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If you are not a believer in Jesus Christ, or aren't sure and would like to become one, then you need to believe that Jesus Christ was and is the Son of God, that he was God who became a man, that he lived a sinless and perfect life, keeping the Law of God perfect in every way, that he kept faith perfectly, and that he was crucified on that cruel cross for your sins, mine and the entire world- he died for our sins! His death on the cross paid the penalty fully, one time for all sins that we have ever committed and that we will ever commit. He died; he went down into the bowels of the earth, even into Hell, and was raised from the dead on the third day in a resurrected, eternal body. He ascended back into heaven, was seated at the right hand of God, and is now Lord over heaven and earth. He is coming again to judge the world, to raise the dead, where he will give an eternal, resurrected, glorified body to everyone that has believed on him as their Lord and Savior, and to establish his kingdom one earth.

You come become a Christian right now as you read this, by personally placing your faith and trust in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior; believing that he is God's only begotten Son, that he died on the cross for you and that he was raised from the dead and is now seated in heaven at the right hand of God the Father. *"Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved."* Acts 16:31a And when you do trust Christ, and Christ alone, as your Lord and Savior, then go to God the Father in heaven in prayer and tell him so. Tell him that you have believed on his Son, thank him for his Son, and thank him for forgiving your sins and saving you! *"That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord", and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved."* Romans 10:9,10 *"For, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."* Romans 10:13 *"Therefore, being justified by faith (declared righteous), we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."* Romans 5:1

THE GATES OF HELL

Many people on earth deny that Hell even exists. Christians believe that Hell does exist, but know very little about it and some deny that it has gates. But if there is a literal Hell, then there must be literal gates. If the gates of Hell are figurative, then Hell itself must be figurative. So let's see what the Word has to say.

A. The Gates of Hades.

"And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it." Mt.16:18

1. *"And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church"*- kagw de soi legw `oti su ei Petros, kai epi tautw th petra oikodomhsw PAS-legw, su- dat. sg.. PAI-eimi, nom. masc. sg.- petros, nom. fem. sg.- tauth, petra, FAI-oikwdomew.

In going through this, we need to clear up a doctrinal area that the Roman church has concerning the Apostle Peter. For centuries they have claimed that Christ was building his church on a man, the Apostle Peter, and that this authority has been handed down over the years to the Popes. (For a side note, Peter was married. Mk.1:30; Lk.4:38, 1Cor.9:5).

This can be cleared up by looking at the grammar of the passage. When the Lord was speaking to Peter, he called him *Petros*. He said, *"You are Petros"*, su ei Petros. But when talking about the rock upon which he would build his church he used *Petra*! *"Upon this rock (petra) I will build my church"*. *"Kai epi tauth th petra oikodomhsw mou thn ekkhlhsian"*.

Obviously, we can see that they are not the same words. **Petra** speaks of a massive, single rock. We don't mean a large rock, but a single rock that is of massive proportions. But **petros** refers to a detached stone that can be easily moved. It is upon this massive single rock that Christ is building his church, not some little stone. Christ is the *Petra*, the massive single rock, while Peter is the *petros*, the little stone. Aside from the Greek, common sense would tell us that Christ would build his own church on himself, not some little stone that needed saving himself; a little stone that is easily moved!

This also brings in the symbolism of the mythological **Cosmic Rock**. This idea held that there was a massive rock sitting on top of the world-mountain, which was hollow. Inside the mountain was the underworld, Sheol, the land of the dead and the imprisoned spirits. This rock served two functions. One, to close off the underworld so that the imprisoned spirits could not escape, tending toward the idea of demons, fallen angels, who wished to do us harm. Two, it was the foundation that supported the sanctuary of God. Even in these myths, we see that Christ is the fulfillment, for he is the Rock that seals over the imprisoned spirits, and he is the Rock upon which the sanctuary of God is being built- the Church of Christ!

2. *“And the gates of Hades will not overcome it”*- kai pulai `adou ou katusousin- FAI- katusuw, nom. pl., gen. sg.- `adhs.

The first thing that must be stated is that every culture in the ancient world right up to the time of the church age, and including Israel, believed that Hades, Sheol, was a vast underground civilization that existed in the bowels of the earth; a place where all went to at death. They also believed that there were gates to Hell, not one or two, but many that gave the dead access to this place, but also prevented anyone from leaving.

Hades, Sheol, Hell is a vast subterranean area in the bowels of the earth divided up into at least three separate areas, and is sometimes referred to as the underworld, the bowels of the earth, the netherworld, the pit, the land of the dead, the land of the shades, etc..

There were many varying beliefs as to how many gates it has, who has control over them, what they were made of, the creatures that guarded them, etc., but they all held the one thing in common, and that was that this place existed, it had gates that one had to go through to go into it, and that there were many gates to it. Perhaps this was due to the idea of accessing many locations around the world, including the seas and oceans.

The gates of this underworld, (Hades), were made of the strongest steel or brass, with powerful locks on them that could only be opened by the one who had the keys. The one who held the keys to the gates of Hades is found in Rev.1:18, where it tells us that Christ holds the keys to Death and Hades.

Whether Hades is centrally located in one area, or spread out over a vast underground area in the bowels of the earth, we do not know. We do know that it is composed of three separate areas: the **Place of Torments**, where the unrighteous dead are; **Paradise**, where the righteous dead are; and **Tartarus**, where some of the fallen angels are.

In the ancient cultures of the world, much is said about this area, perhaps even more than the land of the living. The reason why, is that all would have to go there one day and end up spending more time there than they did in the land of the living. Some said that demons were down there, or fallen angels were down there; others said that there were deities down there. This was their area of dominion.

Now the first thing we want to note is that Hades/Sheol has gates. Some may want to think of the term gates in a figurative sense, but one needs to think along those lines in completion. It is true that the term gates was used for the whole city, or the inhabitants of that city, (synecdoche), or for conquering a city, "The gates were captured". The important thing to note is that, first of all, the city had gates! A figurative use or application is often taken from a literal reality. Every city that had walls had gates, and more than just one or two gates. I thought that this could be referring just one gate for Hades having two doors on it and simply being referred to in the plural. But the normal way that gates were hung was with two swinging doors that fit into sockets on the wall, but referred to in the singular; the gate of the city. Gate in the singular was an opening into the wall with one or two doors, while gates would refer to more than one such opening.

The word gates in the passage is found in the plural telling us that Hades has more than one opening into it. Some writings from antiquity have four gates, some seven gates, and in some rabbinic tradition there were forty thousand gates, each needing a key to open them. Christ has the keys to death and Hades, though, regardless how many gates there are.

Gates to cities were usually made of wood, sometimes plated with metal, sometimes-metal bars. They could also be made from a single slab of stone with carvings on them. The city of the New Jerusalem has twelve gates in it, each one made of a single pearl. I'd hate to see the oyster they came from!

Now the Gates of Hell can be a synecdoche, a figure of speech that speaks of the powerful angels that are imprisoned there and their unsaved followers, but even if it does, it still tells us that there are gates into the domain of Hell.

