

*Questions I've Been Asked*  
*Where Are the Dead?*  
*Acts 2:22-31*

Theme: Dead, Death

Aim: To show that there exists a place called Hades where the dead reside awaiting the general resurrection and judgment day.

1. I think that I can safely say that every mortal human being, at some time or another, begins to contemplate their own mortality. When that happens, a secondary consideration also arises.
2. What happens to the dead? Where do they go? Does the Bible have any information or answers to these questions?
3. Indeed it does. In Hebrews 2:14-15, we are told that Jesus took away our fear of death. Knowledge drives out fear. If we know what lies beyond this life, our fear of the unknown is relieved.

I. The Bible clearly teaches that there will be a general resurrection, a judgment day and then an eternal existence.

A. There will be a resurrection.

1. Jesus tells us so, John 5:25-29.
2. Paul affirms the reality, I Thessalonians 4:13-18, 1 Corinthians 15:50-58.
3. Such is assured by the reality of Jesus' resurrection, 1 Corinthians 15:12-19, 1 Peter 1:3-5.

B. There will be a judgment day.

1. Romans 14:10-12.
2. 2 Corinthians 5:1-11.
3. Revelation 20:11-15.
4. The scene is anticipated by Jesus' words in Matthew 25:31-46.

C. But where does the spirit of man go to await the resurrection and judgment?

1. Remember that the body without the spirit is dead, James 2:26.
2. The body goes into the grave and back to the dust from which it came.
3. Where does the spirit go?

II. What does the Bible say about where the disembodied spirits of folks are?

A. Let's begin by looking at what Peter said about Jesus in Acts 2:22-31.

1. Where, according to this passage was Jesus' spirit when it left His body?
2. The text tells us that his soul was in Hades. An unfortunate translation in KJV as "hell."
3. Hades is simply the realm of the unseen. Used to translate the Hebrew word sheol, "the grave."
4. Hades is the place where disembodied spirits are.

B. Do we find any other information about this place?

1. Notice Jesus' word to the thief on the cross, Luke 23:39-43.
  - a. Word paradise means a garden and then a place of rest and contentment.
  - b. It seems then that there is a place in the Hadean realm called by our Lord, "paradise."

2. Look also at Luke 16:19-31 (This is not a parable, but even if it was the lessons are the same).

a. Both rich man and Lazarus found themselves, not in the places we call heaven or hell, but in the hadean realm, as was Jesus.

b. In contrast to paradise, or Abraham's bosom, the rich man found himself in torments.

3. Consider carefully what Jesus says about the relationship of the two places in Hades.

a. One is a place of torment, one of comfort. Tells us one's destiny is fixed at death, but the eternal state or period is not until after the resurrection and judgment.

b. There is a great gulf (chasm) fixed between them. There will be no passing from one to the other.

c. One's consciousness, identity, memory is not destroyed by death.

III. What then is our answer to the question; "Where are the dead?"

A. The dead, the spirits separated from the body, are in the hadean realm.

1. Either a place of comfort (paradise, or Abraham's bosom) or a place of torments.

2. There they will await the resurrection day which will be followed by the judgment day.

B. After the judgment day, we will be ushered into eternity.

1. That will be the place we properly call hell (the devil's abode) and heaven (the place where God dwells), and which are eternal in their duration.

2. Matthew 25:34,41,46.

C. All of this is dependant on what we do, or how we live in this life.

1. Often said that heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people, John 14:1-3. 2. But so is the place called hell! Matthew 25:41.

1. For which place are you making preparation to go?

2.1 pray it is to the place called Abraham's bosom and then heaven.

3. Have you responded to Him who said: "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. Revelation 1: 18-19.

Etown 02-26-05