

**Part A - Salvation, Part B - Judgment, Part C - The Ages to Come****A-1: Table of Contents and Introduction****A-2: Who Are God's People?****A-3: The Book of Life****A-4: "Second Chance" for Unbelievers?****A-5: Death and Hell****A-6: Salvation by Works? (Part 1)****A-7: Salvation by Works? (Part 2)****A-5: Death and Hell**

At this point it might help to get a better idea of what is meant by these words that are sometimes used together - "Death" and "Hell". To start, regarding the Nether (lower) world, the New Testament seems to divide it into two categories: 1) *Hades* (the unseen world 2) *Gehenna* (translated as "Hell") or the *Lake of Fire*.

**DEATH**

In the New Testament the word "Death" (*thanatos* in Greek) took on some extra dimension of meaning besides the obvious meaning of physical death. For example, in Romans 8:6 it is said that "*to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.*" "Death" here is a metaphor for a negative state of mind or being, the opposite of "life and peace". The Book of Revelation makes mention of the "*second death*" when souls are "*cast into the lake of fire*". (Revelation 20:6,14-15) Again "death" doesn't mean that souls actually "die" or get extinguished but rather, symbolizes an unhappy state of being.

In this case of the "*second death*", souls in the realm of *Hades* (the unseen world), who have not turned away from their evil habits and attitudes (and consequently toward Christ), live on to be sent into a worse realm known as the *Lake of Fire* or *Gehenna* (Hell). As the saying goes, "*from the frying pan into the fire.*" (This idea of *Hades* being a sort of Purgatory, or rehabilitation center, for lost souls and evildoers will be explored further ahead.)

Often in the New Testament, *thanatos* is used, either in conjunction

with the word *Hades* or as a metaphor to describe the condition of mankind without the life of God, both in this life and the next. Following is a useful definition of the word:

1. properly, the death of the body, i.e. that separation (whether natural or violent) of the soul from the body by which the life on earth is ended...
2. metaphorically, the loss of that life which alone is worthy of the name, i.e. the misery of soul arising from sin, which begins on earth but lasts and increases after the death of the body...
3. the miserable state of the wicked dead in hell...
4. In the widest sense, death comprises all the miseries arising from sin, as well physical death... to be followed by wretchedness in the lower world... [*Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, pg. 283]

In the age preceding the First Coming of Christ, mankind dwelt under that ominous cloud of spiritual death (*thanatos*). In a world that had been “delivered to” Satan, there was no “life of God” except for certain chosen individuals and the chosen people of the Israelites. (Luke 4:6) King David pleads with God to “not take Your Holy Spirit from me”, and Isaiah mentions the Holy Spirit dwelling “in the midst of them”. (Psalm 51:11, Isaiah 63:11 ASV, NAS, RSV)

The faithful Israelites were dutiful keepers of the laws of righteousness, but there was much that “*the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh.*” (Romans 8:3) Paul even refers to the Laws of Moses as the “*ministry of death [and]. . . condemnation*” (because the Law only brought the knowledge of sin, but without the power to fully obey the Law). (2Corinthians 3:7,9)

Jesus told His followers, “*The Spirit of truth... dwells with you and will be in you.*” (John 14:16-17) Prior to His departure, the Holy Spirit could only dwell with the disciples but not in them. So even for the disciples, there was a certain distance from the life of God. But Jesus had promised, “*I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper... the Spirit of truth.*” The Holy Spirit pulled Christ’s followers out of the “*ministry of death [and]. . . condemnation*” and transformed them into powerhouses of positive spiritual energy - “*that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but*

***according to the Spirit.” (Romans 8:4)***

**Up to that time in history, “sin reigned in death”. But Christ came so that “grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life.” (Romans 5:21) Since the time of Christ’s Resurrection, in our present Age of history, God’s Grace (His favor) has begun its rule, bringing Life to humankind while breaking the monopoly of Sin and wrongdoing with its accompanying fruit of Death and misery.**