Under the concept of parallelism we should be able to accept that the underworld has gates into it. If the New Jerusalem, the heavenly counterpart has gates into it, why can't its counterpart in Hell have gates into it?

In Mt.7:13,14, Christ said, "*Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.*"

The image of the **narrow gate** was familiar in the ancient world. It indicated that because this one particular gate was so narrow that it was difficult to find, hence it was ignored by so many, choosing rather to go through the wide gate due to it being larger, easier to find and used by so many people.

The gate is narrow and so is the road. The road isn't narrow, it has been **narrowed**, the perfect passive participle of *thlibo*, qlibw, showing the restriction of the divine condition of solely believing on Christ to go down this road. It also has the idea of two steep mountains so close to each other that they create a very narrow gorge that one can only enter into by a very narrow gate. **The one narrow gate and narrow path leads upward into the section called Paradise, while the broad gate and broad path lead downward into the area called Torments.**

When Christ is speaking of the wide gate and narrow gate it makes one wonder if he is **really talking about Hades itself after death, a literal description**, and not just figuratively regarding choices that one has to make in life. That is, this is what people will encounter **after** they die! That after death there are **two gates** somewhere down there, one narrow, and the other one wide. The one takes you down a path that leads upward to **Paradise**, and the other takes you down a path that goes downward into **Torments**. At the time of this writing all the dead, both the righteous and the unrighteous went into Hades at death. Was he saying that there were two gates into Hades? The wide one on the broad road that most people took, but after they went through it, it was locked behind them and took them down further down into Hell to a place called torments? But the other gate, which only the righteous dead went through, took them through a narrow gorge to the place called Paradise. Figuratively it would be narrow gate, narrow path, believing on Christ for eternal life: wide gate, wide path, ignoring Christ and going into destruction; with the individual making these decisions **before** he dies. Literally speaking, it would mean that these two gates actually do exist in Hell, and one will go through one or the other after they die.

The next thing that the dead know is that they are all in this vast underground civilization, with huge walls looming before them, and a monstrous wide gate opened up before them. The unrighteous dead see this wide gate and the broad path before them so they walk through it. After all, they had live their lives on the broad path as most people had; they just continue on down it. But as soon as they go through the gate, it slams shut behind them. They run back, only to find it locked. They can't go back now, all they can do is continue on down the path that they are on, ignorant of what lies before them in the place called Torments.

The righteous dead, however, did not go through that gate. Instead, they saw a gate that the others did not see, a narrow one, a gate that the others did not bother to look for, and probably did not even know that it existed. They go through it; it slams shut, and is locked, but this does not concern them; for they have a peace about it. They continue on up this narrow path, that only one can walk at a time and then find themselves in the most beautiful place of timelessness and peace, a place called Paradise, where they will join all their loved ones in the Lord.

3. NT references to Hades.

- a. Mt.11:23- "*And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted up to the skies? (To Heaven?). No, you will go down to the depths.*" (To Hades).

- b. Mt.16:18- *“And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hell will not overcome it.”*
- c. Lk.16:23- *“In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side.”*
- d. Acts 2:27- *“Because you will not abandon my soul to Hades, nor will you let your Holy One see decay.”*
- e. Acts 2:31- *“Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his body see decay.”*
- f. 1Cor.15:55- *“Where, O death, is your sting? Where, O Hades, is your victory?”*
- g. Rev.1:18- *“I am the living one; I was dead, and behold I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys of Death and Hades.”*
- h. Rev.6:8a- *“I looked, and there before me was a pale horse! Its rider was named Death, and Hades was following close behind him.”*
- i. Rev.20:13- *“The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and Death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done.”*
- j. Rev.20:14- *The death and Hades were thrown into the Lake of Fire. The Lake of fire is the second death.”*

Hades is not only a literal place in the bowels of the earth with gates, there also keys to the locks on those gates, and Christ is the only one who has the keys to the gates of Hades. *“And I hold the keys to death and Hades.”* Rev.1:18b.

There is also an entrance into the Abyss, the large shaft going down into Hades that has a door or gate at its entrance, and it too having a key to it. This is the place that an angel comes down out of Heaven to unlock. He seizes the devil, throws him into the Abyss, and then locks and seals it over him for a thousand years. Rev.20:13.

So Hades is not a **state** of existence, (death is the state of existence), but a **place** of existence, with gates, (probably barred), with locks on them that only Jesus Christ has the keys to.

The common view in ancient times was that Hades was the name of the entire underworld, often with barred gates having strong locks. The one who had the keys to those locks had the power over this domain.

In Babylon, **Nedu** was the keeper of the keys. In Greece, **Pluto, Aiacos, Persephone** held the keys, and in the Mithras cult it was **Selena-Hecate** who held the keys. In some places it was **Anubis** who had the keys to Hades, and in Egypt **Isis** was said to hold them. In Rabbinic Judaism it was said that the keepers of the keys stood at the gates of Hades like great serpents. Keys were a symbol of great power and authority. Whoever had the keys possessed the power over whatever gates they unlocked; keys to a city; keys to a home or business, and keys to death and Hades.

For a thousand years, from Babylon to ancient Rome, It was taught in the pagan world that **Janus and Cybele** each bore a key that unlocked the underworld. **Rome has been teaching for years that the Pope has the keys of Peter, stating that Christ had given**

Peter the keys of the kingdom of Heaven. Now when the pagan world began hearing that the Pope had the keys to the underworld, “Peter’s keys”, they all began flocking to him, for they were all familiar with this concept.

In the broad ocean of paganism they believed that their deity had the keys to death and the underworld, and to now hear from the Apostle John that this crucified, resurrected carpenter from Galilee had the keys made quite a ripple on their beliefs. **The Apostle John wrote in around 96ad that Christ had the keys to death and Hades, but it was the bishop of Rome who stated in 378ad that he had “Peter’s keys”.**

But we must understand the significance of the word Peter. Peter, or PTR meant Interpreter. The Mystery Religion of Babylon was presided over by the Babylonian priesthood. The priest who was over this entire priesthood was the Pontifex Maximus, or the Sovereign Pontiff, literally, the High Priest. But he also held another position in the Mystery Religion and that was the Hierophant in the Greek language. His job as the Hierophant was to interpret and explain the mysteries to all under him. The Books of Hermes figured prominently in this; Hermes being another name for Cush, the father of Nimrod.

In ancient Babylon, before Rome, the Interpreter of the Babylonian Mystery religion was known by the name of Peter, which simply meant, Interpreter. He was also called Peter-Roma, which meant the Grand Interpreter.

So when the pagans had heard that the Pope, (another name for father, pater, Peter, PTR, Interpreter), was being called the “Peter of Rome”, it meant to them that **he** now was the head of the mystery religion, and that he had the keys to unlocking death and Hades. But, as we have seen, only Jesus Christ has the keys to Death and Hades, not the Pope. But the question is how and when did he get them?

