



# A Traveler's Guide to the Afterlife

*A Bible Literacy Study Guide on the Eternal Destiny of the Individual*

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## The Intermediate State of the Dead

# The Intermediate State of the Dead



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This icon shows Christ standing over the broken gates of hell depicted as the lids of Adam & Eve's coffins. This icon by Nick Papas portrays Daniel and other Old Testament Prophets to our right and St. John the Baptist, King David and King Josiah to the left. The lost still lie bound in Hades. Adam and Eve are being lifted up from their graves. The locks and chains of death are broken.

**The Afterlife**

Hades (NT)

Paradise

New Heaven & New Earth  
(Rev. 21:27)



**Body Dies**  
(Eccl. 12:7)

*Spirit* ↑

Paradise

Lazarus, Jesus, thief on cross, OT righteous dead



*Eph. 4:8-9*

*1 Thess. 4:13-18*

*2nd Coming & Resurrection*

*Mt. 25:46*

**Great Gulf**  
(Luke 16:26)

*Jn. 5:28-29*

**Judgment**  
2 Cor. 5:10

*Spirit* ↓

Tartarus

rich man, angels who sinned, OT wicked dead



*2nd Coming & Resurrection*

*Mt. 25:41*

Sheol (OT)

Hell  
(Rev. 21:8)

# Intermediate State of the Dead



- The period between a person's death and the final resurrection at the end of time.
- The New Testament sometimes describes the act of dying as a "falling asleep" and the state of death as a "sleeping" (Matt 9:24; 11:11; 1 Cor 15:20,51).
- In 1 Thess 4:13-15, the apostle Paul speaks of "those who have fallen asleep," "those who sleep in Jesus," and "those who are asleep."
- This should not be understood as "soul-sleeping"-a reference to the dead in an unconscious state.
- Death as sleep is a widely used biblical concept signifying rest from earthly care and labor, as is true of natural sleep (2 Peter 3:4).
- Jesus' story of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31) represents the rich man as conscious and tormented in Hades and Lazarus the beggar as conscious and blessed in Abraham's bosom.

# Intermediate State of the Dead



- This passage of Scripture is a parable, which means that every point should not be pressed too far.
- The parable suggests that immediately after death the righteous are rewarded and the unrighteous receive punishment.
- On the cross Jesus said to the repentant thief "Today you will be with Me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43).
- The word paradise is of Persian origin. It suggests an orchard, park, or garden.
- The apostle Paul spoke of being "caught up into Paradise" (2 Cor 12:4), evidently equating heaven and Paradise.
- In the Book of Revelation the crucified and resurrected Christ declared, "To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God" (Rev 2:7).
- The overall sense of these references identifies Paradise with heaven, to which the righteous go immediately after death.



# Intermediate State of the Dead



- The apostle Paul's clearest treatment of the intermediate state is found in 2 Cor 5:1-8: "For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (v. 1).
- From this passage it is difficult to see Paul anticipating an unconscious, or even subconscious, state after death.
- He ends this passage by declaring, "We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord" (v. 8).
- No in-between or intermediate state seems to be in mind here.
- In another place Paul says that when the Lord returns, "God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus" (1 Thess 4:14).
- This implies that believers who have died are with Jesus now.

# Parable of Rich Man and Lazarus

## Luke 16:19-31



19 "There was a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day.

20 And at his gate was laid a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores,

21 who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man's table. Moreover, even the dogs came and licked his sores.

22 The poor man died and was carried by the angels to **Abraham's side**. The rich man also died and was buried,

23 and in *Hades*, being in **torment**, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side.

24 And he called out, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.'

# Parable of Rich Man and Lazarus

## Luke 16:19-31



25 But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish.

26 And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.'

27 And he said, 'Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father's house —  
28 for I have five brothers — so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.'

