

Where Did Jesus Go When He Died? (Part 2)

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[0 : 00] I'm going to try to finish this up about where did Jesus go right after he died.

! I'm going to try to finish this up.

There are some, so you might have that in front of you. The first view that I've listed there on the sheet is the view that is often called the two-compartment theory or the shield theory.

That is that there was a holding place for all who died prior to the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ. And all the unbelievers went to one compartment in Sheol, the place of torment, which would be the lower section of Sheol.

And then the believers went to paradise. All right? And there's the great gulf, not golf, gulf, affixed between the two.

[1 : 49] And we get that from Jesus' parable about the rich man Lazarus, or at least those who hold this view get it from there. And then the other view is that Jesus just went straight to heaven after he died.

And that's my view. And we've looked at several passages of scripture that really some of these support or are used to support both views.

That is, those who are proponents of the shield theory use some of these same passages. They are the key passages there. And then those who would argue against that and support the view that Jesus went directly to heaven use some of those same passages.

First one that I pointed out to you real quickly just by way of reviews, Acts chapter 2 and verse 23. Acts chapter 2, verse 23. And you might remember, well, let me just read the text real quickly. Starting with verse 23, this man, of course, this is, by the way, Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost. And he is speaking of Christ.

[2 : 57] He says, this man, reference to Jesus, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to the cross by the hands of godless men.

And put him to death. But God raised him up again, putting an end to the agony of death since it was impossible for him to be held in his power. And then he quotes Psalm 16, verses 9 through 10. For David says of him, and this is key, a key thing to note here, that David was speaking of Christ. Now, David didn't know that. In a sense, he was speaking of himself, but in a prophetic sense, it was a messianic psalm.

He's speaking of Christ. I saw the Lord always in my presence, for he is at my right hand, so that I will not be shaken. Therefore, my heart was glad and my tongue exulted.

Moreover, my flesh also will live in hope, because you will not abandon my soul in Hades. Or in the King James, I believe it's translated, hell.

[4 : 05] Nor allow your Holy One to undergo decay. You have made known to me the ways of life. You will make me full of gladness with your presence.

Alright, so, what is this passage a reference to? Those who hold to the Sheol theory say, well, here it is very clearly, that Jesus went to hell, and David, who's speaking of the Messiah here, or prophetic of the Messiah, is saying that, you know, he did go to hell, but God's not going to leave him there, and he just went there temporarily.

So they use that passage to help support the view. However, in verse 26 there, when he says, moreover, my flesh also will live in hope, he's talking there about the reality of the grave, the burial, the grave.

The New American Standard uses the word live, but it really is a word that I think would be better translated rest, rest in hope. The context is the grave.

I mean, the whole context, the larger context is Jesus, his death, and his resurrection. And so when he died, he was put in the tomb, in the grave. David, prophesying of the coming of Christ, he's

saying that my flesh, my body, will rest in hope.

[5 : 33] That is rest in the grave, in hope. Hope of what? The resurrection. All right, so it's not a passage talking about going to hell. It's a passage talking about what the hope that the Messiah had when he was placed in the tomb.

By the way, the word rest, I think I mentioned this last week, is really an idiom of the day. It really could be translated, pitch my tent.

So the idea being that here the body is placed in a grave, in a sense, pitches a tent in the grave, in the sense that this is temporary.

I mean, you don't pitch a tent if you're going to stay there forever. And so here's the idea, the imagery of being put in the grave temporarily, because he said in verse 27, you will not abandon, abandon my soul in Hades.

The word abandon means to leave hopeless. So now, if Jesus, or if the Bible here is referring to, or it's a reference to Jesus going to hell, then, you know, the idea of being abandoned there hopelessly just doesn't line up.

[6 : 56] He's talking about the grave. And the promise that Jesus is coming and he dies, and his body is placed in the grave, but it rests in hope, because it's just going to be there temporarily.

As a matter of fact, it's not going to even undergo any decay. He says there, nor allow your Holy One to undergo decay. And so, this is the grave.

Now, someone will object and say, well, in my English translation, it says hell. Because you know, he says, verse 27, because you will not abandon my soul to hell.

But the actual word is Hades, brought over from the Greek. In the Hebrew, and of course he's quoting the Hebrew text in the Old Testament, Psalm 16, it is Sheol.

And here's where the confusion lies. Because the word Sheol, and also Hades, its Greek counterpart, it depends on how the word is used, as to whether it is speaking of the grave, or if it's speaking of the abode of the unbelieving dead, or hell.