We know that Christ defeated the devil by his atoning death for our sins and by his resurrection out of Hades, *“So that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death, that is, the devil.”* Heb.2: 14b. But, as we have also seen in our studies, this is speaking of the devil who had the power of death, that is, **he ruled over the domain of death, the state of death, and the actual place of death called Hades; the place where the dead ones exist.**

Let’s say that the devil and all the fallen angels under him ruled over the domain of death and Hades. This would mean that they also held the keys to the gates of Hades. If this was their domain, then they would control this place and that **they would have control of the keys.**

It would then be because of Christ’s **undeserved** suffering on the cross for us, his death, his entrance into Hades and his victorious resurrection out of Hades, that he would win the right to have the keys to death and Hades. Only Christ has conquered death and come up out of Hades. He now, alone, possesses the keys to these two things, and as such, he alone now has the right to determine who will enter into death and Hades, **and who will**

come out of these things! This is why at the judgment; he will summon all those in Hades to rise and be judged; some to everlasting destruction, and some to everlasting life.

It appears that the goal of Christ's descent was to overcome the rulers of this underworld in battle. Could this be what [Col.2: 15](#) refers to? *“And having disarmed the rulers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.”*

4. The Church's Victories Over Hades.

This goes back to the imagery of the Cosmic Rock that many believed in the ancient cultures of the east, including some in Israel, where there was the idea of a universal flood and waters covering the world. Out of the waters a mountain came up and on the top of that mountain a temple was built. It was probably the idea behind the building of the pyramids, with a temple on the top of them. It's how people tried to explain the universe, man, heaven, etc.

This temple was built upon a massive rock, which served as both a foundation for the temple, and the means by which the inhabitants of the underworld, Hades or Sheol, were kept down there; a foundation rock that served as a lid on the underworld and its inhabitants. That's why ancient temples were built coming up out of the sea like islands. **The pagans had their rock**, which they believed served as the foundation for their temples in worshiping their gods, and acted as a cap preventing the inhabitants of the underworld from coming back up, and many of **the Jews believed the same thing, only that it was the temple of Yahweh that did that.**

But, as we have seen, **Christ now applies all this imagery of the rock to himself!** This is not an endorsement of the pagan's beliefs, but taking something that they believed and using it as a vehicle to apply it to himself. He is the rock upon which he will build his church, the new temple of Yahweh, and the gates of Hades, the unsaved and the demons, will not prevail against it. Why? Because He, the Rock, will prevent them from doing so.

The Cosmic Rock served as the foundation for the temple of the deity who had the power over death and hell, keeping a lid on it, until he released them in his own time and for his own purpose, and it also was the gateway to heaven. The Jews believed that the temple of Yahweh did that, but all of that now is vested in Jesus Christ! Christ is the gateway to heaven and eternal life. He is the rock upon which Yahweh's new temple is being built, which is the church, with each believer being a living stone in that temple. And Christ is the lid on the inhabitants of Hades. They cannot come up out of there unless he allows it in his own time and purpose, which will occur when he returns to earth and resurrects the dead. The Gates of Hades, that is, its inhabitants and the rulers over it down there, do not have the power to keep the elect there. Christ has its keys.

Now the word for prevail or overcome is *katischuo*, which is a compound of two words: *ischuo*, a word for power or power capacity, and the preposition *kata*. As we have seen, *ischuo* meant to **have the power sufficient enough to accomplish an objective or purpose**. Having enough muscles to lift the heavy weight, or military to win the war.

Kata is used in its figurative sense to describe hostility toward someone. So, when we combine the two, it means that hostile action is directed toward someone, in this case, the church. But Christ uses the emphatic negative, *ou*, telling us the Gates of Hades, that is, its inhabitants or rulers, will not have the upper hand of power or strength, they will not gain the victory over the church. Now there's **two ways of looking at this**. One: the inhabitants of Hades launching an attack against the church but losing. Or, two: **the rulers of Hades trying to hold the church in its grasp to prevent them from leaving**, which it can't, because Christ holds the keys to death and Hades.

The Hebrews spoke of this place as *Sheol*, a vast subterranean place full of valleys, caves and gates; a place where darkness exists in varying levels, a place where the shades of the dead are gathered. It comes from the Hebrew word *shaal*, which meant to be hollow. Akin to the unused word, *shaghal*, which also meant to be hollow. When the Greeks took this word, Sheol, they chose the term Hades to designate it. **Originally Hades was the name of the deity, Pluto, who ruled over the realm of the dead!** In Greek mythology, Pluto was the king of the infernal regions.

Originally it was called "**The House of Hades**". Hades came from two Greek words, *a* (*ha*), which meant no or not, and *idein*, to see. Hence, "The Invisible Land", the unseen land; the land that one cannot see with the eye, the land of shadows. **It was the place that all who departed life descended into, without regard to moral character.** It was inhabited by both good and bad men, saved and unsaved. The Greeks divided Hades into two parts: Elysium, the place where the good men went to, and Tartarus, where the wicked went to. This corresponds to the Hebrew account, and the account that Christ gave in Lk.16: 19-31. The Greeks also believed that when they died and went down to this place, they went to be with their gods who lived there. Beings that Christians believe are demons, or the fallen angels. **Gates that prevail are gates that will not open to allow the dead to come out, but the Gates of Hell will not prevail against the Church.**

In the Lazarus account, the rich man looked up and saw Lazarus on the other side of the chasm that separated them. This revealed that the Paradise section of Hades is not only separated from the Torment side, but at the closest point is above Torments. The Lazarus account also gives us a description of the conditions there. **The Torment side not only did not have any water, but also was a place of flames and heat. While the Paradise section had water and was a place of comfort.**

Both Hades and Sheol were regarded were regarded by the Hebrews and their pagan counterparts as a definite, vast subterranean place in the bowels of the earth; where all went to at death, and one got there by descending. The **pagans** viewed this place where dead heroes went and held high discourse, a place of tall mountains, vast plains and black abysses, a place where offenders are tortured. Their greatest desire in life was to go down into Hades and be joined to the gods they worshiped and enjoy joy forevermore in their presence. The **Hebrews**, on the other hand, spoke of Hades/ Sheol as a dull, joyless, shadowy existence, a place of darkness and suffering for the unsaved, not a permanent place of joy. A place from which all men would be raised up to stand judgment before the awesome judgment and creator of the universe. "*Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth*

will awake; some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt.”
Dan.12:2. *“But your dead will live, their bodies will rise. You who dwell in the dust, wake up and shout for joy. Your dew is like the dew of the morning; the earth will give birth to her dead.”* Isa.26:19. *“I will ransom them from the power of Sheol; I will redeem them from death. Where, O Death, are your plagues? Where, O Sheol, is your destruction?”* Hos.13:14.

Some have regards the expression, “Gates of Hades”, as an orientation for the court, throne, power and dignity of the infernal kingdom; a city of formidable, frowning gates, and the gates of this powerful dominion will not be able to hold the people in.