**However, there still exists the barrier of the Curse; it is not easy for human beings in this present Age, first of all, to perceive the life of God, and then to receive it. Which probably is why Jesus made remarks like, “*Narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it;*” or, “*Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.*” (Matthew 7:14, John 20:29) In the present Age, the believers, or “elect”, are few. But the time is coming, in a future Age, when that number will increase enormously; and that is a subject to be explored in upcoming posts.**

**Although some individuals and the Israelite society prior to Christ’s First Coming were granted access to quite a bit of God’s Truth and Light, the majority of mankind lived under that ominous cloud of “death”. Besides physical death and the accompanying sorrow and sense of loss that it brought, human society had to deal also with the fear of spiritual death - of not knowing what would come in the Afterlife, or if there would even be an Afterlife.**

**Some human societies became so preoccupied with the fear of death that they spent enormous amounts of labor and resources building elaborate tombs for their rulers. The pyramids, for example, were huge structures filled with a Pharaoh’s earthly possessions. By this means, people in ancient societies hoped to preserve into the next life what they had worked so hard for during their earthly lives. In Chinese ancestor worship, the relationship between the dead and their family members continues on in the form of various ritual offerings and sacrifices. Reincarnation is another belief system that attempts to bridge the gulf between death and life.**

**And throughout history an endless number of beliefs and superstitions**

have arisen to explain or resolve the fear and sense of loss felt in the “death” experience. For centuries upon centuries human societies have tried to reassure themselves with various beliefs and practices that would guarantee the soul’s continuance and/or prosperity in the Afterlife.

Then God came into our realm in the person of Jesus Christ. And for what reasons? Probably the most obvious is God’s compassionate desire to restore mankind’s relationship to Himself. This meant rolling back the Curse, and the first aspect of it that has rolled back is the fear of death. *“He Himself likewise partook of the same nature, that through death He might destroy him who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong bondage.”* (Hebrews 2:14-15, RSV)

Jesus declared that He was the “*way, the truth, and the life*” and that whoever “*received Him*” would gain “*the right to become children of God*” and thus inherit eternal life in the Kingdom of God. (John 14:6,1:12) Christ’s coming overthrew once and for all that all-pervading gloom and pessimism about death.

And we know from the apostle Peter’s words that Christ, the Son of God, went into that Dark Kingdom to rescue lost souls who had died in previous ages. (1Peter 3:19, 4:6) Jesus taught that whoever trusts in Him will have “*passed from death into life*”. (John 5:24) And so, a few years later the apostle Paul was able to declare, “*O Death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?*” (1Corinthians 15:55, KJV)

Monumental change had begun, as we learn from certain Scriptures. “*And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence.*” (Matthew 11:12) Evidently, a great “stir” took place at this time, not only here on Earth but also in the Heavenly Realm: Christ preaching to the “*spirits in prison*” to release them; “*the veil of the temple... torn in two from top to bottom*”; “*graves... opened; many bodies of the saints... raised.*” (Matthew 27:51-52)

Obviously, a great convulsion was going on in the unseen world - events that are beyond our finite minds to fully comprehend. And in the earthly realm, a great polarization began: the forces of Darkness began fighting a Kingdom far more “dangerous” than the physical state of Israel;

**now it was God's Kingdom being established in the hearts of mankind that they had to contend with.**

**That such a monumental shift had taken place in God's universe is evident in a vision recorded by John the apostle. He describes the grand celebration in Heaven of Christ's Resurrection and conquest over the forces of evil. This glorious victory paved the way for mankind's redemption and release from the shackles of Death and corruption.**

**Revelation 5:9-10 portrays it as the grand opening of the seven-sealed "scroll", the book of future history, which could now unfold towards full realization: the removal of Satan's kingdom on Earth followed by the establishment of God's Kingdom of Heaven on Earth.**

**Now when He had taken the scroll... they sang a new song, saying:**

**"You are worthy to take the scroll,  
And to open its seals;  
For You were slain,  
And have redeemed us to God by Your blood  
Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,  
And have made us kings and priests to our God;  
And we shall reign on the earth."**

**Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice:**

**"Worthy is the Lamb who was slain  
To receive power and riches and wisdom,  
And strength and honor and glory and blessing!"**

**(Revelation 5:8-12)**

**Christ had re-directed the course of human history. In the Celestial Realm, the stranglehold of *Death and Hades* over the souls of mankind was broken; the mystery and fear of death were banished; mankind's disinheritance from the Garden of Eden had been reversed. And, as**

**promised in Revelation 21:7, “he who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.”**

**No more did human beings have to worry about separation from God and an uncertain future in the Afterlife. Salvation from sin’s dominion was a promise and guarantee that could be acquired, even in the present earthly existence.**

**It should be safe to conclude then that, according to what we would expect of the fairness, justice, and mercy of God, that He would also present the same gift of salvation to those who arrive in the next life - those worthy souls who lacked opportunity and were not able, for whatever legitimate reasons, to receive His great offer during their earthly lives.**

**Of course, it is better if those who are searching can find Christ in this life. But if it doesn’t happen, then why would not God in His mercy reveal Himself to them in the Afterlife? Why did Christ go to all the trouble of being “made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death” to “taste death for everyone”? (Hebrews 2:9) “Everyone” should include those souls who arrive in the Afterlife, not having had the benefit of finding Christ during their earthly lives. The love of God has no limits and knows no boundaries.**

**And nowadays, because of advanced medical technology, we have plenty of evidence from those who were revived from near-death experiences. Many of these people, who were non-Christians, testified of meeting Christ and being given the invitation to enter the Heavenly Realm. One group of testimonies along this line is titled [True Near Death Experiences](#); and probably there are several other website testimonies along the same line.**

**So, now that we in modern times have a better idea of Afterlife reality, the question that begs for an answer: how do our old mindsets need to change? How does Christian theology need to expand and break out of any narrow confines in response to the more deeply understood reality, even scientific reality, that confronts us nowadays?**

**It is almost a matter of common sense. “God is love.” (1John 4:8) And if**

**that's what God is supposed to be, then, being fair and just in His nature, it is incomprehensible that He would refuse to offer the gift of salvation to those who deserve it (even if they never came to Him during their earthly lives). God knows the hearts of those who are His and those who deserve the honor of being counted as His people.**

## HELL

**Now regarding the word “*Hell*”, that is the common translation for the Hebrew *Sheol* (Old Testament) and the Greek *Hades* (New Testament). *Young’s Analytical Concordance* gives almost the same definition for each word: *Sheol* - the unseen state; *Hades* - the unseen world.**

**This, we should understand, is the general definition of these words. In actual usage, the Bible writers, when speaking of the fate of evildoers, would focus on the desolate and dismal regions of the spiritual realm. And thus, *Sheol* or *Hades* came to be associated with those (lower) regions of the “unseen world”.**

**Originally, there was no realm of *Hades* because there was no such thing as “death” before the Fall of the first man and woman in the Garden of Eden. The Tree of Life was planted there and was meant to enable human beings to regenerate; it was the conduit, the pipeline for the supernatural energy from Heaven that would overcome the natural forces of disintegration, the aging process.**

**The Earth itself was Heaven-like, but because of the Devil’s influence and man’s disobedience, some of those Heaven-like qualities had to be removed and/or transformed in the Curse: mankind and his environment became subject to pain, hostility, the perils of nature, and death (with *Hades* the receiving ground in the spiritual realm for the spirits of the dead).**

**God’s plan, however, as we know from many passages in Scripture (especially Revelation 21-22), is to restore the Earth to its original pristine condition, similar to what existed in the Garden of Eden. “*And there shall be no more curse.*” (Revelation 22:3)**

**Before the Curse we might guess that in the Garden of Eden the spirit**

world was very real and visible to Adam and Eve. But when the relationship between human beings and God was broken, that brought with it a barrier between our world and the spirit realm - a barrier which has already been removed to some extent as a result of Christ's sacrifice and the consequent outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

***"Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him." But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. (1Corinthians 2:9-10)***

And in the days of the future, that veil separating earthly and spiritual realms will be abolished even further, if not completely. ***"Death and Hades" will be "cast into the lake of fire". (Revelation 20:14)*** There will be no more "unseen realm". Earth and Heaven will merge together when once more ***"the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be His people."*** (Revelation 21:3, ESV) No more will that same barrier exist between earthly and spiritual realms as we experience now in the present Age.