[8 : 16] It can be used either way. And I think clearly, this is my take, that since David is talking, or rather Peter here in this sermon is talking about Jesus, who was handed over and killed, his body was placed in the tomb, David prophesying of that, that the Messiah could take hope, because he's just simply going to be there temporarily.

In fact, he's not going to even be there long enough for his body to begin to decay. And then he will be resurrected out of there. Verse 31, he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

He is speaking of the resurrection, not talking about Jesus going to hell, or doing any such thing down in hell, you know, leaving captivity out of hell, anything like that. The whole context is the, first the death, Jesus being turned over, and resurrection.

He looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of Christ, that he was neither abandoned to the grave, nor did his flesh suffer decay. Right?

So it's just as simple as that. Now let's move to the second one that I mentioned last Wednesday. 1 Peter 3, verse 18.

[9 : 32] And here is the one that those who hold the Sheol view will typically go to, starting with verse 18. 1 Peter 3, and verse 18.

For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that he might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the Spirit.

Made alive in the Spirit. in which also he went and made proclamation to the spirits, now in prison. Now I want to stop right there, and just point out a few things as we go along.

The word spirit, there in verse 18, is a reference to, or excuse me, let me back up and say it this way.

Verse 19. In which, the antecedent of in which is Spirit, in verse 18. Now it was Jesus who was made alive in the Spirit.

[10 : 35] In the Spirit. In which, in what? In the Spirit, also he went and made proclamation to the spirits, now in prison. Alright, so, it's a reference to Jesus preaching.

No doubt about that. Preaching in the Spirit. Alright? Now the question is, where did he do it? When did he do it? And, did he, like the Sheol view, those who hold the Sheol view, suggest, that he preached in the Spirit, in hell, or in Sheol, or did he preach in the Spirit, in another place?

Maybe even before time. I mean, before the time this was written, or before the time that Jesus died. I think it was, that he preached way before, back in Old Testament times, the reason I say that, as we go on, verse 19, so he preached in the Spirit, in which, also he went and made proclamation, to the spirits, now in prison.

Alright, so he preached to those in prison. Where were they? What prison was this? Well, let's read on. Who, verse 20, and you have to follow along here.

Who, now, what does who go with? The Spirit's in prison. Alright, that's the antecedent of who. The Spirit's in prison. Who, once were, what? Disobedient.

[12:01] Disobedient, when the patience of God, kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water. I believe, verse 20, identifies who these spirits in prison were.

They were those living in Noah's day. Jesus preached to them, in the Spirit. He preached through Noah.

For 120 years, Noah preached to those living, on this planet, prior to the flood. He preached, while he was building the ark, testimony to the long suffering of God, gave him 120 years to repent, not anybody repented.

Only eight souls were saved. Noah, and his wife, and his kids. And, and that, that was it. Alright, so, let's put all this together real quickly. We're talking here about Christ, who preached in the Spirit, to those in prison, spirits in prison, and the spirits in prison, because verse 20 explains, those living in the days of Noah, who were disobedient.

Now, the word disobedient there, by the way, in verse 19, is speaking of those who are willfully disobedient, literally, those who refuse to be persuaded.

[13:27] it's a picture of those living in Noah's day. Even while the rain is falling. And, most of them had never seen, in fact, in my view, I don't think it rained at all on the earth, prior to the flood.

But, we could talk about that another time. And so, here the flood waters come up, and they still would not repent. We're talking about people, who willfully, were content to be willfully disobedient, to the gospel, as Noah is preaching, and preaching, and preaching.

So, this is not, in my opinion, a reference to Jesus, dying, and going to shield, preach to the disobedient. By the way, let me ask you a question.

If, if, this is a reference to Jesus, going to the spirits in prison, that is, those who are disobedient, willfully unbelieving, then what kind of message, would he give them?

And, you might say, or some might say, well, he gave them the gospel. Well, do they have an opportunity, to repent and believe? Well, no. There's no, probation in hell, after death.

[14:43] No probation there. I guess, as someone suggested, that maybe he went there, and preached the gospel, so that they'd know, what they missed. It's ridiculous.

You know, like, eh, yeah, you missed it. No, I don't think so. I think this is just simply, a reference, to the gospel being preached, in the Old Testament. And, that Jesus, preached in the spirit, to the disobedient, back in Noah's day.