5. Jacob’s grief for his son Joseph.

Gen.37:35- *“All his sons and daughters came to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted. ‘No’, he said, ‘in mourning will I go down to Sheol to my son’. So his father wept for him.”*

Gen.42:38- *“But Jacob said, ‘My son will not go down there with you; his brother is dead and he is the only one left. If harm comes to him on the journey you are taking, you will bring my gray head down to Sheol in sorrow.’”*

Gen.44:29- *“If you take this one from me too and harm comes to him, you will bring my gray head down to Sheol in misery.”*

Gen.44:31b- *“Your servants will bring the gray head of our father down to Sheol in sorrow.”*

Here we see that Jacob, the son Of Isaac, the son of Abraham and Jacob’s sons were all familiar with the reality and location of Sheol.

6. The rebellion of Korah and his followers.

Num.16:30- *“but if Yahweh brings about something new, and the earth opens its mouth and swallows them, with everything that belongs to them, and they go down alive into Sheol, then you will know that these men have treated Yahweh with contempt.”*

Num.16:33- *“They went alive down into Sheol, with everything they owned; the earth closed over them, and they perished and were gone from the community.”*

7. The Judgment of God on a Land.

Deut.32:22- *“For a fire has been kindled by my wrath, one that burns to Sheol below. It will devour the earth and its harvests and set afire the foundations of the mountains.”*

Again, Sheol is shown as being below the surface of the earth, and to get there one has to go down. All went into it, and enter in at death.

8. The Prayer of Hannah.

1Sam.2: 6- “*Yahweh brings death and makes alive; he brings down to Sheol and raises up.*” The second clause of verse 6 corresponds to the first one. “*The Lord brings death*” in the first clause corresponds to “*He brings down to Sheol*” in the second one. Death and entering into Sheol are put as the same event. “*The Lord makes alive*” in the first clause corresponds to “*The Lord raises up*”, (those in Sheol), in the second clause. The Lord brings death; he makes alive; he brings down to Sheol, and he raises up from Sheol.

“*To bring death*” is the hiphil participle of *maweth*. The hiphil stem is the causative stem, which shows that it is Yahweh that is the cause of the death of men. He has control over their life and over their death. The participial form shows a continuous activity. Yahweh determines the date, manner and place of everyone’s death. He sets limits that no man can go beyond.

“*To make alive*” is the piel participle of *chayah*. It means to cause to live, to make alive, to give life to, to call back to life. Once again, the participle shows that this activity belongs solely to Yahweh, and is exercised by him. The piel stem looks at the intensity of the idea of making someone come to life again.

“*To bring down to Sheol*” is the hiphil participle of *yarad*, to go down, which also is causative telling us that Yahweh is the one who causes men to go down to Sheol.”

“*And raises up*” is also an hiphil participle of *ghalah*, and it means to cause someone to be raised up, and in the participial form it brings our attention to the concept that it is Yahweh, and Yahweh alone, who causes men to be raised from the dead.

Now what we’ve got to see is that there are two concepts involved, and two other concepts that stand in opposite contrast to them. The first concept is **death**, and the second concept, which is a separate concept to it, although linked to it, is going down to Sheol. The other two concepts that stand in contrast to the first two are that **God makes alive**, as in contrast to dying, and that **he raises men up from Sheol**, in contrast to bringing them down there. To connect the thought in the passage, we could write it as, [*“Yahweh brings death; he brings down to Sheol. And Yahweh makes alive; he brings up from Sheol”*]. Death= Sheol, Alive= The Resurrection.

9. David’s brush with death.

2Sam.22: 6- “*The cords of Sheol coiled around me; the snares of death confronted me.*” David had found himself in such a situation that death was imminent. In his distress he called out to Yahweh and was delivered.

This is a hunter/ trapper idea where the hunter lays a trap with a trip wire, so that the hapless victim will trip the wire to have a cord or wire wrap around him. He’s saying that Death and Sheol already had him in their grip, but the Lord released him.

10. David's charge to his son Solomon.

1Kings 2:6- *“Deal with him (Joab) according to your wisdom, but do not let his gray hair go down to Sheol in peace.”*

1Kings 2:9- *“But now, do not consider him innocent. You are a man of wisdom; you will know what to do with him. Bring his gray head down to Sheol in blood.”*

11. Job's discourse on Sheol.

Job 7:9, 10- *“As a cloud vanishes and is gone, so he who goes down to Sheol does not return. He will never come to his house again; his place will know him no more.”*

Man is put as one of the lightest and the most temporary things in nature, a cloud. A cloud appears in the sky, and then a short time later it is gone! But not so with Christ, he is the Rock!

Job 11:8- *“They are higher than the heavens- what can you do? They are deeper than the depths of Sheol- what can you know?”*

Job 14:12, 13- *“So man lies down and does not rise; till the heavens are no more, men will not awake or be roused from their sleep. If only you would hide me in Sheol and conceal me till your anger has passed! If only you would set me a time and then remember me.”*

The rising of man is described here as man rising up from Sheol. The word resurrection comes from the Latin **resurrectus**, which comes from **resurgo**- to rise. Resurgo comes from re- again, and surgo- to rise, **to rise again**.

Job 17:13- *“If the only home I hope for is Sheol, if I spread my bed out in darkness.”* By the use of bayth we see that Sheol is a place of dwelling, a home for the dead when they depart this life.

Job 17:16- *“Will it go down to the gates of Sheol? Will we descend together into the dust?”* The word for gate is badah and it refers to a cavity or aperture, an opening into something. Stating that the entrance into Hades is through gates.

Job 21:13- *“They spend their years in prosperity and go down to Sheol in peace.”* Again, Sheol was a very familiar thing to all who lived on the earth.

Job 24:19- *“As heat and drought snatch away the melted snow, so Sheol snatches away those who have sinned.”* Looking at this idea here of the sin unto death. Man is allotted so many days on earth, but these can be shortened. God is in control of this.

Job 26:6- *“Sheol is naked before God; Abaddon lies uncovered.”* This tells us that even though man on earth cannot see Sheol, or know where it’s at, to Yahweh it lies naked, uncovered. It is open to the sight of God; he can see right into it.

Psa. 6:5- *“No one remembers you when he is dead. Who praises you from Sheol?”*

Psa.9:17- *“The wicked return to Sheol, all the nations that forget God.”* This is a reference to those who reject the Word of God and are taken out under the sin unto death, with the application of this on a national level. America, beware!

Psa. 16:10- *“Because you will not abandon me to Sheol, (or abandon my soul to Sheol), nor will you let your Holy One see decay.”* This is a prophecy that David is making toward Jesus Christ, the Messiah of Israel. Even though David would not be left behind in Sheol, he will be raised; but his body did see decay, as all flesh does. But the body of Jesus Christ did not decay, for he was raised on the third day.

