

The Trip to the Afterlife, part 2

I would like to share with you a sermon from Douglas Hamilton, preacher at the Junction City Church of Christ, Junction City, KS.

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[Douglas Hamilton Video link](#)

Continuing "*The Trip to the Afterlife, Part 2*", with:

The Transition

We have a transition that will occur when we die.

When we die, our *soul* and *spirit of life* disassociates from our body

We are losing the old shell. The real you, just like a snake sheds its skin. The real snake isn't the skin. It's the one who left the skin. Don't go home and say, "The preacher called us snakes!" Ok?

Well since the *spirit of life is the life force* of both the body and the soul, when the soul becomes disembodied it takes the spirit of life with it to Hades. This is why these words are used interchangeably. A lot of times you will be reading in your Bible, as we will see, and it will say "somebody died and their spirit left, somebody died and their soul left." Is it the *spirit*, is it the *soul*? The answer is: yes.

Let's look at some examples:

- **Genesis 35:18**, Rachel dies in childbirth, "*as her **soul** was departing (for she died).*"
- **1 Kings 17:21,22**, Elijah pray for the widow's son, "*let this child's **soul** return...²² and the **soul** of the child came back to him, and he revived.*"
- **Luke 8:54,55**, Jesus and Jairus daughter, " '*Child, arise*'⁵⁵ and her **spirit** (*pneuma*) returned."

Wait, wait, what's the difference? Well, *the spirit of life* returned and that's always with the soul. Remember God "*formed man... and breathed into his nostrils the **breath of life** and [he] became a living soul*" He was a dead soul before that and since then all souls are living.

And it says, "her spirit returned", vs 55.

- **Luke 23:46**, Jesus on the cross, about to be disembodied, it says, *Jesus crying out with a loud voice, said, "Father, INTO YOUR HANDS I COMMIT MY **SPIRIT** [Psa 31:5]."* Having said this, He breathed His last.

That's not the Holy Spirit, it's Jesus' *spirit of life*

- **Acts 7:59,60**, Stephen being stoned, *called on the Lord and said, "Lord Jesus, receive my **spirit!**"*

That's lowercase 's'

- **Acts 5:5**, Ananias falling dead, "*gave up the ghost*" (ASV,KJV), greek word means *to expire* or "*breathed his last*" (NKJV, NASB, ESV) or "*and died*" (NIV)
- **Acts 5:10**, Ananias' wife also "*gave up the ghost*"
- **Acts 12:23**, gave up the ghost (ASV, KJV), or "*breathed his last*" (ESV) or "*and died*" (NKJV, NASB, NIV)
- **James 2:26**, "*the body without (or apart from) the spirit is dead*"

So we see the Bible uses spirit and soul interchangeably, even though they are not the same thing! Because when we die both our soul and spirit of life leave the body.

SR: It's a lot like what we learned in our study of Romans about *righteousness* and *justification*. The Bible uses the terms interchangeably even though they are not the same thing. If we received the free gift of Jesus' righteousness (and are therefore righteous, because He is righteous) then we are justified. Because the gift of His righteousness **IS** our justification, the reason why we can be called righteous (even though we have no righteousness of our own!). So if we understand our receiving His righteousness is our justification then we can use those terms: righteousness and justification interchangeably.

SR: So it is with our **soul** and **spirit of life**. If we understand that the *spirit of life* God breathed into us is what makes our souls alive and eternal (because it will never leave our soul), we can use the terms interchangeably.

Some verses say spirit, some say soul, but where did this ghost term come from? "They gave up the ghost"

The etymology of the word ghost tells us [it comes from the] Old English [word] *gast* for "breath; good or bad spirit, angel, demon;...", in Biblical use "soul, spirit, life," the English representative of the usual West Germanic word for "supernatural being." In Christian writing in Old English it is used to render [the] Latin [word] *spiritus*, a sense preserved in Holy Ghost.

When you die, your soul **and** your spirit of life disassociates (leaves) with the body. Where do they go?

All souls go to Hades after death

Hades? Yes, that's what the Bible says.

There are two primary Biblical theories immediately following death

- Some say we immediately transition to heaven
 - The Bible doesn't really support that, you can twist a couple verses, but then you have to ignore everything [else] the Bible does say.
 - And that's not who we are.
 - "The sum of your word is true" Psalm 119:160
 - It's **ALL** God's word, you can't just pick and choose what you want.

- We adjust, our minds are "*transformed by the renewing of your mind*". Rom. 12:2
- The Bible actually says that we go to Hades and await the judgement
 - In the NT the word used is the greek word Hades
 - In the OT the word used is the hebrew Sheol

Hades is the same as Sheol

SR: I'm going to sum up a discussion Douglas has regarding Hades and Sheol. The reason they use the word Hades in the NT

- Hades was an **already** established idea in Greek culture.
 - The underworld, the place of the dead.
- Hades literally means "the place of disembodied souls."
- Hades is also the name of the greek god of the underworld in greek mythology
 - He has a three headed dog, the three-headed hound of Hades.
 - And together they prevent anyone from escaping Hades. It is a place impossible to escape from. That's why when Paul is preaching to the stoic and epicurean philosophers on Mar's Hill, the Areopagus, and he starts talking about the resurrection of the dead, they sneer at him, because they fully believe that nobody escapes Hades. Once he gets you in his grip that's where you are.