And, he did so, through Noah, himself. As he preached. Let's go to a third passage, real quickly. Since, Wednesday night is something, we have to do quickly.

See, whatever we do, we've got to do it quickly. We may, we're going to change that, by the way. I should mention change, you know, that's a no-no.

All right, Ephesians, chapter, Ephesians, chapter 4, and, look at, verse 7.

[15:48] Ephesians, chapter 4, verse 7. Is that the next one, I have on your list? 1 Peter 4, verse 7. All right, I missed one. Let's see here.

How did I do that? All right, let's go to 1 Peter 4, verse 6. Then we'll get, well, that's just where we were. Oh, 4, 6. Yeah, that's right. I was going to also interject something you said in chapter 4.

Well, look at verse 6. It didn't already close your book to it, your Bible to it. 1 Peter 4, verse 6. For the gospel has, for this purpose, been preached even to those who are dead.

Now, I'll tell you what, those who hold to the shield theory, they tie that verse in with what was said in chapter 3. And they make that fit with the view that they come away with in chapter 3 and say, well, see here, here's another reference that Jesus went to shield and preached to the dead.

Dead. All right, but that's not what this means. We're, you know, we need to not take the time tonight to get so much into what the passage is really talking about.

[17:01] The two possibilities. He's either talking about, if it is a reference tied or still tied to chapter 3, and we're still talking about those back in Noah's day, then he's talking about people who are dead now.

He preached to those people back there in Noah's day, but they're dead now. Or, and I think the context seems to suggest, that he's talking about people who are dead in sin.

Dead in sin. Not dead people in hell or in some place called Sheol. People who are just dead. Dead. And he puts side by side, dead and living. And so I think we can dismiss 1 Peter chapter 3 as well as chapter 4 as any evidence for the theory of Sheol.

Because again, I just come back, back to the bottom line. There's no doubt we're talking about preaching to unbelievers. It's very clear that the disobedient, willfully disobedient.

And what kind of message would Jesus preach to those who are dead in sin? And is there a possibility of repentance? And I don't think so. Alright, now let's go to the Ephesians chapter 4, verses 8.

[18:14] Let's start with verse 7. Ephesians chapter 4, verse 7. The Bible says, But to each one of us, grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift.

Therefore it says, When he ascended on high, he led captivity, a host, or captive, a host of captives. That's how it's worded in the New American Standard. We'll get back to that here in a minute. And he gave gifts to men. And then you skip, verse 9.

Now, this expression, he ascended, what does it mean, except that he also had descended into the lower parts of the earth?

He who descended is himself also he who ascended far above all the heavens, so that he might fill all things, and he gave. And I'll just stop there in verse 11, because I wanted to add the first phrase there in verse 11, first few words, because that ties in with, he gave gifts up there in verse 8.

[19:21] Now, let's go through this real quickly. The idea here is, those who hold the Sheol view, that here it is, very plain, he, you know, when he died, he went down to Sheol, he went into the lower parts, preached the gospel to the disobedient, and then he entered into Abraham's bosom, that compartment that contained the believing Old Testament saints, but they have been held prisoner there in Abraham's bosom for now thousands of years, and he led them out, you know, because he's the victorious Christ.

And he preached the gospel, led out the believers, and took them all to heaven, and that's basically, basically the view based upon this passage.

But now, let me just point out a few things here. Number one, I think, clearly, you have to really force something into this, to come up with this full-blown theory, here, because, well, for one thing, he led captive, a host of captives.

In the text, the Greek text, as Paul wrote it, we have quite a few words in the English, but it's really just two words. In the Greek.

And it's captive, captivity. Captive, captivity. And that's all. And we draw out of that, of course, as we bring it into the English, the idea is that he certainly did do something with some captives, and he did captivate them.

[21:06] The question is, who are the captives? Well, there aren't any captives. The word order suggests that he, captivated, captivity itself, took prisoners, took prison, in prison, captivity itself.

That's the literal idea here. Now, who, who, who might that be a reference to? Are we talking about believers? Are believers, could we identify believers, some group of believers, Old Testament saints, in Sheol, as captivity personified?

They're not the captors, or the captivity. The reference here is to the power of darkness. From my, from my, in my judgment, and I'm throwing this out to you, you can study it, uh, on your own.

He didn't lead, some prisoners out. In fact, uh, the very, the words themselves, do not suggest, that they were prisoners, but that they are now prisoners, because of his act.

