

PRESENT TRUTH

A Teaching Newsletter of Lifestream Teaching Ministries

Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth. ([2 Peter 1:12 KJV](#))

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Spiritual War Series

The Kingdom of Darkness Part 3

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Recap: Previous Lessons

The Spiritual War Series deals with the kingdom of darkness: its origins, its functions, its judgment, its defeat and final demise. In previous issues of "Present Truth", we determined that the kingdom of darkness started in the heart of Lucifer, one of God's created beings. Lucifer became Satan when he rebelled against God's order and fell. Prior to Lucifer's fall he ruled some portion of the universe for God and performed functions associated with the purpose for which he was created. The earth existed prior to his fall and was most likely the base of operations from which Lucifer exercised dominion for God. He defiled his sanctuary by operating a whispering smear campaign against the Lord that seduced a third of God's angels that are now referred to as Satan's angels (Rev. 12:7-9). God judged Lucifer's rebellion and the results of that judgment devastated the entire domain for which Lucifer was responsible. This occurred between the first and second verses of Genesis. Little is said of this because the Bible is primarily a history of man and only gives us glimpses into the eternal realm. Beginning with verse two of Genesis, God rebuilds the earth as a habitat that is suitable or appropriate for man. It appears that the current environment of earth is quite different from the previous environment (before Adam). The vegetable Eden for which Adam was responsible is very different from the mineral Eden that Lucifer occupied (Ezekiel 28:13).

The previous issue dealt with the two categories of beings that came under judgment with Lucifer: the angels that believed Lucifer's smear campaign against God and the created beings who occupied the domain that was Lucifer's responsibility. We determined that the fallen angels began to serve Satan's purposes in the heavenlies and that the dis-embodied spirits of the creatures that were destroyed when Lucifer's domain was judged became the demonic spirits which are loose in the world today. While we wrestle or struggle with the fallen angels (principalities and powers) we simply cast out demons when we encounter them in people.

This issue of “Present Truth” will look at territory, habitat, and locations of the principal players of the Kingdom of Darkness.

Headquarters for the Kingdom of Darkness

The Scriptures tell us that the principalities and powers that we wrestle against are in the heavenlies (Eph. 6:12). The word is plural, implying more than one “heaven”. The Old Testament refers to the throne room of God as the “heaven of heavens” (Neh.9:6). There are also references to “heaven and the highest heavens”: Deu. 10:14; 1Ki. 8:27; Psa. 115:16; Psa. 148:4. Paul said that he knew a man that was caught up to the third heaven (2 Cor. 12:2). We must conclude then that there are at least three heavens with the highest being the “heaven of heavens” or the throne room of God.

Since there is a “third heaven” there must also be a first and second heaven. The first heaven is probably the physical heaven that we see when we look upward. The third heaven we have already identified as the throne room of God. That leaves us with the “second heaven” or middle heaven as un-identified. Let's see if we can reach any conclusions about it.

Jesus told us that He saw Satan fall from heaven:

Luke 10:18 NASB

(18) And He said to them, **"I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning.**

Based on our previous discussion, we can conclude that the heaven from which Satan fell was the “heaven of heavens”, i.e., the throne room of God. This probably occurred when God's judgment fell on Satan's rebellion. The real question is, “Where did he fall to?”

He didn't fall to earth because that doesn't happen until the twelfth chapter of Revelation.

Revelation 12:9 NASB

(9) And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

Revelation tells us the actions of Satan after he is thrown down to the earth and they are quite dramatic and seem to be a prelude to the close of this age. So, where is Satan now?

I believe that when Jesus saw him as lightning fall from heaven, He was referring to the ousting of Lucifer from the throne room of God, the “heaven of heavens”. Satan then took up residence in the “middle or second heaven” where he began to establish the headquarters for the Kingdom of Darkness. The fallen angels that occupied the now fallen principalities of the heavenlies began to function in a manner that furthered the purposes and strategies of Satan rather than those of our Lord.

Ephesians 6:12 NASB

(12) For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.

What about Hell?