But in the Beginning, Adam and Eve, and all succeeding generations, were barred from partaking of the Tree of Life, ***"and so death passed upon all men"***. (Romans 5:12, KJV) Our bodily existence, the visible part of us, comes to its end at the time of "death", but our spirit, which is invisible, lives on and has to go somewhere.

Earth is the visible habitation while our bodies are alive, while ***Hades/Sheol*** is the invisible habitation for our spirits. As inhabitants of the earthly realm, it is difficult for us to get an accurate idea of what ***Hades*** is like. But perhaps we can describe it as that region in the spirit world which, in broadest terms, is the receiving ground for the spirits of the dead.

But in actual usage in the New Testament, ***Hades*** came to mean that region in the spiritual realm designated for the unrighteous. It may include different environments - ranging from neutral reception areas to regions of barren desolation. ***Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*** offers these definitions of ***Hades*** (pg 11):

***The nether [lower] world, the realm of the dead... the common receptacles of disembodied spirits.***

And there is a foreboding aspect:

***“[Hades] denotes, therefore, in biblical Greek Orcus, the infernal regions, a dark (Job X.21) and dismal place...”***

As for the Hebrew *sheol*, Jewish belief held that it had two parts, one for the righteous and one for the unrighteous. Most of the Scriptures that mention *sheol*, however, zero in on the fate of evildoers in its “lower” regions. “Unseen world” is the widest definition of *Sheol*, but the Old Testament often refers to it in more pessimistic terms, which in the New Testament is more accurately expressed in phrases like “*Death and Hades*” or “*lake of fire*”. Following are some of the references to *Sheol* in the Old Testament:

*Sheol* appears to have different levels reserved, probably, for different ranks of evildoers:

***“lowest part of Sheol” (Deuteronomy 32:22, NAS)  
“lowest sheol” (Psalm 86:13, ASV)***

*Sheol* is not a cheerful place:

***“sorrows of Sheol” (2Samuel 22:6, Psalm 18:5)***

And it can be uncomfortable:

***“pangs of Sheol” (Psalm 116:3)***

*Sheol* is considered to be the abode of evildoers:

***“the wicked shall depart to Sheol” (Ps 9:17, RSV)***

***“her [harlot’s] house is the way to Sheol... her guests are in the depths of Sheol” (Proverbs 7:27, 9:18, RSV)***

***“the wise man’s path leads upward to life, that he may avoid Sheol beneath.” (Proverbs 15:24, RSV)***

***“Sheol beneath is stirred up to meet you [king of Babylon] when you come... your pomp is brought down to Sheol” (Isaiah 14:9,11 RSV)***

***“How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!... For you have said in your heart... ‘I will be like the Most High.’ Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, to the lowest depths of the Pit” (Isaiah***

**14:12-15 12)**

***“You sons of the sorceress, you offspring of the adulterer and the harlot!... You sent your messengers far off, and even descended to Sheol.” (Isaiah 57:3,9)***

**Above all, Sheol is a domain where one experiences separation from the presence of God:**

***“My life draws near to Sheol. I am counted among those who go down to the pit... like one set loose among the dead... like those whom you remember no more, for they are cut off from your hand... Do You work wonders for the dead? Do the departed rise up to praise You? Is Your steadfast love declared in the grave, or your faithfulness in Abaddon? Are Your wonders known in the darkness, or Your righteousness in the land of forgetfulness? (Psalm 88:3-5,10-12)***

