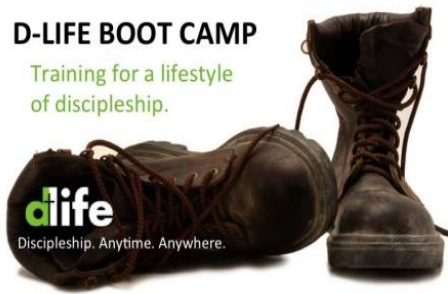


D-LIFE BOOT CAMP

Training for a lifestyle
of discipleship.



Keeping it Real

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Pastor Dale L. Crawley Sr.

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." Matthew 28:19-20

Rev. Dr. Deborah Crawley, Teacher
Sis. Tammi Brown, Asst. Teacher

Eschatology – Where The Dead Are Now

The different terms used in the Bible for heaven and hell—sheol, hades, gehenna, the lake of fire, paradise, and Abraham's bosom—are the subject of much debate and can be confusing.

The word **paradise** is used as a synonym for heaven (**2 Corinthians 12:3–4; Revelation 2:7**). When Jesus was dying on the cross and one of the thieves being crucified with Him asked Him for mercy, Jesus replied, **"I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise"** (**Luke 23:43**). Jesus knew that His death was imminent and that He would soon be in heaven with His Father. In His words of comfort to the penitent thief, Jesus used paradise as a synonym for heaven, and the word has come to be associated with any place of ideal loveliness and delight.

Abraham's bosom is referred to only once in the Bible—in the story of Lazarus and the rich man (**Luke 16:19–31**). Abraham's lap was used in the Talmud as a synonym for heaven (Seder Nashim, Kiddushin 72b). The image in the story is of Lazarus reclining at a table leaning on Abraham's breast—as John leaned on Jesus' breast at the Last Supper—at the heavenly banquet. The point of the story is that wicked men will see the righteous in a happy state, while they themselves are in torment, and that a "great gulf" that can never be spanned exists between them (Luke 16:26). Abraham's bosom is obviously a place of peace, rest, and joy—in other words, **paradise**.

In the Hebrew Scriptures, the word used to describe the realm of the dead is **sheol**. It simply means **"the place of the dead"** or **"the place of departed souls/spirits."** The New Testament Greek equivalent to **sheol is hades**, which is also a general reference to "the place of the dead." The Greek word **gehenna** is used in the New Testament for **"hell"** and is derived from the Hebrew word hinnom. Other passages in the New Testament indicated that sheol/hades is a temporary place where souls are kept as they await the final resurrection. The souls of the righteous, at death, go directly into the presence of God—the part of sheol called "heaven," "paradise," or "Abraham's

bosom” (**Luke 23:43; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23**).

Tartarus, a word that appears only once in the entire Bible in second (2 Peter 2:4) is defined by Bible scholars as **the deepest abyss of hades**. Admittedly, we don’t know much about that deep abyss except that, as part of hades, it too is probably temporary.

The lake of fire, mentioned only in **Revelation 19:20 and 20:10, 14-15**, is the final hell, the place of eternal punishment for all unrepentant rebels, both angelic and human (**Matthew 25:41**). It is described as a place of burning sulfur, and those in it experience eternal, unspeakable agony of an unrelenting nature (Luke 16:24; Mark 9:45-46). Those who have rejected Christ and are in the temporary abode of the dead in hades/sheol have the lake of fire as their final destination.

NO LIMBO OR PURGATORY

The soulish state should not be confused with the much popularized purgatory or limbo, which we do not find in God’s Word. Purgatory is said to be a place where men go to do penance or suffer for the sins they have committed in this world in order to purify them for a better afterlife. The startling difference between the biblical teaching on the present state of the dead and this false teaching is that there is no indication whatsoever in the Bible that those in the torment section of Sheol-Hades or those in heaven **will ever be anywhere but where they are for all eternity**.

We have already learned that those who are in the **Place of Torment** can never bridge the Great Gulf Fixed and enter Paradise. On the contrary, all those who are presently in torment will eventually be cast into the lake of fire because they have not accepted Jesus Christ and because their names are not written in the book of life (Revelation 20:12-15). The suggestion that those in torment today will be granted a later opportunity to be saved contradicts Isaiah 38:18 which says, **“For Sheol cannot thank You, Death cannot praise You; Those who go down to the pit cannot hope for Your truth.”** NKJV .

The Place of Torment is strictly a place of suffering and is void of the teaching of truth. Therefore, those who enter that place cannot hope for escape.

But those whose names are written in the **Lamb’s book of life** should have no fear of this terrible fate. By faith in Christ and His blood shed on the cross for our sins, we are destined to live eternally in the presence of God.