29 But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.'

30 And he said, 'No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.'

31 He said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.'" ESV



# Significant Scriptures



- 1 Samuel 2:6—The LORD kills and brings to life; he brings down to *Sheol* and raises up.
- Daniel 12:1-2—12 "At that time shall arise Michael, the great prince who has charge of your people. And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never has been since there was a nation till that time. But at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone whose name shall be found written in the book. 2 **And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake**, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.
- Luke 8:30-31—30 Jesus then asked him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Legion," for many demons had entered him. 31 And they begged him not to command them to depart into the *abyss*.

# Significant Scriptures



- Luke 23:43—And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in *Paradise*."
- Acts 2:27, 31—27 For you will not abandon my soul to *Hades*, or let your Holy One see corruption. 31 he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to *Hades*, nor did his flesh see corruption.
- 2 Peter 2:4—For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of *gloomy darkness* to be kept until the judgment;
- Jude 6—And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under *gloomy darkness* until the judgment of the great day —

# Soul Sleep



- *Psychopannychy*, the doctrine that the soul sleeps between death and resurrection.
- It has been held sporadically in the church.
- It is not a heresy in the narrower sense, due to the scarcity of Scripture teaching on the intermediate state, but it may be called a doctrinal aberration.
- Some Anabaptists endorsed it.
- In the Forty-two Articles of Edward VI, which preceded the Thirty-nine Articles, the following statement, as the Fortieth Article, was included: "*They which say that the souls of those who depart hence do sleep being without all sense, feeling or perceiving till the Day of Judgment, do utterly dissent from the right belief disclosed to us in Holy Scripture.*"

# Soul Sleep



- The case for soul sleep rests principally on these considerations:
  1. Human existence demands the unity of soul and body. If the body ceases to function, so must the soul.
  2. The use of the term "sleep" in Scripture for death is alleged to point to the cessation of consciousness.
  3. A state of consciousness between death and resurrection, characterized by bliss or woe, unwarrantably anticipates the judgment of the last day, when the basis for these experiences is provided.
- As to the word "sleep," it is intended to apply to the body, even though the individual as such may be said to sleep in death. This is clear from Matt 27:52; John 11:11; Acts 13:36, etc.

# *Sheol*



- [*SHE ole*] (meaning unknown) - in Old Testament thought, the abode of the dead.
- *Sheol* is the Hebrew equivalent of the Greek *Hades*, which means "the unseen world."
- *Sheol* was regarded as an underground region (Num 16:30,33; Amos 9:2), shadowy and gloomy, where disembodied souls had a conscious but dull and inactive existence (2 Sam 22:6; Eccl 9:10).
- The Hebrew people regarded *Sheol* as a place to which both the righteous and unrighteous go at death (Gen 37:35; Ps 9:17; Isa 38:10), a place where punishment is received and rewards are enjoyed.



# *Sheol*



- Sheol is pictured as having an insatiable appetite (Isa 5:14; Hab 2:5).
- However, God is present in *sheol* (Ps 139:8; hell, NKJV). It is open and known to Him (Job 26:6; Prov 15:11).
- This suggests that in death God's people remain under His care, and the wicked never escape His judgment.
- *Sheol* gives meaning to Ps 16:10.
- Peter saw the fulfillment of this messianic psalm in Jesus' resurrection (Acts 2:27).

# Abaddon



- In the Book of Revelation (9:1-11), when John sees his vision of the fifth trumpet blowing, a vast horde of demonic horsemen is seen arising from the newly opened abyss.
- They are sent forth to torment the unfortunate inhabitants of earth, but not to kill them.
- They have a ruler over them, called a king (*basileia*), the angel of the abyss, whose name is given in both Hebrew and Greek.
- In Hebrew it is *Abaddon* and in Greek *Apollyon*, both words meaning Destroyer or Destruction.
- The word only occurs once in the New Testament (Rev 9:11) and five times in the Old Testament (Job 26:6; 28:22; 31:12; Ps 88:11; Prov 15:11).