**As “Hades” is associated with “Death” (a miserable state of existence) in the New Testament, so “Sheol” is often associated with misery in the Old Testament:**

***“My life draweth nigh unto Sheol... Shall thy lovingkindness be declared in the grave? Or thy faithfulness in destruction?” (Psalm 88:3,11 - ASV)***

***“What man is he that shall live and not see death, that shall deliver his soul from the power of Sheol?” (Psalm 89:48)***

***“Hell and Destruction are before the LORD.” (Proverbs 15:11)***

***“Sheol is naked before Him, and Destruction has no covering.” (Job 26:6)***

**And here is a definition of Sheol:**

***Orcus, hades, a subterranean place, full of thick darkness (Job 10:21,22), in which the shades of the dead are gathered together... hell, purgatory... (Gesenius' Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon of the Old Testament, pg. 798)***

**The picture we get here then is that Sheol, in its more common usage, is the place of the dead in the unseen world that is reserved for the unrighteous and, we might suppose, for those whose spiritual status is in a state of limbo - not righteous, but also not terribly evil.**

**As for the righteous, the Old Testament seems to indicate that, even in those days prior to Christ's coming, they did not land in *Sheol*. There is the example of king David's declaration: “*my flesh shall rest in hope, for You will not leave my soul in Sheol... But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave [Sheol], for He shall receive me.*” (Psalm 16:10, 49:15)**

**And if the righteous were received by God, then their dwelling place in the Afterlife would be a heavenly environment. (Other Scriptures on this include Psalm 16:10-11, 17:15, 23:6, 115:17-18, Ecclesiastes 12:7, 2Kings 2:11.) It was understood then that both Heaven and Hell were God's creation, meant as habitations for souls in the Afterlife. “*If I ascend into heaven, you are there; if I make my bed in Hell [Sheol], behold, you are there.*” (Psalm 139:8)**

**The appearance of Moses and Elijah, conversing with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration, also points to the fact that they too were dwelling in the presence of God. “*Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of His saints.*” (Psalm 116:15) This also agrees with how Jesus pictured it in the New Testament: *Hades* was the abode of the unrighteous, an unpleasant environment, while the righteous were received into “*Abraham's bosom*” - meaning a heavenly abode. (Luke 16:10-31)**

**And not just for the righteous, but also for the innocent, the Afterlife was pictured as a realm of serenity and peace. Job's lament over his earthly distress provides some insight:**

**Why did I not die at birth?...**

**For now I would have lain still and been quiet... then I would have been at rest...**

**There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary are at rest.**

**There the prisoners rest together; they do not hear the voice of the oppressor.**

**The small and great are there, and the servant is free from his master.**

**(Job 3:11,13,17-19)**

**The ancient Hebrews were aware of the mercy and justice of the**

**Almighty and knew that the innocent - such as children who died, or those who were oppressed - need not look forward to a gloomy Afterlife but would find release and rest from their earthly troubles in a Paradise-like environment.**

**According to its broader definition of “unseen world”, *Sheol* or *Hades* would not be the kind of dreadful region in the spiritual realm that we usually associate with the word “Hell”. For many souls *Sheol/Hades* may be a neutral sort of region - like a Purgatory or “holding cell” environment - a time and place where souls can continue their activities, not in a wonderful heavenly environment, but at least one where they might have opportunity to prove by their works and attitude of heart where they stand.**

**What we think of as “Hell” is a domain that exists in a different region of the spiritual realm. This is the “real Hell” (which in the New Testament is translated from the Greek *gehenna*) and is also called the “*lake of fire*”.**

**In the Final Judgment, those souls in *Sheol/Hades* who have turned towards the Love and Truth of Christ shall have their names “written in the *Book of Life*”, while those who have not repented in their Afterlife existence will meet their fate in the Lake of Fire; the heat gets turned up a bit.**

