

A Chronological Overview of the Judgments and Resurrections

Bible Study Chart #103

by Mike Wingfield

Key Texts Concerning the Judgments and Resurrections

John 5:25-29; 1 Corinthians 15:20-23

The judgments always take place at the time of a person's resurrection: Daniel 12:1-2; 2 Timothy 4:8; Revelation 22:12

During the O.T. days there were no final resurrections or judgments. All the dead souls went to Sheol, a holding place in the lower parts of the earth. It had two compartments (see reverse side). The dead souls of the saints went to Paradise (same as "Abraham's bosom" in Luke 16:22), while the souls of the dead sinners went to Hell. The saved remained in Sheol until the ascension of Christ.



1 At the end of the O.T. days, Jesus arose from the grave, becoming "*the firstfruits of them that slept*" (1 Corinthians 15:20). This means He was the first to receive a heavenly body. Jesus took all the souls of all the saints in Paradise to heaven with him in His immediate ascension after His resurrection (Ephesians 4:8-10). These saints could not go to heaven until their sins were paid by Jesus on the cross. This was not the time of the resurrection of all the O.T. saints. All the sinners remain in hell until their resurrection day at the end of the kingdom.

2 ke place (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). All the dead church saints will be resurrected, and all the living church saints will be instantly transformed into heavenly bodies and be transported to heaven (1 Corinthians 15:51-58). The church believers will be instantly judged by the Lord Jesus when they see Him in the clouds before going to heaven (1 Corinthians 3:9-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Hebrews 4:13; Revelation 4:10). The church, symbolically pictured as 24 elders (see chart #303), will be in heaven for seven years and return with Jesus at the end of the Tribulation (Revelation 19:4-14).

3 At the end of the Tribulation Period, Jesus will return to earth from heaven. We call this "The Revelation." The O.T. saints will be resurrected and judged at this time to inhabit the Millennial Kingdom promised to Israel (Psalm 50:3-6; Daniel 12:2-3; Matthew 24:31). All the saved who died in the Tribulation Period will also join the resurrection and judgment of the O.T. saints (Revelation 20:4). The survivors of the Tribulation will be judged by the Lord Jesus, separating the saved from the unsaved (Matthew 25:1-46). The sinners will go to hell, while only the saved Tribulation saints will physically inhabit the Millennial Kingdom (Matthew 25:34, 41). They will repopulate the earth during this time.

4 At the end of the Millennial Kingdom two very significant events transpire. The rule of Christ during His earthly kingdom will end in a fiery judgment of the rebelling sinners born during the kingdom (Revelation 20:7-9). Then, instantly, all sinners of all ages will be resurrected to physically stand before Jesus at the Great White Throne Judgment (Revelation 20:11-15). They will be judged by their works and the absence of their names in the Book of Life. Then they are casted into the eternal Lake of Fire. The saints of the kingdom will be instantly changed, judged, and transported to the New Jerusalem on the New Earth, along with all the saints of all ages (Revelation 21:1-4). 1 Corinthians 15:50 helps us understand that no finite body, fashioned for living on earth, can be transported into the spiritual realm to live in the presence of God. All the saints live with Jesus in His Father's house forever.

The Place of the Souls of the Dead Saints in Old Testament Times

by Mike Wingfield

A Biblical View of Sheol

In the Old Testament, when people died, they went to a place called in Hebrew “sheol.” The word sheol is found 65 times in the Bible. It is translated “*pit*” three times, “*grave*” three times, and “*hell*” 31 times. In a few places in the Bible, sheol is a reference to a physical grave (Genesis 37:35; 1 Samuel 2:6; Isaiah 14:11). However, most of the time it is a reference to the place of the souls of the departed dead.

a place of comfort
Paradise
Abraham’s Bosom

“great gulf fixed”

a place of torment
Hell or Hades

A Biblical Description of Sheol

Luke 16:19-31

Sheol is a physical place located in the “*lower parts of the earth*” (Psalm 63:9; Ezekiel 32:18; compare with Ephesians 4:9). It had two compartments. One was called “hell” or “hades.” The other was called “paradise.” (See the graphic illustration to the left.) During His early ministry, Jesus described this place while describing a real account of two people who died as recorded in Luke 16:19-31. According to the Bible, the saints of the Old Testament (from Abel to Pentecost) went to a place of comfort called “Paradise,” or “Abraham’s bosom.” The word translated bosom literally means “side.” To be by Abraham’s side in this case indicates a “a place of honor.” The sinners went to a place of torment called hell. This is their “*prison*” for all of eternity (Revelation 20:7)

In the Bible, Hell is described as a place of “*darkness*” (Jude 6), “*the bottomless pit,*” (Revelation 9:1), and a place of “*fire*” (Luke 16:24; Mark 9:43-48). Hell is a place of everlasting fire (Matthew 18:8). The constant torment in hell brings great pain. People who are there are constantly “*weeping,*” (Luke 13:28); “*wailing,*” (Matthew 13:42); and are gnashing their teeth in excruciating pain (Luke 13:28).

Jesus’ Experience with Death and Sheol

When Jesus’s body was in the tomb for three days, His spirit was in Paradise (Matthew 12:40; Luke 23:43). While Jesus’s spirit was in Paradise, He also visited hell for a brief announcement of judgment (1 Peter 3:18-20). If you struggle with accepting this, remember that God is omnipresent [everywhere present at the same time]. Read Psalm 139:8. When Jesus ascended back to heaven at His resurrection, He led the saints out of Paradise to heaven (Ephesians 4:8, 10). Jesus emptied Paradise. Therefore, it no longer exists in the lower parts of the earth. When believers die today, they go directly to heaven (2 Corinthians 5:8). Before Christ’s resurrection, the O.T. saints had to wait for Jesus to make the payment for their salvation before they could enter the direct presence of God in heaven.

However, the compartment of sheol that was a place of torment was not emptied. It still exists. The souls of the sinners are still in hell awaiting their judgment day when they will be resurrected and called up out of hell to stand before Jesus at the great White Throne Judgment (Revelation 20:11-15). At this judgment, sheol will end. “*And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire*” (Revelation 20:14).