Psa. 18:5- *“The cords of Sheol coiled around me; the snares of death confronted me.”*

Psa.30:3- *“O Yahweh, you brought me up from Sheol; you spared me from going down to the pit.”*

Psa.31:17- *“Let me not be put to shame, Yahweh, for I have cried out to you; but let the wicked be put to shame and be silent in Sheol.”*

Psa.49:14, 15- *“Like sheep they are destined for Sheol, and death will feed on them. The upright will rule over them in the morning; their forms will decay in Sheol. But God (Elohim) will redeem my soul from Sheol; he will surely take me to himself. Selah.”*

The word for *redeeming his soul* is *padah*, and it meant to set somebody free by paying a price. It was usually found in setting somebody free from bondage, such as slavery, by paying a set price that had to be paid. The writer is saying that Elohim will redeem his soul, *nephesh*, out of Sheol; that Elohim will pay the price to have him released. **The price, as all believers know, was the death of Elohim’s son, Jesus Christ, Yeshua Meshiah.**

*“From Sheol is miyyad-sheol. Miyyad is from two words; min, is a preposition which means to be **taken out and away from something** one was in; it has the idea of separation from it. And the word, yad, is the word for **hand**. “But Elohim will redeem my soul from the hand of Sheol.”* Using the idea of hand tells us that Sheol has a grip on all who are down there, but will let them go upon payment of the price.

*“To take me to himself”, is yiqqacheni, from laqach, which meant to transfer to another place. **Elohim will transport me from Sheol to himself.***

Psa.55: 15- *“Let death take my enemies by surprise; let them go down alive to Sheol, for evil finds lodging among them.”*

Psa.86:13- *“For great is your love (grace) toward me; you have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.”* The word for deliver here is the hiphil preterite of *natsal*, and it means to snatch someone out of danger, David is in a bad situation, one that threatens to take him down to the depths of Sheol, but Yahweh delivered him out of it.

Psa. 88:3- *“My soul is full of trouble and my life draws near to Sheol.”*

Psa. 89:48- *“What man can live and not see death, or save himself from the power of Sheol? Selah.”* This was written by Ethan the Ezrahite and he is talking about the lot of all men on earth. *“What man can live and not see death?”* He’s saying that **all men die!** He uses the word *geber* for man to bring out the idea that **even the strong man, the wise man, the hero cannot save himself from death.**

To *“save himself”* is the piel future of *malat*, which meant to be slippery or smooth, to slip away from something; in this case, to slip away from Sheol. In the piel stem it’s to escape. **Two things man cannot do: one, keep from dying, and, two, escape from Sheol on his own.** If he is to get out of Sheol, only the Kinsman-Redeemer can do it for him- Jesus Christ.

Psa.116:3- *“The cords of death entangled me, the anguish of Sheol came upon me; I was overcome by trouble and sorrow.”*

Psa.139:8- *“If I go up to the Heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.”* David is talking about the omnipresence of God’s spirit and he says that if he went into Heaven, you are there; and if he went down into Sheol, he is there too! He uses a demonstrative adverb, which comes out as, *“Behold, you are there too!”*

Psa.141:7- *“They will say, ‘As one plows and breaks up the earth, so our bones have been scattered at the mouth of Sheol’.”* This tells us about the idea of **marking the place of entrance into Sheol. Wherever one sees people’s bones; that is the place where they entered into Sheol.**

Prov.1:12- *“Let’s swallow them up alive, like Sheol, and whole, like those who go down to the pit.”*

Prov.5:5- *“Her feet go down to death; her steps lead straight to Sheol.”*

Prov.7:27- *“Her house is a highway to Sheol, leading down to the chambers of death.”*

Death is put here as a synonym for Sheol; they are both the same, for **death is the event and Sheol is the place entered into at death.** We see also that Sheol (Death) has chambers, *cheder*. *Cheder* is a word that belonged to the world of established civilizations, of people living in houses in their villages and towns, not in tents, or on the ground. *Cheder* referred to one of the **inner rooms** in one’s house where you could go and have privacy, to be unseen, where you could sleep, study or pray. It was never a room where there was no exit; **it was not a cell or prison, but one’s private place where they could be alone for whatever the reason. This tells us that Sheol has rooms-**

chambers! Places where individuals dwell, their own place where they can go and be alone, and then come out and be with others. They are not places of confinement or punishment.

Prov.9:18- “*But little do they know that the dead are there, that her guests are in the depths (valleys, plains) of Sheol.*” Interesting that this isn’t the word for the dead, but the word *rephaim*, the word for **shades or ghosts**. The word comes from *rapha*, to be flaccid, feeble or weak. The ancient Hebrews believed that once the individual lost his blood and physical life, because of death, they became weakened, but still retained all their mental powers. Shades or ghosts were how they referred to the souls now in Sheol. The soul was perceptible to sight, but not to touch. They have form; they can think, talk and remember; there seems to be sensory contact with their surroundings, but are not the same without their physical body. **They are just a shadow of their former existence.**

As we know, God did not create people to be disembodied spirits, but to have a body! That’s one of the unique characteristics of humanity; we have human bodies. But at death, the soul has no body; it is considered a shade or spirit. What they are waiting for is the resurrection, where they will be given a new body, an eternal one.

Interesting that “*her guests*” is the qal passive participle of *qara*; they were called there by God. Another interesting point is that the word for the “*depths of Sheol*” is not the word for depths, but the plural construct of *gaymak*. Gaymak is the word for valleys or plains. It’s not saying that Sheol is in the depths of the earth, which we know that it is, **but that it has valleys and plains in it.**

Prov.15:11- “*Sheol and Abaddon lie open before Yahweh- how much more the hearts of men.*” *Neged*, “*before*”, in the presence of, in the sight of, tells us that **Yahweh looks right down into Sheol and sees everyone and everything that is going on.** But we also have the word Abaddon here, which comes from the root word for destruction, which would look more at **the place of destruction** than destruction itself. The ancient Jews thought of Abaddon as the personification of death, taking a concept or event and making it into a person. But in Rev.9:11 we see that there is an actual fallen celestial being living in the Abyss, who is king over the locusts and his name is *Abaddon*. One could say that Sheol and the Being called Abaddon are ever in his presence.

Prov.15:24- “*The path of life leads upward for the wise to keep him from going down to Sheol.*” (*Sin unto death*).

Prov.23:14- “*Punish him with the rod and save his soul from Sheol.*” (To prevent the believer from the sin unto death).

Prov.27:20- “*Sheol and Abaddon are never satisfied, and neither are the eyes of man.*” *Sabag* means to be full; Sheol is not full; there’s plenty of room left.

Prov.30:15b,16- “*There are three things that are never satisfied, four that never say, ‘Enough!’: Sheol, the barren womb, land, which is never satisfied with water, and fire, which never says, ‘Enough!’*”

Ecc.9:10- “*Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might, for in Sheol, where you are going, there is neither working nor planning nor knowledge nor wisdom.*” Obviously, existence in Sheol is much different than it is here, but the righteous dead have it good there. It is a place of comfort, rest, peace and joy for them, but not for the unbelievers, who are also down there. 1Sam.28:13-15.