# Abaddon



- In Ps 88:11 Destruction is parallel to the grave; in Job 26:6 and Prov 26:6 it is parallel to *Sheol*; in Job 28:22 it is parallel to Death.
- Job 31:12 says sin is a fire that burns to destruction.
- So in the Old Testament *Abaddon* means the place of utter ruin, death, desolation, or destruction.
- In Revelation, *Abaddon* is not a place-the realm of the dead-but a person-the angel who reigns over the abyss.
- The angel of the abyss is called Destruction or Destroyer because his task is to oversee the devastation of the inhabitants of the earth, although it is curious that his minions are allowed only to torture and not to kill.
- His identity is a matter of dispute. Some make him Satan himself, while others take him to be only one of Satan's many evil subordinates.

# Hades



- *Hades* is the state in which all the dead exist.
- In the New Testament a descent to *Hades* may simply refer to someone's death and disembodied existence. In this sense even Jesus enters *Hades*.
- Jesus' parable of the rich man and Lazarus portrays additional features of this state (Luke 16:19-31).
- An unbridgeable chasm separates the wicked and the righteous dead.
- Death has fixed the human's destiny without further opportunity for repentance.
- *Hades* is the place where the wicked dead reside and are punished.
- In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, the rich man experiences torment in *Hades*.

# Hades



- This is the intermediate state, for the bodily resurrection and the final judgment are still future.
- This differentiation between the wicked and the righteous dead continues throughout the New Testament.
- The righteous dead are "at home with the Lord" (2 Cor 5:8), "in paradise" (Luke 23:43), or in the presence of God (Rev 6:9; 7:9; 14:3).
- The unrighteous are held in punishment and wicked angels are imprisoned in Tartarus, a Greek term designating the lowest part of Hades (1 Peter 3:19; 2 Peter 2:4,9; Jude 6).
- In summary, the New Testament affirms that Christ has conquered Hades.
- While dead believers exist in this state, they are also "with the Lord."
- Hades also denotes the vanquished stronghold of Satan's forces whose end is certain and the intermediate place of punishment for the wicked dead until the final judgment.



# Purgatory



- Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox churches set forth a place of temporal punishment in the intermediate realm known as purgatory, in which it is held that all those who die at peace with the church but who have committed venial sins must undergo penal and purifying suffering.
- Only those believers who have attained a state of Christian perfection are said to go immediately to heaven.
- All unbaptized adults and those who after baptism have committed mortal sin go immediately to hell.
- The great mass of partially sanctified Christians dying in fellowship with the church but nevertheless encumbered with some degree of venial sin go to purgatory where, for a longer or shorter time, they suffer until all sin is purged away, after which they are translated to heaven.

# Limbo



- Definition: Medieval theologians designated Limbo as the place or state of those souls after death who did not fit neatly into either heaven or hell.
- In fact there were two limbos.
  1. The *limbo of the fathers* (*limbus patrum*) was for the souls of the saints of the OT; Christ's descent into hell in the creed was interpreted as his liberating these souls and taking them to heaven. In Renaissance art the limbo of the fathers was depicted as a large prison cell.
  2. More important was the *limbo of infants* (*limbus infantum*). The majority of children born before the development of modern medicine died without attaining a maturity sufficient to commit serious personal sin.
- Augustine believed that all children of Adam have original sin, and hence infants who die without baptism are consigned to hell, although their punishment there will be mild.

# Limbo



- Peter Lombard and Thomas Aquinas considered the Augustinian view too harsh and postulated limbo as a perpetual state free from sensory pain but without supernatural salvation and the enjoyment of God.
- The Councils of Lyons and Florence stated that those who die with only original sin will be punished differently from those with personal sin (mortal sin).
- Belief in limbo has never been defined by the Roman Catholic Church, although it was the dominant teaching of Catholic theologians for many centuries.

# Limbo



- Theologians in the Calvinist tradition had little need to postulate a limbo: unbaptized infants go to heaven or hell as God has predestined them.
- Many 20<sup>th</sup> century Catholic theologians have tended to argue for the salvation of unbaptized infants, some postulating an illumination of the infant at the moment of death and a choice for or against God.
- Others see death itself as a sort of saving martyrdom.
- Some argue that the parents or the church provide a kind of baptism by desire.
- Others see limbo as lasting only until the general judgment, at which souls in limbo are either united to Christ or obdurately reject him.

