

27. These groups are systematically categorized over the course of world history by this doctrine:

## The Doctrine of **שְׁאוֹל** (*Sh<sup>e</sup>'ol*): **Shé'ol** or **Ἅδης** (*Hádēs*): **Hádēs**

### Introduction: Definition and Etymology

1. The Hebrew word **Shé'ol** originally meant in post-Biblical Hebrew the deep parts of the sea. But both **Shé'ol** and the Greek word **Hádēs** are used to refer to anything that is subterranean and large. Therefore, they are used for the vast subterranean place of the departed dead of the human race and the abode of certain fallen angels.
2. Both **Shé'ol** and **Hádēs** are mistranslated “hell” which adds to the confusion.
3. **Hádēs** is used from classical times and before for the underworld and the realm of the dead.
4. **Shé'ol** is sometimes used for the grave, as in Genesis 37:35, 42:38; 1 Samuel 2:6 and other passages.
5. The dying are said to go to **Shé'ol**, which is not the grave, but to the under part of the earth. This is a reference to the soul in Numbers 16:30; Ezekiel 31:15, 17.
6. Prior to the resurrection of Jesus Christ, all human dead went to **Shé'ol** or **Hádēs** where two compartments were designed to receive them. Old Testament believers went to Paradise or Abraham's Bosom. Unbelievers went to Torments.
7. Those who are believers in the Old Testament are said to be delivered into the power of **Shé'ol**: Hosea 13:14; Psalm 49:16.
8. However, since the resurrection of Christ, Old Testament believers have all been transferred to the third heaven as a part of the triumphal procession.

### Summaries of the Compartments of **Shé'ol** or **Hádēs**:

- A. **Παράδεισος** (*Parádeisos*): **Paradise**: The place where Old-Testament believers' souls and interim bodies resided prior to the resurrection of Christ.

At the Lord's resurrection, all Old Testament saints followed Jesus Christ into the Third Heaven where they will reside until the Second Advent which terminates the dispensation of Israel.

**Ephesians 4:8** “When He ascended on high [ the resurrection ], He led a host of captives [ Old Testament believers ]; and He gave gifts to men.”

Documentation of where in Hades the Lord's soul went once He experienced physical death is confirmed in this exchange between Jesus and one of the criminals crucified with Him:

**Luke 23:39** One of the criminals who were hanged there was hurling abuse at Him [ Jesus ], saying, “Are You not the Christ? Save Yourself and us!”



**Luke 23:40** But the other answered, and rebuking him said, “Do you not even fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation?”

**v. 41** “and we indeed are suffering justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong.”

**v. 42** And he was saying, “Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingdom!”

**v. 43** And He [ Jesus ] said to Him, “Truly [ ἀμήν (*amēn*): equivalent to ἀληθώς (*alēthōs*): “truly; to speak with certainty” ] I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise.” (NASB)

Within what is referred to as Christianity, there is among its alleged followers those whose understanding of how a person is saved are both varied and sundried.

Some believe in the grace doctrine of faith alone in Christ alone for the imputation of salvation and eternal life.

Others insist that faith is not enough so that to confirm one’s salvation, good works must follow. Yet, unless those works are inspired by the filling of the Holy Spirit and based on divine guidance from doctrinal absolutes, then those works are typified as being burned by fire. See 1 Corinthians 3:12–15.

The believer-criminal on a cross by Jesus could not perform any work. He was nailed to it. He could not dislodge himself in order to perform a work if he had thought it necessary to do.

What he could do was speak and this is what he said, “We are receiving what we deserve for our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong.”

He then turned to Jesus and said, “Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingdom.” Jesus responded, “Today you will be with Me in Paradise.”

## **B. The Great Gulf Fixed**

This describes a chasm in the earth that is associated with these compartments of **Hádēs**. It sits between Paradise and the compartment of Torments where unbelievers are sequestered awaiting their evaluation in eternity future.

Here is a synopsis of the Great Gulf Fixed:

**The Greek word *hadēs*, like its Hebrew equivalent, *sheol*, is used in two ways:**

**To indicate the condition of the unsaved between death and the great white throne of judgment (Revelation 20:11–15). Luke 16:23–24 shows that the lost in *hadēs* are conscious, possess full use of their faculties, memory, etc., and are in torment. This continues until the final judgment of the lost (2 Peter 2:9), when all the unsaved, and *hadēs* itself, will be cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:13–15).**

**This indicates, in general, the condition of all departed human spirits between death and the resurrection. It should not lead anyone to think that there is a possibility of change from one state to the other after death, for verse 23 shows that when the unsaved man who was in *hadēs* saw Abraham and Lazarus, they were “far away,” and verse 26 states that between the two places there is a great chasm, so that no one can cross from one to the other.**

**It is certain that all who are saved go at once into the presence of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23). Jesus told the penitent thief, “today you shall be with Me in Paradise” (Luke 23:43).<sup>4</sup>**

**C. Torments (βάσανος): *Básanos***

Where the souls and interim bodies of every unbeliever in history reside presently and will reside in this compartment until they are assembled before the great white throne for their judgment (Revelation 20:11).

This event is what immediately follows the incineration of the universe, details of which are provided in 2 Peter 3:10–12. John comments on this event in:

**John 3:18**                      The one who believes in Him  
[ **Jesus** ] is not judged. The one who does not believe is  
judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the  
one and only Son of God. (NET)

(End JAS4-22. See JAS4-23 for continuation of the study at p. 221.)

<sup>4</sup> “Hades and Sheol,” *The Scofield Study Bible: NASB* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 16:23, p. 1436.