Song of Songs 8:6- “*Place me like a seal over your heart, like a seal over your arm; for love is as strong as death its jealousy as unyielding as Sheol. It burns like blazing fire, like a mighty flame.*” Here death and Sheol are put as two concepts that have tremendous, unyielding strength. The dead stay dead, and the souls of those who died stay in Sheol, until someone comes along that is stronger. He has, and his name is Jesus Christ.

12. Addendum on Hades.

I had mentioned that **Pluto** was considered to be the king or god associated with the underworld. Now the name Pluto comes from the Egyptian definite article P’ prefixed to lut, to hide- Pluto. Which translates out as the “**Hidden One**”. The word Hades was just another name associated with him, which comes from the Greek *a-* no, not, and *eidein-* to see, which translates out to the “Hidden One”. So Hades is a synonym for Pluto.

Another name used for this deity was **Saturn**, which also means the “**Hidden One**” **Saturn was not considered to be one of the celestial deities, but an infernal deity.** But on closer examination of the Mystery religions, **all three words were used of Nimrod.** Nimrod was also referred to as the “Hidden One”. Remember, in the mystery religions mortal man could become a god, Satan’s lie to the man and woman in the Garden.

Nimrod was said to be one of them, with his wife, **Semiramis**, as a goddess, and their son, **Tammuz**, as a god. They also considered that the individuals who lived before the flood as gods; they even included Adam and Eve as gods. Now when Nimrod died, (according to tradition by the judicial act of the patriarchs under Shem), he went down into Sheol, and it was named Hades from that time forward in honor of him by the pagans throughout the world. (The word Hell in the Anglo-Saxon tongue meant a hole or deep place).

The Babylonian rites sprung up around him, such as, “**Weeping for Nimrod-Thammuz**”. This was done by the adherents of the Babylonian religion to console Nimrod for his loss of power. Another rite was the “**proprietary sacrifice**”, which was done to placate Nimrod for his loss of power. **The gladiator games, with all their blood and violence, were performed on the Saturnalia to propitiate Saturn and his great anger over the loss of his power. Saturnalia was celebrated the week beginning on December 17.**

Now Pluto/ Hades/ Nimrod was considered by the Mystery Religion as the king of this underworld dominion; he ruled over it, and it was named Hades after him. **He also was the first king on the earth after the flood, and was/ is considered to be the king of the subterranean regions of the earth called Sheol/ Hades/ Hell.**

Now in this story, **Pluto** took a beautiful maiden, kidnapped and raped her, and produced a beautiful child. Her name was **Proserpine** the daughter of mother, **Ceres**. But all were called by different names in the different nations. She was known as: a “goddess”, as the “wife of Pluto” the god of Hell, as the “holy virgin”, as being “immaculately conceived”, as the “dove”, as the “incarnation of the spirit of god”, as the “virgin mother pure and undefiled”. (Sound familiar?)

It must be remembered that the significance of the spirit and the dove goes back to ancient Babylon. **They believed that the “holy spirit”, (their “holy spirit”), incarnated into the virgin woman making her a goddess.** (Sort of like along the line of that old Star Trek show, if you’re old enough to remember). When she had her child, then she became the mother- goddess. And **the dove was the symbol of all that.** Today, many believe that Mary was the incarnation of the holy spirit, and the dove symbolizes that.

Apparently, Pluto took her down to his underworld domain, where he raped her and made her his wife in the myth account. But it also sounds similar to other accounts where Nimrod kidnapped, drugged and raped the wife of Shem producing the boy Thammuz.

When Proserpine’s mother, Ceres, had heard the news that Pluto had kidnapped her daughter, she refused to eat for forty days because of her great sorrow. This was the beginning of the **observance of Lent.**

Now after Pluto/ Nimrod was killed and went down into Sheol he left his pagan priesthood still intact on the surface of the earth, with a High Priest (Pontifex Maximus) presiding over it. The High Priest, Sovereign Pontiff, was the representative of the dead, now deified, Nimrod. Saturn, also known as Pluto, was said to be the visible head of the Beast, while Teitan was said to be the invisible head of the Beast.

The clincher of all this is that the people living in Babylon, Egypt, Greece, and the rest of the pagan world, knew that one day they would die and have to go down into underground civilization where Pluto/ Nimrod ruled as a king and a god! There, they believed, they would be totally at his mercy.

This is where **the priesthood had power over the people.** Even though the “god” of Babylon had died and was no longer on the earth; they could not escape him, because they too would die and have to go where he was at- Hades! The underground kingdom he is supposed to rule over. This thought was terrifying to them, for they would be subject to his cruel caprices, not unless somehow they could be so prepared in this life so they could be in good standing with him. **This is where the priests with their rites, initiations and sacraments of the Mystery Religions came in holding tremendous power over people.**

By observing the rites and rituals of the Babylonian religion and taking part in the sacraments, the people were led to believe that they would be in good standing with Pluto

when they descended into the underworld. Even killing and blood sacrifices showed that you had identified yourself completely to the injustice done to him.

The idea of **Purgatory**, from to purge, came out of this **for it was taught that Pluto purified the souls after death**. The more pure you were in life, the less purifying you needed by him. They were also taught that he had the keys to the gates of his kingdom, so one needed to please him, if you were ever to get out. There is also the idea that the secrets of Babylon were for the inner circle, and religion was created by them for the purpose of controlling the masses and taking their money.

Once can see how much of a monstrous lie this Babylonian religion is, and how it has kept so many millions of souls in bondage to it over the years, and how blasphemous it is because it takes away from the finished work of Christ on the cross and his victorious resurrection (raising up) from Hades.

But one can understand why and how this Mystery religion, whether in the Roman Catholic style, or in the Masonic brand, has had so much influence over the people throughout the years. If they believed that if they weren't perfected, or didn't have enough good deeds, or were hostile to the religion, etc, and also knowing that they would enter into the domain of Pluto at death and be assigned different areas of punishment, then one can see why the Mystery religions, such as the Elysium mysteries and its priesthood, would have so much power over them.

Now with all this in mind, with all this background on death and the afterlife in the underworld, one can see what a dramatic a concept and what an impact it made on people's minds, **when Christianity stated that Christ conquered Death and Hades, and that he had the keys to Death and Hades!** They all knew that they would die one day and then go to Hades. They also knew that Janus/ Pluto/ Nimrod had the keys to Hades, and that he had never let one person go out of his gates! And here are Christians now telling the world that Christ had died for their sins, went down into Hades, and came out alive! **Christ defeated the powers that ruled over Hades!**

Now whom are you going to want to identify with as a person? Who are you going to trust? The defeated powers of Hades, or the one who had conquered them? **This is why many pagans turned to Christ in faith.** One can also see the impact that this made on the priests of Babylon, who began to lose their power and control over the people- they hated Christianity!

13. Isaiah's Statements on Sheol.

Isa.5:14- *"Therefore Sheol enlarges its appetite and opens its mouth without limit; into it will descend their nobles and masses with all their brawlers and revelers."* This refers to God's judgment on the inhabitants of Jerusalem; taking them out of this life before their allotted time.

