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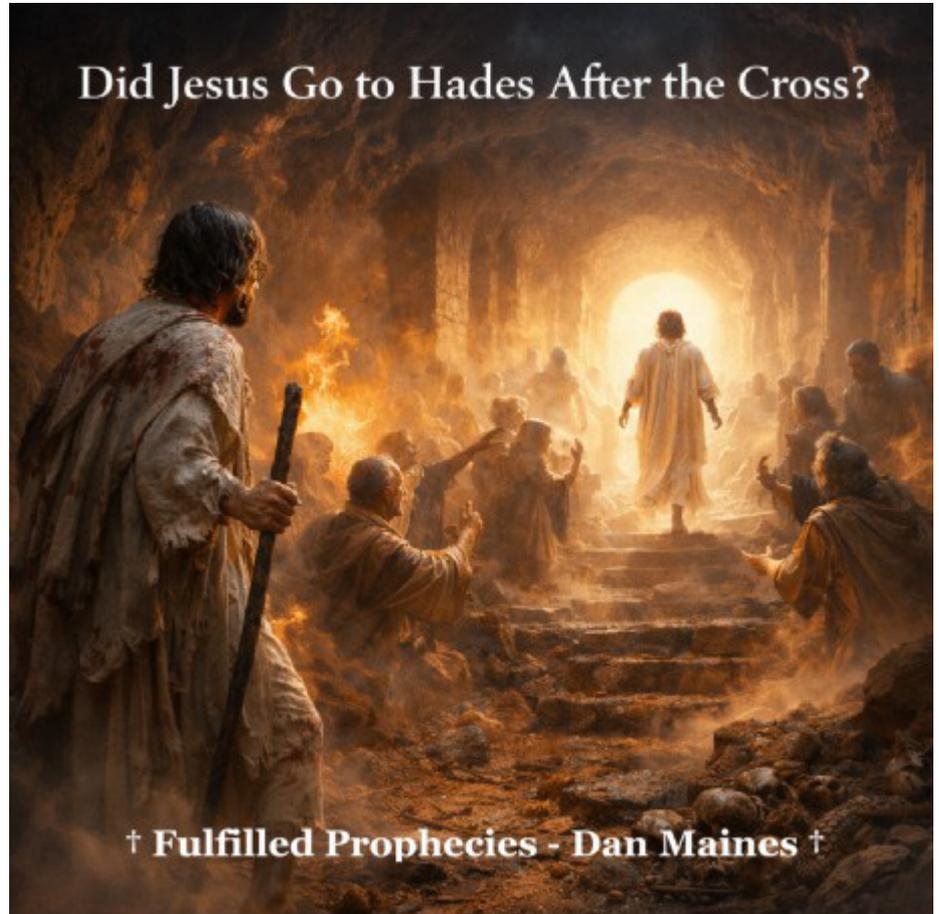
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Did Jesus Go to Hades After the Cross



By Dan Maines

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Introduction

† In the Bible, Hades is the realm of the dead, not a place of torment for the righteous. (Ecclesiastes 9:10)

† In the Old Testament, this same realm is called Sheol, the grave, the unseen state of the dead. (Psalm 16:10)

† Much confusion exists because later tradition redefined Hades into something Scripture never taught. (Colossians 2:8)

† To understand what happened after the cross, we must let

Scripture define Hades and death. (Acts 17:11)

Psalm 16:10

For You will not abandon my soul to Sheol,
Nor will You allow Your Holy One to undergo decay.

† This Psalm defines Sheol as the realm of the dead, not a place of punishment. (Ecclesiastes 9:10)

† Peter later applies this directly to Jesus, proving this was always messianic. (Acts 2:31)

† Sheol is shown as temporary and defeatable, not eternal. (Hosea 13:14)

Acts 2:27

You will not abandon my soul to Hades,
Nor allow Your Holy One to undergo decay.

† Scripture shows that Jesus truly entered death. (Romans 6:9)

† Peter is clear that Jesus was in Hades, but He was not left there. (Acts 2:31)

† Hades here corresponds to Sheol, the realm of the dead, not a place of torment for the righteous. (Psalm 16:10)

Matthew 12:40

for just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

† The heart of the earth is Jewish language describing death and the realm of the dead. (Genesis 37:35)

† This is not language for fiery torment or punishment. (Ecclesiastes 9:10)

† Jesus did not bypass death, He entered it fully. (Hebrews 2:14)

Ecclesiastes 9:10

Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might, for

there is no activity or planning or knowledge or wisdom in Sheol where you are going.

† Sheol is described as the state of death, not conscious torment. (Psalm 6:5)

† This reinforces the biblical definition of the realm of the dead. (Job 14:10-12)

† This is the condition Jesus entered when He died. (Romans 6:9)

John 19:30

Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, It is finished. And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.

