

# Where Are the Dead?

## *What Happens After We Die? (2)*

**Scripture Reading:** *Matthew 22:23-33*

### **Introduction:**

- A. Remember our prayer for this study: “O LORD, make me know my end...” (*Psa 39:4*).
- B. Death is not the end of our existence; our spirits will return to God (*Ecclesiastes 12:1-7*).
- C. Physical death is simply the separation of our bodies from our spirits (*James 2:14-17,26*).
- D. But what happens **after** this separation? What happens after physical death?

### **I. Jesus’ parable of the rich man and Lazarus (*Luke 16:19-31*) provides valuable insight**

- A. Jesus wasn’t in the habit of basing his parables on unrealistic foundations. He implies:
  - 1. There is a conscious, personal aspect to life after death.
  - 2. In this future realm, the identity of self is preserved.
  - 3. Wherever the dead are, there is a separation between the evil and the good.
  - 4. The dead are experiencing what they are experiencing based on the exit ramp they took.
- B. Jesus used a term with rich Biblical background to describe this abode of the dead—*Hades*.

### **II. “The realm of the dead”**

- A. The Hebrew equivalent to *Hades*—***Sheol***—is used 64 times in the Old Testament.
  - 1. *Genesis 37:34-35* — Jacob, as he laments the reported death of his son, Joseph.
  - 2. *Psalms 89:46-48* — Ethan the Ezrahite, on the difficulties of earthly life.
  - 3. *Psalms 139:7-8* — David, on the omnipresence of God.
  - 4. *Proverbs 7:24-27* — Solomon, providing a warning against the sin of adultery.
- B. The New Testament uses ***Hades*** (Greek) 10 times to describe this realm of the dead.
  - 1. *Matthew 16:18* — the gates of Hades will not prevail against Christ’s church.
  - 2. *Acts 2:22-32* — Peter, contrasting King David with Jesus of Nazareth.
  - 3. *Revelation 1:17-18* — the glorified Christ has the keys of Death and Hades.

### **III. “He is not God of the dead, but of the living”**

- A. In *Matthew 22:23-33*, Jesus makes clear that there will be a resurrection of all the dead.
- B. In *Matthew 25:31-46*, Jesus clearly reveals the ultimate point of the coming resurrection.
- C. In *Revelation 20:11-15*, we are told that Hades will eventually give up the dead who are in it.
- D. Why? *2 Corinthians 5:10* and *Romans 14:11-12* provide God’s answer.
- E. Regardless of the exit ramps taken from this life, all roads will converge at God’s throne!

### **Conclusion:**

*“Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade others.” (2 Corinthians 5:11)*