Isa.14:9- *"Sheol below is all astir to meet you at your coming; it rouses the spirits of the departed to greet you- all those who were leaders in the world; it makes them rise from*

their thrones- all those who were kings over the nations.” One must remember that this is a reference to not only Lucifer, but to the king of Babylon. Here the king of Babylon undergoes the end of all men, he will die and go to Sheol. But in Sheol, he gets a very interesting reception party.

The word *ragaz* means to be moved, to be stirred, to be excited. Curiosity, surprise, shock hits upon these souls when they hear that the king of Babylon has arrived in their midst. *“You have become weak as we are; you have become like us.”* Who would think that the invincible king of Babylon, conqueror of the world, would end up dead and weak like us!

“To meet you” is *qara*, to call or cry out. *Boa* is to “*come*”, or to enter into some place. *“Sheol is all astir, excited about meeting you; calling out to you at your entrance into it.”*

“To rouse the spirits” is *gur*, and it means to waken one from sleep, to arouse them. It could be that they are asleep, or exist in a semi-conscious state; after all, what do they have to do! The word for “*spirits*” is *rephaim* and is actually the word for **shades or ghosts**. *“Sheol is all excited about your arrival; it rouses the shades to greet you.”*

“All those who were leaders in the world”, is actually, *“all the he-goats, (atud), of the world”*. **This puts the earthly leaders as he-goats who lead around the nations of the world as flocks.** *“It makes them rise from their thrones”*, indicating that as they had thrones in their life on earth, they have some kind of a throne in Sheol. *Casa* is the word for thrones, and *qum* is the word for arise, but in the hiphil stem something causes them to arise.

“All those who were kings over the nations” is *kol malkay goyim*, which is, *“All the kings over the gentiles”*. Now we don’t know the names of these people, but we do know that they were assumedly gentiles in their former lives, and that they held the high positions of being kings over their respective nations with their own thrones. What is interesting is that after they were brought down to Sheol they still sat on thrones. But their rule and power now is but a shadow of former times.

The picture is one of certain enthroned souls in Sheol called shades or ghosts, (**ghost being the Anglo- Saxon word for the spirit or soul of the departed**), and they’re just sitting there, not unconscious, but more the idea of **languishing in hopeless despair, along with discomfort, boredom and monotony**. The mind-numbing monotony and sameness, the unpleasant surroundings and company, with the despair of being raised up one day for judgment by a Holy God and his Son would cause anyone to just sit there and languish away. And it never gets better.

But something arouses them; something stirs them from their languishing stupor on their thrones, and that is when they hear that the King of Babylon, the mighty conqueror and invincible ruler of the world, is coming into their midst. This bit of news causes them to stir, to awaken, to be aroused to the place that they actually arise from their thrones and call out to him. They cry out to him, *“You also have become weak as we are; you have become like us”*.

Obviously we see some sarcasm or astonishment here from the shades in Sheol toward the former conqueror of the world, (a type of anti-christ). He regarded himself as a god and so did his people. He lived in opulent luxury and sought to make himself supreme to the living God, Yahweh. And after reaching the pinnacle of success in the world, its conqueror and ruler, he was brought down to Sheol in weakness to join the other shades.

Isa.14:11- *“All your pomp has been brought down to Sheol, along with the noise of your harps; maggots are spread out before you and worms cover you.”*

Isa.14:5- *“But you are brought down to Sheol, to the depths of the pit.”*

Turad is the hophal stem of *yarad*, to bring down, or to go down. It is both causative and passive. Passive in the sense that the king of Babylon received the action, and that he was caused to go down to Sheol. He had no choice in the matter. God ordained his death and for him to be taken down into Sheol.

Isa.28:15- *“You boast, ‘We have entered into a covenant with death, with Sheol we have an agreement. When an overpowering scourge sweeps by, it cannot touch us, for we have made a lie our refuge and falsehood our hiding place.’”*

Isa.28:18- *“Your covenant with death will be annulled; your agreement with Sheol will not stand. When the overwhelming scourge sweeps by, you will be beaten down by it.”*

Isa.38:10- *“I said, ‘In the prime of my life must I go through the gates of Sheol and be robbed of the rest of my years?’”*

Isa.38:18- *“For Sheol cannot praise you, death cannot sing your praise; those who go down to the pit cannot hope for your faithfulness.”*

Yahweh had determined that king Hezekiah would die at a certain point in his monarchy, but Hezekiah pleaded with the Lord to spare him, so God added fifteen more years to his life. Isa. 38. Hezekiah should have accepted God’s decision gracefully, but he didn’t and was totally subjective in the matter, and naive also about the threat that Babylon posed to Israel when he showed the envoys of Babylon all the wealth of Israel.

Isa.57:9- *“You went to Moloch with olive oil and increased your perfumes. You sent your ambassadors far away; you descended to Sheol itself.”*

Isaiah believed in the reality of Sheol and so did Hezekiah. Hezekiah even believed that he would have to go through the gates of Sheol upon his death.

14. The prophet Ezekiel’s statements on Sheol.

Ezek.31:15- *“This is what the Lord Yahweh says, ‘On the day it was brought down to Sheol I covered the deep springs with mourning for it; I held back its streams, and its abundant waters were restrained. Because of it I clothed Lebanon with gloom, and all the trees of the field withered away.’”*

Ezek.31:16- *“I made the nations tremble at the sound of its fall when I brought it down to Sheol with those who go down to the pit. Then all the tress of Eden, the choicest and best of Lebanon, all the tress that were well-watered, were consoled in the earth below.”*

Ezek.31:17- *“Thos who live in its shade, its allies among the nations, had also gone down to Sheol with it, joining those killed by the sword.”*

Ezek.32:21- *“From within Sheol the mighty leaders will say to Egypt and her allies, ‘They have come down, and they lie with the uncircumcised, with those killed by the sword.’”*

Ezek.32:27- *“Do they not lie with the other uncircumcised warriors who have fallen, who went down to Sheol with their weapons of war, whose swords were placed under their heads? The punishment for their sins rested on their bones, though the terror of these warriors had stalked through the land of the living.”*

Chapters 29-32 refer to the prophetic judgment by Yahweh against ancient Egypt, where Egypt was to be reduced to a second rate nation, fulfilled from 572BC to 568BC.

In Ezek.29:1-16, Pharaoh- Hophra is pictured as a sea monster (crocodile) in the Nile. In Ezek.31:1-18, he is pictured as a cedar tree. In Ezek.32:1-32 he is pictured as a lion. To accomplish this devastation Yahweh used Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. Israel had sinned by entering into a treaty with Egypt to protect them, instead of relying on the Lord. They had put their trust in Egypt, not Yahweh.

The “*mighty leaders*” is *geborim* and tells us that the warriors, heroes and leaders of Egypt, strong and ferocious as they were, all ended up dead in Sheol due to God’s judgment upon them.