# Paradise



- A word probably of Persian origin, appearing as *pardees* in the OT three times ("orchard," Song 4:13; ASV; "forest," Neh 2:8; ASV; "parks," Eccl 2:5).
- The NT employs *paradeisos* three times, to denote the place of blessedness promised to the thief (Luke 23:43), the third heaven (2 Cor 12:4), and the location of the promised tree of life (Rev 2:7).
- Since the paradise of Eden was the place of bliss man had lost, rabbinical literature used the term to portray the place of blessedness for the righteous dead, in contrast to Gehenna, the place of torment.
- Jesus used the term once (Luke 23:43), and some see here only a reference to heaven.
- However, Jesus may be exhibiting essential agreement with traditional Jewish opinion by employing "Abraham's bosom" as an alternate term for "Paradise" in Luke 16:22 (the rich man and Lazarus).



# Paradise



- Paradise is viewed as the abode of the righteous in a separate section of Hades (a term equivalent to Sheol, Ps 16:10; cf. Acts 2:27,31).
- The remaining references to Paradise in the NT are to heaven and some conclude that since the resurrection and ascension of Christ, Paradise has been removed from Hades to the third heaven, and that the "host of captives" who ascended with Christ were the OT saints (Eph 4:8, RSV).
- If Paradise means heaven as the dwelling place of God in all NT instances, then the choice of the term "Abraham's bosom" may have been deliberate.
- Jesus promised to the thief the bliss of heaven on that very day, thus, the same prospect belongs to all Christian believers (Luke 23:43; Phil 1:23; 2 Cor 5:8).

# Abraham's Bosom



- A unique phrase found in a parable of Jesus describing the place where Lazarus went after death (Luke 16:19-31).
- It is a figurative phrase that appears to have been drawn from a popular belief that the righteous would rest by Abraham's side in the world to come, an opinion described in Jewish literature at the time of Christ.
- The word *kolpos* literally refers to the side or lap of a person.
- Figuratively, as in this case, it refers to a place of honor reserved for a special guest, similar to its usage in John 13:23.
- In the case of Lazarus, the reserved place is special because it is beside Abraham, the father of all the righteous.
- The phrase may be synonymous to the paradise promised to the thief on the cross (Luke 23:43).
- Together these passages support the conviction that a believer enjoys immediate bliss at the moment of physical death.

# Tartarus (Torment)



- Tartarus (*Tartaros*) is a Greek word, typically translated "Hell".
- It apparently is used to refer to a place for holding the wicked dead and the fallen angels who sinned.
- It appears to be part of the Hadean realm.
- One of the most prominent themes of ancient Jewish tradition, though usually suppressed by the later rabbis, was the idea that the "sons of God" in Gen 6:1-3 were angels who lusted after women and so fell.
- In Greek thought it was also a place of holding the wicked dead and the Titans (pre-Olympian supernatural beings) and consisted of the severest conceivable tortures.
- It occurs elsewhere in Jewish literature as the place where the fallen angels were imprisoned.
- Jewish writers also generally affirmed a current hell as a holding place for the wicked until the final judgment.

# Tartarus (Torment)



- 3 Scriptures that possibly support Tartarus:
  - Luke 16:22-23—*22 The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried, 23 and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side. 24 And he called out, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.'*
  - 2 Peter 2:4—*4 For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment..*
  - Jude 6— *And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day — .*
- In these 3 passages is described as a place of torment, anguish, flames, chains, and gloomy darkness.

# The Bottomless Pit



- The bottomless pit (NASB rendering of the Grk. *to phrear tes 'abussou*, "the pit of the abyss," Rev 9:1-2; the NIV renders "abyss") or abyss (from Heb. *t<sup>a</sup>howm*, "the deep") refers to the underworld as
  - a prison for Satan and certain demons (Luke 8:31; Rev 20:1,3; cf. 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6);
  - the realm of the dead which the living cannot enter (Rom 10:7) and the place from which the beast or Antichrist arises (Rev 11:7; 17:8).
- That God alternately imprisons and releases the demonic spirits signifies his ultimate power over the satanic evil realm.
- The concept provides an additional complementary image to hell of the place of terror filled with demons.

