

off my tongue", was "in agony in this flame", and was in agony. These were not physical eyes, finger, tongue or flame Remember, he was disembodied!

Perhaps it would help to draw a parallel from the figure of speech called anthropomorphism as applied to God. When we read of God as having an outstretched arm and a mighty hand, as having eyes that run to and fro throughout the earth, as being seated in heaven, or as using the earth as His footstool, we understand that since God is incorporeal (i.e., He does not have a physical body), these expressions are speaking of functions performed by human beings through physical organs, but by God through non-physical powers. By way of analogy, the language employed in this passage can be understood to be speaking of functions that disembodied souls/spirits perform in the spirit world which are spoken of in terms appropriate to the physical world.

Another possible explanation is that those who have recently experienced physical death may persist (for a time) thinking in and using physical terms to express non-physical functions in their disembodied existence.

- (g) How do we know that these are intermediate and not final states?

If Jesus was speaking of final states, wouldn't this clear up all the problems of physical language, since souls/spirits are re-embodied in these states?

Since the final states begin following resurrection and final judgment, there is no more opportunity for the unrighteous to repent, once the final state has begun. In this account, however, we find the rich man begging Abraham to send Lazarus to his father's house in order to persuade his five living brothers to repent and avoid ἄδης. Since in this account repentance is still envisioned as a possibility, we know that our Lord must have been speaking of the intermediate state and not of the final state.

- (h) Is human destiny fixed at the final Judgment or at death?

In this passage we are told that there is a great chasm fixed between heaven and ἄδης, and that those who may wish to cross over are not able to do so. Although the rich man suggests that human beings who have passed from earth to heaven in the experience of physical death may be able to return to earth, there is no record (except in the case of Christ) of anyone ever having done this. (This assertion is not contradicted by the appearance in a vision of Moses and Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration, as recorded in Matthew 17, Mark 9, and Luke 9, since appearance in a vision is not the same as coming from heaven to earth).

As far as human beings who have passed from earth to ἄδης being able to cross over from ἄδης to heaven, this passage places an unbridgeable chasm between these two places, and thus fixes human destiny at physical death. And since those who are in ἄδης will be cast into the lake of fire, the eternal destiny of the wicked is fixed at physical death. The accepted time of salvation is now, during this present life!

Summary: One meaning of ^ἡἄδης is that of the place or condition to which the wicked dead, in their disembodied state, pass at physical death. In the New Testament, ἄδης is the place or state in which the wicked dead remain in a disembodied state in torment until the resurrection of the unjust and the final judgment, at which time they come forth from ἄδης to be reunited with their bodies, judged, and cast into the lake of fire.