

Liberalism in the Church (Hell: Part 1 - What Happens When We Die?)

I. What happens when one dies?

A. Does the righteous soul immediately go to Heaven?

B. Does the unrighteous soul immediately go to Hell?

C. To the Catholic:

i. If a person dies in God's good graces and friendship but still has some stains of sin, that person goes to purgatory where his/her soul is purged and cleansed on sin, readying the soul for Heaven.

ii. Otherwise, the soul goes straight to Heaven or Hell

D. To the Evangelical:

i. A saved person goes to Heaven; an unsaved person goes to Hell.

E. To the JW:

i. When you die, that's the end of your soul (annihilation).

ii. During the millennium (or new system of things), the soul is recreated with a new body:

1. 144,000 will be ruling with Jesus as kings and priests over the Earth.

2. The rest will live in the new earthly paradise.

F. To the Seventh Day Adventist:

i. Your soul goes to sleep until the resurrected, where your soul will be awoken and rejoined to your body.

ii. Then, the wicked will be annihilated while the saved go to Heaven.

G. The Early Christians Apologists:

i. Everybody goes to an intermediate place called Hades

ii. Hades is divided into two areas:

1. The righteous go to comfortable place known as Paradise (Abraham's Bosom)

a. The soul waits there until Christ returns.

b. Then you are resurrected

c. You stand before God's Judgment throne

d. Then you go to Heaven.

2. The unrighteous go to the lower part of Hades (known as the Abyss or Tartarus)

a. The soul waits there in anguish until Christ returns.

b. Then the unsaved are resurrected

c. They will stand before God's Judgment throne

d. Then they will be cast into the Lake of Fire (Gehenna).

H. Let's see if this is what the Bible says...

i. Luke 23:43 (ESV), "*And he said to him, 'Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.'*"

1. At death, Christ (along with the thief) went to paradise.

2. Notice He didn't say, "Today you will be with me in Heaven!"

3. Paradise is part of the region known as Hades...

a. Acts 2:26-27 (ESV), "*For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One see corruption.'*"

i. Jesus' soul was not left in Hades (that is, the realm of the dead)

- ii. NIV translates the Greek word “Hades” as “grave” and KJV as “hell.”
 - iii. Since Jesus was not going to be left in Hades, therefore one can safely say that Paradise is located in the hadean world.
 - iv. After the resurrection, Jesus ascended to the Father in Heaven (cf. John 20:17)
 - v. This gives us a picture of what will happen to the righteous dead.
- ii. What about the unrighteous dead?
1. Read Luke 16:19-31 – Lazarus and the rich man
 - a. Vs. 23 (ESV), “and in *Hades*, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side.”
 - i. The rich man went to Hades, but was in torment
 - ii. The Hadean world is divided by a great gulf (vs. 23)
 1. The righteous dead (i.e., Abraham, Lazarus) are in Paradise (the good part of Hades)
 2. The unrighteous dead (i.e., rich man) are in Tartarus (Strong’s Greek dictionary defines it as the deep abyss of Hades)
 2. Does the Bible mention Tartarus?
 - a. Read 2Peter 2:4-9
 - i. The evil angels were cast into hell (the Greek says “Tartarus”)
 - ii. All the unrighteous dead (the people of the flood; Sodom and Gomorrah, and all the unrighteous) will be kept under punishment until Judgment Day.
 3. *Optional passage: John 14:1-3, “*Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. ²In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.*”
 - a. Notice how Jesus told His apostles, I will go and prepare a place for you and then I will come back and take you to be with me.
 - b. He didn’t say “When you die, you will be at that place with me”
 - c. Therefore, the apostles (and all the righteous) will wait for the second coming of Christ.
 4. What happens at Judgment Day?
 - a. Read Revelation 20:12-15
 - i. The dead will come out of Hades (i.e., those in Paradise and in Tartarus)
 1. Jesus speaks of the resurrection of both the good and evil (John 5:28-29)
 2. Paul mentions the type of bodies the resurrected dead will have (1Corinthians 15:42ff)
 - ii. The unsaved will be cast into the lake of fire.