# The Bottomless Pit



- Hell (Gehenna) is the eschatological fiery final destination of all the wicked (man and demons), while the abyss appears to be the present abode of demonic spirits.
- The dispensational perspective of the abyss is that in the end of the age myriads of these imprisoned evil spirits will be set free to indwell, torment, and energize men (Rev. 9) to engage in a gigantic attempt to oppose Christ and God's kingdom plans for the Jew in the millennial age to come (16:13-16).
- At the second coming of Christ, Satan and demons will be remanded to the abyss (20:1-3), a condition that will make possible the Kingdom age on earth (20:3).



# The Abyss



- In our English Bibles, the Greek word *abussos* is transliterated as "abyss" (rsv "bottomless pit") in every instance except Rom 10:7, where it is translated "the deep."
- In the Septuagint *abussos* translates *Tehom* almost exclusively, but in rare instances *tsula* (Isa 44:27), *Meshula* (Job 41:22), and *Racha* (Job 36:16).
- In the New Testament it is used in two ways.
  - In Rom 10:7 Paul uses it specifically to mean "the realm of the dead," drawing from Deut 30:12-14, but not quoting exactly. He contrasts "ascent into heaven" with "descent into the abyss," but because Christ was there, the abyss should not be conceived as an evil or demonic realm.
  - Luke (8:31) and John (Rev 9:1-2; 11:7; 17:8; 20:1,3) describe the abyss specifically as the dwelling place of demons and the beast and as a place of confinement unto judgment that is under God's control.
- In Luke 8:31 the demons beg Jesus not to send them into the abyss, knowing that they will no longer be free to wreak havoc on the earth.

# The Abyss



- Here, *abussos* is similar to *tartarus* in 2 Peter 2:4, where the angels that sinned are confined until the judgment.
- In John's vision of the fifth trumpet (Rev 9:1-11), the shaft leading to the abyss is opened, releasing the demonic hoard of locusts.
- Their ruler is "the angel of the abyss," whose name is Destruction (Heb. *Abaddon*; Gk. *Appolun*).
- The beast who ascends from the abyss (Rev 11:7; 17:8) presents a complex picture.
- Combined, it represents the antichrist, demonic power, Rome (i.e., political power as supportive of the harlot), and ultimate evil.
- This beast is to be thrown alive into the "fiery lake of burning sulphur" (Rev 19:20).
- Satan is chained in the abyss for a thousand years (Rev 20:1,3), until he, too, is thrown into the lake of fire (Rev 20:10).

# gracEmail: The Intermediate State



- **A brother who has read *\*The Fire that Consumes\** inquired about the state of believers after the moment of death and before the resurrection at the Last Day, the period sometimes called "the intermediate state."**

\* \* \*

- If one begins thinking at the point of biblical anthropology, it seems to me one easily concludes that there is no conscious "intermediate state." In the Creation story, God makes a mud man (body) into which he breathes "breath of life" (spirit/breath) and the creature BECOMES a "living soul". Genesis uses the same expressions "breath of life" and "living souls" when talking about animals as well as humans.
- There is no hint in Genesis (or most of the rest of the Bible) that people HAVE a "soul" which is the "real" person and which automatically survives the death of the body. That is a notion which came from the pagan Greek philosophers, chiefly Plato, and which infiltrated early Christianity a century or two after Christ. For the biblical writers, the human creature is inherently MORTAL, and is totally dependent on God for existence at all times. One who has this biblical understanding would not automatically assume that there is any conscious intermediate state, but rather would think that "when you die, you're dead." That is not the end, however, because God will raise the dead – some for eternal life, some for condemnation and the second death.

