowls of the heaven” (Genesis 2:19; 7:3,23; Psalms 8:8, etc.), “the eagles of heaven” (Lamentations 4:19), is our atmosphere that surrounds the earth.

In Genesis 1:14 God then said, “*Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night.*” The first heaven consists of the clouds and the atmosphere, the heavens above us, until we come to the stars.

Psalms 78: 23

Yet He had commanded the clouds above, and opened the doors of heaven, had rained down manna on them to eat, and given them of the bread of heaven.

The expression doors of heaven or windows of heaven involved the firmament, our atmosphere. Descriptions used of this heaven are from where God would provide food or rain. Genesis 7:11–12 – “*the windows of heaven were opened. And the rain was on the earth forty days and forty nights.*” Genesis 8:2 – “*The fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven were also stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained.*” Malachi 3:10 – *says the LORD of hosts, “If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it”* – in reference to an abundant harvest of crops.

Deuteronomy 11:17 (NASB)

Or the anger of the Lord will be kindled against you, and He will shut up the heavens so that there will be no rain and the ground will not yield its fruit; and you will perish quickly from the good land which the Lord is giving you.

Deuteronomy 28:12 (NASB)

The Lord will open for you His good storehouse, the heavens, to give rain to your land in its season and to bless all the work of your hand; and you shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow.

Second Heaven: Outer Space, the starry heavens (Deuteronomy 17:3; Jeremiah 8:2; Matthew 24:29). The second heaven is the starry heavens, where our atmosphere ends. It is the heaven in which the sun, moon, and stars are fixed in the orbit. The stars are seemingly endless and the distance between all of them is staggering.

Psalms 19:1 (NKJV)

The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork.

Even though the scientists have taken thousands of years to discover what lies beyond, the Bible, from the beginning, has always spoken of its amazing truths and facts. The scientists are still fascinated with its amazingly intricate design.

The firmament, or expanse, *raqiya`* – “*In which the sun, moon, stars, and constellations are fixed*” (Genesis 1:17), and God placed them in the firmament of heaven.

Isaiah 40:22 (NKJV)

It is He who sits above the circle of the earth, And its inhabitants are like grasshoppers, Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, And spreads them out like a tent to dwell in.

Psalm 19:4,6 (NLT)

Yet their message has gone throughout the earth, and their words to all the world. God has made a home in the heavens for the sun. The sun rises at one end of the heavens and follows its course to the other end. Nothing can hide from its heat.

Jeremiah 8:2 (NKJV)

They shall spread them before the sun and the moon and all the host of heaven, which they have loved and which they have served and after which they have walked, which they have sought and which they have worshiped. They shall not be gathered nor buried; they shall be like refuse on the face of the earth.

Third Heaven: This is where God and the holy angels dwell. It is called “The heaven of heavens” (Deuteronomy 10:14; 1 Kings 8:27; Psalms 115:16, 148:4). “*The heavens, even the highest heaven, cannot contain you*” (1 Kings 8:27). *The One enthroned in heaven laughs; The LORD scoffs at them* (Psalm 2:4).

The third heaven is beyond the space and stars, where no man has ever seen with a telescope. This heaven is the dwelling place of God, as Paul writes, the region where God dwells.

2 Corinthians 12:4 (NIV)

was caught up to paradise and heard inexpressible things, things that no one is permitted to

The word “paradise” (paradeisos) (NT:3808) occurs but three times in the New Testament – Luke 23:43; 2 Corinthians 12:4; Revelation 2:7. It occurs often in the Septuagint, as the translation of the word garden –

Genesis 2:8–10,15–16, 3:1–3,8,16,23–24, 13:10; Numbers 24:6; Isaiah 51:3; Ezekiel 28:13, 31:8–9; Joel 2:3. And also in Isaiah 1:30; Jeremiah 29:5; and of the word *pardeec* (OT:6508) in Nehemiah 2:8; Ecclesiastes 2:5; Song of Solomon 2:13.

Hebrews 4:14 – *“Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens”* (Jesus ascended to the place he was before he became man).

Hebrews 7:26 – *“For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens,”* meaning He is more important than the dwelling place of God and angels. Hebrews 8:1 – *As our high Priest, he “is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens.”*

The word “heavens” is also used for visions or a spiritual event. Stephen said, *“Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!”* (Acts 7:56). Mark 1:10, when Jesus was baptized, *“He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove.”*

The term heaven is used metaphorically in Isaiah 14:13,14; “doors of heaven” – Psalms 78:23; heaven “shut” – 1 Kings 8:35; “opened” – Ezekiel 1:1; the “kingdom of heaven” – Matthew 25:1, James 2:5; the “eternal kingdom” – 2 Peter 1:11; the “eternal inheritance” – 1 Peter 1:4, Hebrews 9:15; the “better country” – Hebrews 11:14, 16.

Heaven is the abode of the righteous who are in possession of “everlasting life,” “an eternal weight of glory” (2 Corinthians 4:17), where they are delivered from all sufferings forever, a deliverance from all evils (2 Corinthians 5:1,2). Christ calls it his “Father’s house” (John 14:2), also “paradise” (Luke 23:43). It is the location of “the Heavenly Jerusalem” before it comes to earth (Galatians 4:26; Hebrews 12:22; Revelation 3:12).

Heaven is the inheritance of all believers where there is “fullness of joy,” everlasting blessedness. The “place of our inheritance where Jesus went ahead to ‘prepare’ for us that we may be with him, where he is” (John 14:2).

The Obvious Questions

Where is the Paradise now?

It has been taken up and it is not so clear in the scriptures.

Did people repent when Jesus preached?

We don’t know that clearly; there are no scriptures relating to this specifically. However, the scriptures do mention that Jesus preached to them.

What happened to those who are dead in faith?

After Jesus preached, they have been freed from their captivity, meaning they are no longer under the control of Satan.

What about death means to me today?

Hebrews 2:15, *Jesus did this to make us free from the fear of death. We no longer need to be chained to this fear.* (NLV)

What will happen at the second coming?

Those who are dead in Christ will have the resurrection of their bodies from the earth. They will be raised to new life in their bodies – glorious incorruptible bodies. Then, those who are in faith in the Lord Jesus will be taken up to heaven. And along with Christ rule and reign for 1000 years until the third coming of Jesus for judgment.

What will happen to you?

1Thessalonians 4:13-18 (NLT)

And now, dear brothers and sisters, we want you to know what will happen to the believers who have died so you will not grieve like people who have no hope. ¹⁴For since we believe that Jesus died and was raised to life again, we also believe that when Jesus returns, God will bring back with him the believers who have died. ¹⁵We tell you this directly from the Lord: We who are still living when the Lord returns will not meet him ahead of those who have died. ¹⁶For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God. First, the Christians who have died will rise from their graves. ¹⁷Then, together with them, we who are still alive and remain on the earth will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Then we will be with the Lord forever. ¹⁸So encourage each other with these words.

The assurance comes from knowing the verse 14 as your reality!

Do you know Jesus as a living God who came and died for you?

Is Jesus Lord of your life?

We pray and bless you to have an awesome resurrection Sunday! Let the Risen Lord live through you every day of your life.