This idea of Hades is most closely associated with the idea of Sheol in the OT

Jesus went to Hades upon death

Jesus is our trail blazer. He took the path that we will take. What was the path that Jesus took?

- **Matthew 16:18**, I shall build my church... gates of Hades shall not prevail against it
- **Luke 23:43**, to thief on cross... today you shall be with me in Paradise
Not in heaven, but Paradise. As we will see that's a part of Hades
- **Acts 2:27**, where did Jesus go when he died? Quoting from David from the OT:
"For You will not leave my soul in Hades, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption."

Jesus went to Hades

- **Acts 2:31**, Peter speaks of the resurrection of Jesus, that he will not be abandoned in Hades, again, quotes David saying:
"[David], foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption."

Hades is where Jesus went

- **Revelation 1:18**, Jesus "*holds the keys of death and Hades*", How did he get the keys? He had to go there, to Hades, to get them

He didn't go to heaven, when Jesus died on the cross, he went to Hades.

- **Hebrews 2:14,15**, *Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵ and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.*

So Jesus went to Hades when he died.

Jesus taught from the perspective of Hades

- When talking about his church in **Matthew 16:18**, *And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and **the gates of Hades shall not prevail** against it.*

SR: I'm going to interject something here based on a statement Douglas makes in his sermon shortly regarding the *gates of Hades*.

I used to think that what Jesus was saying here is that the kingdom of Satan, Hades, could not prevail against the church. As in an offensive assault. The armies of the Devil waging war on the church. But a sister in Christ conveyed a better idea that she heard in a sermon. That the "*gate of Hades*" are not an offensive weapon. The demons don't pick them up and beat the church with them like some kind of weapon, well what are they? They're defensive! They are protection for Satan's kingdom. And she relayed the idea that it was the church beating on the gates of Hades and the gates could not prevail! That sounded pretty good. But, then you might get the idea that the church could reach in after someone died and pull them out... and that's not the idea here. Well, what could it mean? As Douglas has shown that Jesus went to Hades when he died. And that He didn't STAY in Hades, but rose from the dead! As Peter says in

Acts 2:24 (NIV) *But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because **it was impossible for death** to keep its hold on him.*

You want to know another way of saying that?... "*and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against him!*" **Hades COULDN'T keep him**, nor shall they prevail against the church when our Lord resurrects us!... Hades won't be able to keep us either! What do you think about that!

Back to Douglas: If Jesus did not come back from the dead then the whole thing was for nothing. Would you trust somebody to rescue you from the dead, if he couldn't be brought back from the dead himself?

The gates of Hades couldn't prevent Jesus from escaping Hades, nor will it keep the church from resurrecting.

- **Luke 16:22,23**, *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. 23 In Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and **saw Abraham far away and Lazarus in his bosom.**

Now we're going to claim that we follow Jesus. I'm a disciple of Jesus! That means a follower. And if Jesus is saying we go to Hades and if Jesus said He went to Hades, then if we say, "no, when we die we go right to heaven", we just bypassed Hades, then we're not following Jesus anymore. And then

we can't call ourselves disciples, then we're just "*pot-luck-ownians*" or something, that's all we'd be.

The dead going to Hades was the acceptable teaching of the Scriptures

Compare Hosea 13:14 and 1 Corinthians 15:55

- **Hosea 13:14**, Shall I ransom them from the power of Sheol?
Shall I redeem them from death?
O Death, where are your thorns?
O Sheol, where is your sting?
Compassion will be hidden from My sight.

Paul quotes Hosea 13:14 in:

- **1 Corinthians 15:55** (NKJV), "O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?"

Most translations say "death" in 1 Co 15:55, for where is your victory. The NKJV & WEB say "Hades", the KJV says, "grave". Since Hosea uses "Sheol" it is correct to say "O Hades, where is your victory"

And then Paul goes right to the resurrection...

That's how we have victory, because we've been rescued from death through the power of Jesus Christ. Our trail blazer, He's been there before us!

Everybody who has died, according to the Bible, is still in Hades. Jesus holds the keys to Hades, nobody else holds the keys. And they're waiting.

Jesus said in **John 5:28-29** (NKJV), *Do not marvel at this; for **the hour is coming** in which all who are **in the graves** will hear His voice ²⁹ and **come forth**—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.*

That doesn't diminish anything concerning salvation. Well, let's speak accurately about what the Bible says. Your loved one is in the place of disembodied souls if they passed. We'll cover that more in detail.

The Two Side of Hades

- There are two sides the Bible teaches us.
- Two sides to this realm the Bible speaks of.
 - One for those destined for heaven
 - The other for those destined for hell
- The saved side of Hades is called Paradise (Luke 23:43)
 - Jesus said to the thief on the cross, "Today you shall be with me in Paradise." That's one part of the realm.
- There is a great gulf affixed

- The two rooms don't have interchangeable doors
- The other side, the condemned side is Tartarus, **2 Peter 2:4**, *For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to **_hell** (greek: Tartarus) and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment;_*

That's the holding area for disembodied souls where they will not be going to heaven during the resurrection.