There is a popular belief that the Devil is in Hell and is currently ruling over the demons who are also headquartered in Hell. This is totally untrue. We have this idea because of the pagan beliefs that came into the Church during and after the time of Constantine, when the visible Church became a political entity and a way of unifying conquered nations. The so-called church received any and all without the need of a new birth and pagan beliefs were introduced under a thinly disguised Christian veil. These pagan beliefs included an underworld of the dead who were continually tortured by demons who were ruled by the Devil as the King of the demons. Today, this concept is heavily exploited by Hollywood and has become the defacto “truth” for many. However, it is not in accord with the Scriptures and is, therefore, a deception. According to the Scriptures, the Devil is not in Hell, has never been in Hell, and will never be in Hell.

To explore what the Scriptures say, let's first look at the original words and how they are translated. Our English word, hell, is from the Anglo-Saxon, *hel* or *helle*, and means “a hidden place”. Its root is the Anglo-Saxon word *helan*, to hide. Now, we should add to its meaning the attributes of the words that are used in the Scriptures and eliminate from our minds the traditions and pagan concepts that have become attached to it.

In the New Testament there are two Greek words that are translated with our English word, *hell*. They are *geena* or *gehenna* and *hades*. (Actually, there is a third one, *tartaroo* or *tartarus*, which is only used once in 2 Peter 2:4. This will be discussed later in this teaching series.)

(1) *Geena* appears in the Scriptures 12 times and is always translated as “hell”. Examples are Matt. 5:22, 29, 30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15, 33; Mark 9:43, 45, 47; Luke 12:5; James 3:6.

(a) *Gehenna* (Greek = *geena*) is the transliteration of the Hebrew word, *Gai' Hinnom*, which means valley of Hinnom. This was a valley with perpetual fires burning the garbage and other refuse from Jerusalem. It is used symbolically to signify the lake of fire in Revelation as the final abode of all of the wicked angels, demons, and men.

(2) *Hades* appears in the Scriptures 11 times and is translated as “hell” ten times and “grave” once in 1 Cor. 15:55 (KJV; NASB = death). Examples of the word rendered as “hell”: Matt. 11:23; 16:18; Luke 10:15; 16:23; Acts 2:27, 31; Rev. 1:18; 6:8; 20:13, 14.

The Greek word *hades* is equal to the Hebrew word *sheol*. How do we know this? The Holy Spirit used the Greek word, *hades*, in Acts 2:27 and 31, which is a quote from Psalm 16:10 where the Hebrew word, *sheol*, is used. This tells us that we should not understand *hades* with any of the Greek traditions attached, but should understand it as meaning the same things that *sheol* meant to the Hebrews.

In the King James bible *sheol* appears 65 times and is translated “*hell*” 30 times, “*grave*” 31 times, “*graves*” 1 time, and “*pit*” 3 times (the NASB doesn't translate it at all, it is simply rendered as *sheol* at each occurrence). We don't have an English word that truly fits the meaning of *sheol* even though in the KJV “grave” is the most prevalent. When we say “grave” we mean the burial place of the body. The Hebrew meaning is closer to “the state of death” and doesn't relate to the physical body. The Hebrew word for grave that corresponds to our English word for

grave is “*keber*, or *bor*”, which means “a grave”.

My understanding of the way the Hebrews understood this is that the body went to a grave (*kebor*) and the non-physical part of us went to *sheol*. This would indicate that sheol had two compartments: a place for the wicked and a place for the righteous. This is borne out by Jesus when He told of the rich man and the beggar. (Notice that Jesus did not refer to this as a parable but as actual fact.)

Luke 16:22-26 NASB

(22) "Now the poor man died and was carried away by the angels to Abraham's bosom; and the rich man also died and was buried.

(23) "In Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and *saw Abraham far away and Lazarus in his bosom.

(24) "And he cried out and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus so that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue, for I am in agony in this flame.'

(25) "But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that during your life you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus bad things; but now he is being comforted here, and you are in agony.

