

WHERE DO PEOPLE GO WHEN THEY DIE?

Where a person went when they died varies between the Old and New Testaments (There may even be an exception(s) in the Old Testament).

We shall look at:

- Paradise
- Heaven (The Third Heaven)
- Abraham's Bosom
- Prison
- Hell
- Pit
- Bottomless Pit
- Lake of Fire

Paradise

Is found only 3 times in Scripture (Luke 23:43; II Corinthians 12:4; Revelation 2:7) All references to "paradise" are found solely in the New Testament. The Bible declares that the wisdom of the Holy Ghost is "comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (I Corinthians 2:13), therefore we can come to the conclusion that paradise must be referring to the THIRD Heaven.

Heaven (The Third Heaven)

The different levels of the heavens are clearly established in II Corinthians 12:1-7. The context of this passage denotes that Paul received revelations of the Lord in the Third Heaven. We know that Jesus Christ is seated at the right hand of God and that to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord (II Corinthians 5:6-8). Also Philippians 1:22-24 tells that that to not abide in the flesh is to be with the Lord which is far better. Amen! Therefore, when the believer dies TODAY he is present with the Lord. (See also Hebrews 12:22-24 and Revelation 21:2, 9-10)

Abraham's Bosom

Luke 16:19-31

Where the righteous under the Old Testament went after they died. The location thereof is IN the earth (I Samuel 28:7-19; Luke 16:26) They did not go to the Third heaven for several reasons. The way into the Holiest of Holies was not yet made manifest (Matthew 27:50-53; Hebrews 9).

Prison

Prison is a place where the dead apparently went. Location is within the earth. Since no one could enter into heaven (with some exceptions: Elijah, Enoch, Moses?) until after the death of the testator. Samuel, the prophet of God, ascended from out of the earth as we just read. However prison may be referring to both Abraham's bosom (as only called in the NT) and hell.

Bring my soul out of prison (Psalm 142:7)

Satan's prisoners (Isaiah 14:12-19)

The host on high and kings of earth punished and put into prison (Isaiah 24:16-23)

Messiah to bring out prisoners from prison (Isaiah 42:6-7); tell them to go forth out of prison (Isaiah 49:7-9); the opening of the prison to those bound (Isaiah 61:1).

Satan bound in prison for 1,000 years (Revelation 20:1-7)

Jesus preached to the spirits in prison (I Peter 3:18-20; 4:5-6). Compare John 5:24-29.

Hell and the Pit and the Bottomless Pit

Hell is a place in the earth (Isaiah 14:9). There is literal fire there (Mt 18:9) and the fire is never quenched and the worm dieth not (Mark 9:43-44). You are tormented there (Luke 16:23). Our Saviour Jesus Christ went to hell for our sakes (Psalm 16:8-11; Acts 2:22-31; Mt 12:39-40). The angels that sinned were cast down into hell until the time of judgment (II Peter 2:4).

The Pit seems to be the same as hell (Ezekiel 26:20; 31:16; Isaiah 38:17-19)

The Bottomless Pit appears to be the same as hell and pit (Revelation 9:1-2)

The beast ascends from hell? (Revelation 11:7; 17:8; 20:1-3)

The Lake of Fire

“Lake of fire” appears only four times in Scripture (Revelation 19:20; 20:10-15). Death and hell are cast into the lake of fire (Rev 20:14). Whosoever was not found in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire (Rev 20:15) This is the final place for all those that have not be “saved” through the ages. The fallen angels final habitation is the lake of fire. They are in hell reserved until the time of judgment. Paul says we shall judge angels (I Cor 6:1-3). Everlasting fire was not made for man, but for the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41)

Exceptions

- Enoch was taken by God, it does not say he died (Genesis 5:21-24, Hebrews 11:5-5) Enoch is a type of the body of Christ. Notice that Enoch was taken prior to the flood that destroyed the earth, even before the days of Noah. Remember what Jesus said (Matthew 24:37-39). What happened in the days of Noah, it will be the same before the Son of man comes. In the days of Noah the sons of God (the angels that sinned) were come down unto the daughters of men, so during the tribulation or at the end thereof the stars of heaven shall fall unto the earth (Mt 24:29-31; Revelation 6:12-13; 12:4) Just as Enoch was taken prior to God saving a small remnant of the earth (Noah and his family), so will God take us, the church at the day of Christ before the great day and wrath of God Almighty. In a sense, Noah could possibly represent those remnant/elect Jews during the tribulation.
- Elijah was taken up to heaven (II Kings 2:11)
- What about Moses? Read Deuteronomy 34:4-6; Jude 1:9; Mt 17:1-5; Zechariah 4:11-14 and Revelation 11:3-6 and discuss. His body was resurrected. Remember he appeared in glory with Jesus and Elijah?