

**H O U S E o f W I S D O M**  
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## **HELL - Place or a Condition?**

Does the Bible teach that there is a physical place called hell, a place where God punishes the wicked and they are tormented through-out eternity? For hundreds of years there has existed a difference of opinion as to the existence of hell. Of these, there three primary views on hell:

1.Views of a physical place of eternal torment were only taught in "intertestamental writings." (non-Biblical writings of Jewish scribes during the time, 400 years, when God did not call any prophets).

This is the approximate time between when the Old Testament writings ended, and New Testament writings began. Daniel 12:2: And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

Based on this scripture, all lay in the graves until resurrection, after which the righteous go to heaven and the wicked are destroyed. Malachi 4:2-3: 2. But unto you that fear my name shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.

3. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts. (i.e. people lie in the grave until resurrection)

2. The theory that when a person dies, the soul is separated from the body and goes, either to heaven or to hell to be tormented. (this seems to be the more common belief among Christians)

3. Limbus, Latin for limbo, the place where good people went before the cross, plus babies who were not baptized. This doctrine was held by the Roman Catholic Church from the 1300s until April of 2007, when they did away with it.

There is one Hebrew word, sheol (h7585), rendered 31 times as grave and 31 times as hell. In more modern KJ Bible, the Hebrew word is often transliterated as sheol like in other versions. There are three words in the Greek, hades (g86), tartaroo (g5020) and gehenna (g1067) translated as hell.

Hebrew sheol (h7585): The meaning of this is word grave, pit. Lexicons add the definition of hell. The concept of hell as it is taught today, is not found in the O.T. (It is believed the concept is from Greek mythology, applied both in the N.T. and the O.T.) Here is a big problem theologians have with the current doctrine of hell in O.T.: Genesis 37:34-35: 34. And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days. 35. And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down into the grave (h7585) unto my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him.

Numbers 16:30: But if the Lord make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them (Korah, Dathan, Abiram) up, with all that pertains unto them, and they go down quick into the pit (h7585); then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the Lord.

So, both good and bad go into sheol (h7585). These scriptures are what led the Roman Catholic Church to adopt the doctrine of Limbo, explained under #3 above.

Other passages use the word as a figure of the place where the spiritually dead go: From the parable of the sower (Mark, chapter 4) can be seen that the earth is a symbol for the mind of man. The grave, a hole in the earth, is a person buried in man's way of thinking and understanding.

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