# gracEmail: The Intermediate State



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- There are a few Pauline texts, such as 2 Cor. 5:1-8 and Phil. 1:21-24, which seem to suggest that the believer, in union with Christ and possessed of his Spirit, might have some peaceful (if inactive) awareness of God's safekeeping during the interim. (I do not think the Lk. 16 parable of Lazarus and the Rich Man determines the outcome of this discussion, as I explain elsewhere in detail.
- It seems very likely to me -- although I might be wrong -- that the practical effect is the same either way and that the differences just might be phenomenological rather than essential or existential. Even if there is no conscious intermediate state, it would seem to appear to the DECEASED BELIEVER that the instant after death ushers in the presence of Christ, since the Resurrection would be the next moment of awareness. There is only an "intermediate" time from the viewpoint of those who survive.

# gracEmail: Are the Dead Conscious?



- A gracEmail subscriber writes, " I read your book **THE FIRE THAT CONSUMES** and I believe your position is scriptural that the dead are unconscious between death and Resurrection. I do have some questions, however, about several passages."

\* \* \*

- My major concern in **THE FIRE THAT CONSUMES** was to investigate thoroughly all biblical teaching about the final state of the lost. Because those who believe that the lost will totally perish and be destroyed eternally in hell are divided as to whether the dead are conscious or awake before the Resurrection, I tried to avoid that subject in **TFTC**. Discussion there about our natural mortality does point toward an unconscious "intermediate" state, however, and other Bible students may think of the same questions this reader raises. Those questions -- and my brief answers -- follow.
- Q: "Was dead Samuel asleep in 1 Samuel 28? What does the word 'disquiet' mean? What did Samuel mean when he said that Saul and his sons would be 'with him' the next day?"
- ANSWER: I find the explanation reasonable that this incident involved a demonic deception or a delusion and that Samuel did not really "come back" at all. If he did, all these comments would fit "sleeping" as well as the traditional view. Samuel had been "asleep" and was "disquieted" or disturbed from his "sleep," and Saul and sons would be with him (although "asleep") the next day.



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\* \* \*

- Q: "The famous 'thief on the cross' -- where would he and Jesus be when 'in Paradise' (Lk. 23:43)? Was Jesus 'asleep' for three days?"
- ANSWER: "Paradise" was a word meaning "Garden" (as in Eden) borrowed from the Persian, and Jesus was speaking to this man in terms he would understand. This was hardly the occasion for a theological discourse on fine points. I believe Jesus was "asleep" between his death and resurrection. It is also possible, by the way, to translate Jesus' statement, as: "Truly I tell you today, you will be with me in Paradise," since the original Greek had no punctuation.
- Q. "What about Moses and Elijah at Jesus' transfiguration (Lk. 9:30)?"
- ANSWER: Matthew calls this a "vision" (Matt. 17:9). Elijah had not died, but ascended to heaven in a whirlwind (2 Kings 2:11). I see no problem in saying that Moses had been "asleep" and God "waked" him temporarily for this momentous occasion.



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- Q: "In Matthew 22:32, Jesus says that God is God of the 'living' not the 'dead.' How can this be reconciled with Paul's comments that dead Christians are 'asleep'?"
- ANSWER: If we read the preceding verse, we see that Jesus is not saying that the dead are conscious now. He is showing the necessity of resurrection, because God is the God of the "living" and the dead clearly are not alive! This is a good example of a passage which, by repeated and prolonged misuse, is commonly thought to teach the exact opposite of its original intended meaning.
- Although the notion that the dead are "asleep" rather than "awake" seems to me most agreeable with the overall biblical witness, there are a few New Testament texts which might suggest otherwise of believers who die. This is certainly not a salvation issue, nor one about which Christians ought to allow their varying views to interfere with their fellowship and unity in Christ. On many such subjects, we ought charitably to allow room for others -- however we perceive matters -- to be "wrong."

# Questions for Discussion



1. What does the Bible teach about the intermediate state of the dead? Compare Eccl. 12:7; Dan. 12:2; Luke 16:19-31; 23:43; 2 Cor. 5:1-8; Phil. 1:21-24; 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6.
2. Compare and contrast the use of Sheol in the OT and Hades in the NT.

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