And so, he's not leading believers, to make them prisoners. So, he must be, captivating, someone else, there. And I believe, it's the power of darkness.

[22:29] When it says, he lived, in King James, and I think, uh, the King James translators, try to, really did a better job, making a more literal translation. It says, that he led, captivity, captive.

Uh, captivity, who are they? Satan. Satan, sin, death. See, when Jesus, died on the cross, he, became the victor, over Satan, sin, death, and led, that, led Satan, the powers of darkness, into captivity.

Now, it, it, has not been, totally fulfilled. I mean, it's been, it's a done deal, in the mind of God. Satan is still, loosed in a sense.

Uh, he's not been bound, uh, but his days are numbered, but in the mind of God, and, uh, and in the context of what was accomplished at the cross, Satan has been defeated.

Death has been defeated. Oh, death, where is your sting? Uh, Paul, uh, reminds us. And, uh, so, the idea here is, is that when he died, he ascended on high, captivating, or, taking prisoner, the powers of darkness.

[23 : 55] And he gave gifts. Gave gifts to who? Not those in some prison in, uh, Sheol. He gave gifts to the church. Because a few verses later, we have those gifts, uh, uh, listed there.

Uh, he gave apostles, and prophets, and evangelists, and pastors, and teachers. And, uh, there's a lot to learn from that passage.

So, you know, he, he descended, in the sense that he went to the grave. And he ascended on high. And because his sacrifice, upon the cross, was accepted by God, he, captivated, captivity itself.

Uh, the powers of darkness. Alright, let's go on to another one. Real quickly, Luke. Uh, in fact, let me, uh, I've jotted down one here, I don't have it on your list, that ties in with this.

Let's look over at Colossians 2, verse 15 real quickly. Um, because we have, uh, similar idea here, I think, uh, uh, explained, I think he's talking about the same thing, but it's explained a little differently.

[25 : 09] Um, what'd I say? Colossians, um, 2, 15. Okay. Yeah. When he, well, let's see, uh, let's look there at verse, uh, partway through verse, 13, he made you alive together with him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, having canceled out the certificate of debt, consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us.

And he has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the crosses, what he accomplished on the crosses, tremendous passage. We don't have time to unpack all that, but verse 15, when he had disarmed the rulers and authorities, he made a public display of them, leading captivity captive, having triumphed over them through him, through, through his Christ.

And so I think that's a reference to the same, uh, the same work of Christ, uh, through his death and resurrection. All right. Luke 16, verse 23, two minutes.

My word, my word. Real quickly, this won't take us very long on this one, and then I'll just comment real quickly about those secondary passages. Luke, uh, 16, 23.

This is that, uh, of course, that famous, uh, parable, and, uh, uh, much of the specifics of the shield theory come from this parable, like Abraham's bosom and the gulf affixed and so forth.

[26 : 46] But if you look down, and you know the parable, but if you look at verse 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 in Hades.

He lifted up his eyes being in torment and saw Abraham far away and Lazarus in his bosom. Now, the question is, is Abraham's bosom a different place than heaven?

Now, those who say that it is, say that another name for Abraham's bosom is paradise. Paradise. And so, uh, you know, that's a different place than heaven.

And so, the, uh, you know, the poor man didn't go to heaven when he died. He went to be a prison, prisoner in shield, albeit in, in, in, on the, uh, good side, the paradise side.

And, uh, but he's still prisoner there, uh, nonetheless. And, uh, that's not heaven. The problem is that if Abraham's bosom is paradise, and paradise is Abraham's bosom, there are a number of passages in the Bible that, uh, clearly, uh, and I'll just, uh, give you a few of them real quickly.

[28 : 10] Uh, in Luke, uh, 23, 42. And I'll just read these to you. There in, uh, 23, 42.

And Jesus, remember, he said, you know, the thief on the cross says to him, remember me, uh, uh, when you come, uh, in your kingdom. And he said to him, truly, I say to you today, you shall be with me.

Where? In paradise. Does he mean Abraham's bosom? If so, he's not going to see him there today. Not on that day. Uh, is it heaven?

I think so. It could go either way, couldn't it? Well, the problem is if you look on down to verse 46, I didn't have you turn to it. We have Jesus crying out to the Lord, to God, to his father.

And he says, father, into your hands, I commit my spirit. Now, where's the father? In Sheol? No, he's in heaven. And so, if Jesus is going into the hands of the father in heaven, and he said, I'm going to see you thief this day in paradise, then paradise and heaven must be the same place.