(26) 'And besides all this, between us and you there is a great chasm fixed, so that those who wish to come over from here to you will not be able, and *that* none may cross over from there to us.'

From this we can see that there are two compartments. One is referred to as Abraham's bosom and the other as simple hades. The poor man in Abraham's bosom (also called paradise) was enjoying comfort while the rich man in hades was being tormented, apparently by fire. These two areas were separated by a chasm so that neither side could cross over; however, the ones being tormented could see across the chasm to the paradise side. (This would further add to the torment.)

It would appear then that, prior to the resurrection of Jesus, the righteous and the wicked both went to the same location, that is, sheol, hades, hell. However, they had separate compartments or habitats with different environments. With the resurrection of Jesus, this all changed.

The Scriptures tell us that before Jesus ascended He first descended into the lower parts of the earth, that is, to sheol, hades, hell (Eph. 4:9). Jesus had told the thief that was on one of the other crosses that He would see him in paradise that day. When Jesus arose from the dead, He led a host of captives (Eph. 4:8). These were the Old Testament saints, the righteous, that were awaiting Christ in the paradise side of sheol. How do we know this? As always, we only know what the Word reveals.

Matthew 27:52-53 NASB

(52) The tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised;

(53) and coming out of the tombs after His resurrection they entered the holy city and appeared to many.

Some, not all, of the Old Testament righteous were resurrected after Jesus and actually walked around Jerusalem in their resurrection bodies. We can conclude that when Jesus arose and ascended to the Father that He lead the captives (those held in the paradise side of sheol) with Him and allowed some to stop off and see Jerusalem on the way to the Father (these were part of the first fruits or wave offering of the resurrection harvest).

Since the resurrection of Jesus, the paradise side of sheol or hades is empty and will remain so. However, the torment side of hades is still active and is still a receptacle for the unrighteous awaiting Judgment Day. Now, the righteous in Jesus are immediately translated to the presence of Jesus upon their death (2 Cor. 5:6-8).

Who runs Hell?

In the Scriptures there are spiritual entities that are called Death and Hades.

Revelation 6:8 NASB

(8) I looked, and behold, an ashen horse; and he who sat on it had the name Death; and Hades was following with him. Authority was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by the wild beasts of the earth.

It is not clear from this verse whether or not Hades is on a separate horse or on the same horse that Death is riding. Regardless, these two are represented as actual beings. It would be assumed then that their domain would match their names.

There will come a time when these two beings will have to give up all that is in their domain.

Revelation 20:13 NASB

(13) And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one *of them* according to their deeds.

One would think that death and Hades would cover all of the dead, but, notice that there are three areas that give up the dead: the sea, death, and Hades. (We will discuss the sea in a future teaching.)

These two beings, death and Hades, are not righteous spiritual beings but rather followers of Satan.

Revelation 20:14 NASB

(14) Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire.

After giving up the dead in their domain these two beings are then thrown into the lake of fire. This reveals them to be fallen angelic beings because God would not throw His righteous angels into the lake of fire.

When Jesus was resurrected, He took the keys to the domains of both death and Hades.

Revelation 1:18 NASB

(18) **and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the**

keys of death and of Hades.

If Adam had not sinned then death and Hades would not have any dominion over us. But because of sin, death comes for men and delivers their souls to Hades. Now through Jesus this has changed.

John 8:51 NASB

(51) "Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he will never see death."

I believe that Jesus was saying that those that belonged to Him would never see the spiritual entity called death because he (death) no longer has the right to deliver a believer to Hades. Our souls are immediately in the presence of the Lord when we die.

So, who runs hell? This may surprise you but the bottom line is Jesus, because He has the keys. However, death and Hades (Hell) are allowed to continue their work until the end of days; but their work only applies to the unrighteous. This should be a great comfort to those of us who keep the words of Jesus.

It appears to me that the only occupants of sheol, hades, hell are the souls of men who are awaiting judgment. Their appears to be a different place reserved for fallen angels and demons. This place is possibly a lower compartment of sheol but I think that it is different. The next newsletter will explore the abode of the demons and fallen angels.

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