==== Two sides

Look at **Luke 16:23,24** Jesus speaking says *And being in **torments** in **Hades**, he (the rich man) lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.*

They're in two different locations, notice the contrast, ²⁴ *he (the rich man) cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.'*

Lazarus, he was comforted, he was resting in paradise, two different outcomes.

Was it a *literal* flame or a flaming agony? We don't know that for sure. SR: and I say, 'does it matter? The end result is the same. The descriptive term Jesus uses is *flame*.'

But, Douglas continues, I know I don't want any part of that. I can tell where I want to be and where I don't want to be. And I don't want to be where the rich man was.

→ But on the other side Lazarus is resting, he's comfortable

Tartarus is associated with Torment, Paradise is associated with Rest

I can appreciate rest. Have you ever noticed that people say, "Did you get your sleep?" What do you do when you get up in the morning? "How did you sleep?" + Sleep, sleep, sleep. I'm so tired I could go to.... **SLEEP**

You know what it's like. Man, that's great.

Rest is a beautiful thing! We call it *beauty sleep*!

Well, rest is a beautiful thing when you're waiting, knowing that you have heaven as your destination. Basically, the safe side of Hades, Paradise, is like the best dream you could ever have!

Did you ever have one of those dreams where it's like so cool that you don't want to wake up. And then you wake up and you try to go back to sleep and get it again. And it doesn't come back and then you can't even remember it.

But this is a dream that's a reality. Look at:

- **1 Samuel 28:15**, Samuel said to Saul when he was summoned by witch of endor, and when it actually worked, it scared the witch of Endor. What did Samuel say to Saul: "Why did you disturb me?"
- **Mark 5:39**, Jesus said, "Why make this commotion and weep? The child is not dead, but sleeping." She was asleep

- **John 11:11-14**, Lazarus was asleep (really dead), but he's asleep, because in the afterlife it's resting
- **Acts 7:60**, Stephen fell asleep when he died.
- **1 Thessalonians 4:13-15**, *I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.*

in verse 14,15, *God will bring with him those who sleep in Jesus.* ¹⁵ *For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.*

- **Revelation 6:9-11**, *...I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.* ¹⁰ *And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"* ¹¹ *Then a white robe was given to each of them;*

What were they told?

*and it was said to them that **they should rest a little while longer**, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.*

Our present life has future implications

We love to quote **John 3:16**, *God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

But why don't we continue on? A few verses later Jesus says: **John 3:18**, *"He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."*

That means you can be a walking dead man in this life and it will determine where you will go in Hades. To Paradise or Tartarus. And then at the resurrection whether you go to heaven or not.

We seem to disassociate our lives here with how we will end up in the future.

- **Luke 16:19-21,25**, Look at the narrative that Jesus put up. This is Jesus, so if we say we follow Jesus, let's follow Jesus to where he's taking us:

Luke 16:19-23 (NKJV)

"There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. ²⁰ *But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate,* ²¹ *desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.*

→ The dogs were the medical treatment Lazarus received

²² *So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried.* ²³ *And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.*

→ At the end of this the rich man is begging to be the evangelist of all time... but it's too late.
Look at:

Luke 16:25

But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented.

→ It wasn't the things (they had) it's what they did with the things

- **1 Timothy 4:7b,8**, ... *exercise yourself toward godliness.* ⁸ *For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.*

You go to the gym and you start working out and you see that profit. There's a gym that God has, it's called: **life** and that one, notice what he says, *godliness is profitable for all things* both in this life and the one to come. Not only are you blessed in this life, but you're blessed eternally.

When we die we're going to Hades, either one side or the other

Conclusion: On a marker, some tombstone in Ireland, it reads...

*Good all, as you pass by, As you are now,
so once was I.*

*As I am now, you all must be
Prepare yourself and follow me.*

Douglas says: (I paraphrase), that he knew of a preacher in Ireland who was thinking about the Hadean realm and he wrote a little note and stuck it on the stone, it says:

*To follow you I'm not content,
until I know which way you went.*

→ We all have a destiny with Hades.

Now if you were thinking, I saw on tv on "Looney Tunes", when Silvester was killed by Tweety, he was playing a harp and floating up to heaven right away... STOP IT!

I saw on "Ghost"... STOP IT!

What about, "It's a Wonderful Life" ? What about "Heaven Can Wait" ?

What about all these shows that you're watching about somebody who had an out of body experience and they made a movie about it... **'so don't tell me it's not true!'** Oh, ok so it's not Biblical, that's all

If we're going to **claim to be Biblical Christians** then we must **hold true to the Bible** and the bottom line is this, the Bible's very clear, we all have a destiny with Hades. The place of disembodied souls,

but you're going to love it.

Invitation

We are extending the invitation, now, to anyone who is subject to it. Come,... while we stand and sing.