

the other a Hell of misery, and that it was a dark and dismal place in the depths of the earth in which disembodied spirits were imprisoned, is nothing less than a wholesale acceptance of pagan Greek mythology, and nothing more than a semantic variation on the Elysium of bliss and the Tartarus of misery where comprised the Hades of Greek speculative thought.

Second, the idea that Christ went to Hades to preach the gospel arose originally out of a tendency, especially on the part of Clement of Alexandria and Origen, toward universalism. Clement held that all men would have opportunity to repent right up to the Day of Judgment; Origen held that there would be a complete restitution of all things, and that even Satan would eventually be saved!

Because of these two basic tendencies I would propose that the theory of Christ's descent into Hades be abandoned. Incidentally, in connection with this proposal, I take note that the New Scofield Reference Bible, in a footnote on 1 Peter 3:19, makes the following statement: "The theory that the Lord Jesus, after His crucifixion, preached to the unsaved dead in hades and gave them a second chance is not found in Scripture." May we all heed the implied admonition!

At the outset of this study I mentioned a second division of our subject. I propose that we now consider:

Some Intriguing Questions about the Intermediate State

I also stated that these were questions concerning which Scripture gives us little or no information. And thus we stand in great jeopardy of moving over into the area of unfounded speculation. However, I would propose these merely as questions for contemplation and reflection.

What is it like to be a disembodied person in a post-mortem state? This question contains and implies many sub-questions. Does a disembodied person have some sort of form? Does a disembodied person retain the same level of intellectual and emotional maturity attained in the ante-mortem state? Does a disembodied baby or child continue to grow psychologically? Does a disembodied person who had passed into senility in the ante-mortem state regain clarity of thought?