15. The prophet Hosea’s statement on Sheol.

Hos.13:14- *“I will ransom them from the power of Sheol; I will redeem them from death. Where, O Death, are your plagues? Where, O Sheol is your destruction?”*

We have certainly documented that Sheol was a them that the OT people of God were familiar with in every respect, much more so than Christians today. They all knew, even the pagans did, that Sheol was a literal place in the bowels of the earth where all went to at death. Death meant Sheol, that’s why the two were put together.

But the people of God had a hope that the pagans didn’t have and that was one day they would be resurrected (raised up) out of this place. The prophecy made by the prophet Hosea was one of the strongest statements made concerning this; it was one of the promises made by Yahweh to his people that he would return and raise them up from the dead, from Sheol.

Paul understood this concept very well, for he referred to it when he stood before King Agrippa, Acts 26:1-8. He spoke of the hope that the Jews had, and one that he also hung on to when he was an unsaved Jew, saying, “*And now it is because of my hope in what God has promised our fathers, (to raise them up from Sheol), that I am on trial today. This is the promise our twelve tribes are hoping to see fulfilled as they earnestly serve God day and night. O king, it is because of this hope that the Jews are accusing me. Why should any of you consider it incredible that God raises the dead?*” Acts 26:6-8.

What Paul was saying is that all the Jews from Abraham on to his day believed that God was going to raise them from the dead. This was their hope, but what Paul was teaching in the Gospel was that Christ Jesus would be the one who actually did it, raise them from the dead! He also said that Moses prophesied that the Messiah would suffer and be the first to rise from the dead. Acts 26:22, 23.

When Paul was writing to the church in Corinth, he took Hosea’s prophecy and said, “*Where, O Death is your victory? Where, O Hades, is your sting?*” 1Cor.15:55. He also said that when the resurrection of NT believers comes about, then the saying that had been written by Hosea will come true. 1Cor.15:54. When the mortal becomes immortal, (which happens at the resurrection), then the saying made by the prophet Hosea concerning Israel’s resurrection will come true. **Both groups will be raised at the same time**. Christ stated this plainly in Jn.6: 39, 40, where he stated that he was going to raise the dead out of Sheol on the last day

God is the one actually speaking through the prophet Hosea and many things are said. One of them is here in Hos.13:14, where he says that he will “*ransom them, padah, from the hand of Sheol*”, and, “*redeem them, gaal, from death*”. The significance of *padah* is that there has to be some type of bondage, such as slavery, and that a set price has to be paid. A cruel slave master has captured a servant of yours, (**Death, and he is holding them on his property, Hades**); he is now in his hands, and to set him free a certain price has to be paid. The elect servants of Yahweh have died and now Sheol has its hand on them and will not let them go until the price is paid. And we notice that it is Yahweh who pays the price to buy them back.

The second thing is that Yahweh says the he will “*redeem them from death*”, and the word that he uses here is the *kinsman-redeemer, gaal*. To understand this we must begin with **tribal life**. The tribe was considered an organic unity, not only in the members of the tribe, but their possessions as well. Any disruption of this unity was regarded as intolerable and had to be repaired or restored. Enter in the *kinsman-redeemer*, who was the nearest male member brother, uncle, son, cousin, etc, who had the right and responsibility to right any wrongs that were done. If someone was murdered, he took the life of the one who did it. If something was stolen, he got it back. If a person or property was sold off, then he bought them back.

If someone sold his house or a piece of property to pay a debt, then the kinsman-redeemer had the right and responsibility to buy it back to restore the possession of the tribe, therefore **preserving its unity**. If an Israelite sold himself as a slave, the *gaal* was to buy him back to restore the breach in the tribe or nation. If someone was murdered, the *gaal*,

(usually his son), was to avenge his death by killing the murderer, or someone in his tribe, thus restoring the equilibrium of it all, a death for a death.

So Yahweh says that he will be Israel's *gaal*, kinsman-redeemer, but to do this he had to ally himself with them in some manner, so he could enter into a certain relationship with those he was going to redeem, so he could redeem them. This he did when he became a man and was born into the tribe of Judah. Once he became a man, an Israelite himself, and the king over Israel, he now was positioned so that he could redeem not only someone from his tribe, but all of Israel! He is not only going to redeem them from death, from the state of death; he is going to avenge them of death by destroying death itself.

The slayer of his people will be slayed itself!

As far as the redemption price that had to be paid to redeem his people; it was not money. Isa.52:3. Yahweh, who incarnated as is now known as Jesus Christ, is the one who will do all this. He will save his people, both OT and NT; he will redeem them from the powerful hand of Sheol, by paying the price in his own blood; he will bring them back from death and avenge himself on death by **slaying death in the Lake of Fire**.

Then he takes up a sarcastic taunt, "*Where, O Death, are your plagues? Where, O Sheol, is your destruction?*" He has conquered all of our enemies for the sake of his Name, and for the sake of the elect! Now when Christ entered on the scene in Israel and began his public ministry, he out rightly claimed that he was the One who was going to do all this, because he said that he was the One who was going to raise those who are dead!

Amos 9:2- "*Though they dig down to the depths of Sheol, from there my hand will take them. Though they climb up to the heavens, from there I will bring them down.*" Amos is prophesying on God's judgment of Israel for their negative volition to his Word and uses Sheol figuratively to say that there is no place they can go to escape his judgment.

Jonah 2:2- "*He said, 'In my distress I called to Yahweh, and he answered me. From the depths of Sheol I called for help, and you listened to my cry.'*" Now Jonah might have died, due to being in the fish's belly, but it is probably a figure of speech to say that he was as good as dead.

Hab.2:5- "*Indeed wine betrays him; he is arrogant and never at rest. Because he is as greedy as Sheol and like death is never satisfied, he gathers to himself all the nations and takes captive all the people.*"

Several times *bar* is used with Sheol, the, which was the word used for a cistern, which was often used to imprison men; showing that Sheol is a prison, a large hollowed out place in the bowels of the earth, perhaps encompassing a vast area with many levels, with mountains, valleys, plains, gorges and gates used to imprison the souls of departed people. *Pachath* and *shachath* are also used to denote a pit, destruction and imprisonment.

The devil rules over the area of death and Hades. Heb.2:14 tells us that he has the power of death. The word for power is *kratos* and it actually looks at the idea of power in the

sense of ruling over something. With the genitive, as we have here, it refers to the actual realm or **place that one rules over**. So, when it says that the devil has the power of death, it means **that he rules over this domain in the bowels of the earth called Sheol or Hades**.

But the **devil also rules over the world**; he is the god of this age, and the ruler of the world. So, it's no wonder that if Satan rules over the world of people in the Land of the Living, he rules over them in the Land of the Dead, Sheol. And as he has demon spirits under his authority ruling over this dark world topside, the *Kosmokratoras* and others, then he must have demon spirits ruling over his domain of Hades/ Sheol. **How more wonderful to us the work of the Savior, when he destroyed Satan's dominion/ rule over Hades, thus guaranteeing the release of God's people from their prison in Sheol!**