† What did He do there, He did not suffer torment, the suffering was finished on the cross. (Isaiah 53:5)

† There was no remaining punishment left to complete after this. (Hebrews 10:12)

† Any teaching that places suffering after this moment denies Christ's finished work. (Hebrews 9:28)

Ephesians 4:8-10

Therefore it says,

When He ascended on high,
He led captive a host of captives,
And He gave gifts to men.

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.

† Instead of suffering, He entered death as a victor. (Colossians 2:15)

† He descended into the realm of death to break its power. (Hebrews 2:14)

† Death held captives under the Law, and Christ led that

captivity captive. (Galatians 3:13)

Revelation 1:18

and the living One, and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.

† Revelation confirms the result of His descent, He was dead, and now He lives forevermore. (Romans 6:9)

† Keys represent authority and ownership. (Matthew 16:19)

† Jesus stripped death and Hades of their authority. (2 Timothy 1:10)

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?

† This prophecy anticipated the Messiah's victory over death and Sheol. (1 Corinthians 15:54-55)

† Death is revealed as a covenant enemy, not merely a biological event. (Romans 5:20-21)

† Redemption from death was always part of God's plan. (Isaiah 25:8)

1 Corinthians 15:54-55

But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written,

Death is swallowed up in victory.

O death, where is your victory?

O death, where is your sting?

† Paul declares Hosea's prophecy fulfilled. (Hosea 13:14)

† The sting of death was the Law, not the grave. (1 Corinthians 15:56)

† When the Old Covenant passed, death lost its covenantal

authority. (Hebrews 8:13)

Luke 16:31

If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.

† This passage is often misused to define Hades, but it is a parable spoken before the cross. (Luke 16:19-31)

† Parables illustrate covenant truth, they do not map afterlife geography. (Matthew 13:34)

† It cannot override clear teaching given after the resurrection. (Acts 2:31)

Revelation 20:14

Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

† Death and Hades are conditions, not people. (1 Corinthians 15:26)

† This imagery shows the removal of their authority. (2 Timothy 1:10)

† From the fulfilled perspective, this occurred at the judgment of that age. (Matthew 24:34)

Historical References

† Josephus describes Sheol as the realm of the dead, the unseen state of death.

† Irenaeus taught that Christ descended to the realm of the dead in victory, not torment.

† Tertullian affirmed Christ's victory over death, not post cross suffering.

How It Applies To Us Today

† Jesus went to Hades in the sense that He truly died and entered the realm of the dead.

† He did not remain there, He was not punished there, and He emerged victorious.

† Believers do not go to Hades now because we are already in Christ. (John 5:24)

† Eternal life is a present possession, not a post death reward. (1 John 5:12)

John 5:24

Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.

† This passage defines the believer's present reality. (Ephesians 2:5-6)

† We have passed from death into life. (1 John 3:14)

† Death no longer has authority over us. (Romans 8:1)

Q and A Appendix

Q Did Jesus go to Hades after He died?

A Yes. He truly entered death and the realm of the dead, but He was not left there (Acts 2:31).

Q Did Jesus suffer in Hades?

A No. The suffering was finished on the cross (John 19:30).

Q Why did Jesus enter Hades at all?

A To truly die, fulfill Scripture, and break the power of death from within (Hebrews 2:14).

Q Do believers go to Hades today?

A No. Believers have already passed from death into life (John 5:24).

Q Did Jesus preach in Hades?

A Scripture does not teach that Jesus preached the gospel to dead humans in Hades. Passages like 1 Peter 3:19 speak of

proclamation of victory, not evangelism, and they refer to Christ declaring His triumph, not offering salvation after death (Colossians 2:15).

Q What about torment being in Abraham's bosom?

A Torment is never said to be in Abraham's bosom. Abraham's bosom appears only in a parable spoken before the cross (Luke 16:19-31), and parables use imagery to teach covenant truth, not map the afterlife. Abraham's bosom represents covenant fellowship with Abraham, not a compartment of Hades, and it cannot override clear post cross teaching about Christ's victory over death.

Q How do we explain Luke 16:23 where it says the rich man was in torment and saw Abraham far away with Lazarus in his bosom?

A Luke 16 is a parable spoken to the Pharisees about covenant reversal, not a literal description of the afterlife. The torment is never said to be in Abraham's bosom. Abraham's bosom is described as far away, showing two opposite covenant conditions. Abraham's bosom represents covenant fellowship with Abraham and the promises, while the torment represents covenant judgment and anguish for those who trusted wealth, status, and lineage. This parable was spoken before the cross and cannot override clear post resurrection teaching about Christ's victory over death and Hades. If taken literally, it creates contradictions such as bodily features and conversations after death. The parable's point is belief in Moses and the Prophets, not mapping Hades or teaching post death torment.

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

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Source Index

† Psalm 16:10; Acts 2:27; Matthew 12:40; Ecclesiastes 9:10;
John 19:30; Ephesians 4:8-10; Revelation 1:18; Hosea 13:14; 1
Corinthians 15:54-55; Luke 16:31; Revelation 20:14; John 5:24
† Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews; Irenaeus; Tertullian

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