**This is known as the “*second death*” when the rebellious will be sent to the “*lake of fire*”, and whatever that is, it should serve as a warning to souls in Purgatory to make peace with God and avoid the dismal fate that lies ahead in that infernal region. (Revelation 20:14-15) (More on this subject later.)**

**Now to those souls who truly are unworthy, we can imagine there may not be any intermediate stage at all for them: those who have committed grievous atrocities and crimes against humanity, the “Hitlers”, the cold-blooded monsters and warmongers; along with their accomplices - the liars, deceivers, and false prophets who lay the philosophical foundation for criminal activity and tyrannical regimes that have come and gone through history. Most of these souls, we will be thankful to see them getting marched off straight into the Lake of Fire (as will happen to the Beast and the False Prophet at the Battle of Armageddon according to**

**Revelation 19:20).**

**Then there are those to whom salvation is offered, but, because of pride, rebellion, excessive guilt or self-righteousness, or other reasons, might feel incapable or unwilling to receive Christ's gift. "For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed." (John 3:20)**

**How does the Lord feel, seeing His created beings turn away? Ezekiel 33:11 expresses it thus: "As I live," says the Lord GOD, "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways!"**

**It is not because Christ doesn't want a person to "come to the light", but because that person "hates the light" and fears to have his "deeds... exposed", then they refuse or find themselves unable to make that step. The choice is ours, not God's. He provides the "light", the guidance we need, but He does not choose for us. That's our part, but as so often happens, because of pride or fear, we make the wrong choice.**

**And for many souls, brought up in gross ignorance, the Light is shown if for no other reason than to make them aware that there is a choice; there actually is an alternative to the kind of life or belief system to which they have been held captive. And once that has had time to sink in, would they not be given their "second chance" - first chance really - to embark on their journey towards the true Light?**

**We may conclude then that *Sheol* and *Hades*, in their widest sense, signify the "unseen realm". However, in actual usage, the terms tend to refer to the lower and gloomy level of that unseen world. Sometimes a more fine-tuned expression is used - "*Death and Hades*" (in the Book of Revelation) and "*Sheol and Destruction*" (in the Old Testament) - as if to say that *Hades/Sheol* really is a wide domain (the "unseen realm").**

**But when the phrases "*Death and Hades*" or "*Sheol and Destruction*" are used, these point specifically to that region of the "unseen realm", which we might think of as Purgatory or a way station or holding cell. It is the temporary abode for the unrighteous until "*Death and Hades*" are "*cast into the lake of fire*". (Revelation 1:18, 6:8, 20:13-14)**

Regarding this subject of how the words *Hades* and *Sheol* were used in the Scriptures, the following explanation provides some helpful insight:

**[Luke] 16:23 In Hades. . .** “Hades” was the Greek term for the abode of the dead. In the LXX [Septuagint Bible - translation of the Old Testament into Greek in about 250 B.C.], it was used to translate the Hebrew *Sheol*, which referred to the realm of the dead in general, without necessarily distinguishing between righteous or unrighteous souls. However, in NT usage, “Hades” always refers to the place of the wicked prior to final judgment in hell. The imagery Jesus used paralleled the common rabbinical idea that *Sheol* had two parts, one for the souls of the righteous and the other for the souls of the wicked - separated by an impassable gulf. But there is no reason to suppose, as some do, that “Abraham’s bosom” spoke of a temporary prison for the souls of OT saints, who were brought to heaven only after He had actually atoned for their sins. Scripture consistently teaches that the spirits of the righteous dead go immediately into the presence of God (cf. 23:43; 2Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23). And the presence of Moses and Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration (9:30) belies the notion that they were confined in a compartment of *Sheol* until Christ finished His work. [from notes on Luke 16:23 in *The MacArthur’s Study Bible*]

The above commentary about Hades offers a reasonable and balanced explanation. Unfortunately however, when commenting on the fate of the unrighteous in the post-Hades era (the Lake of Fire), the same author spirals off into some odd conclusions:

**[Matthew] 25:46 everlasting punishment... eternal life...** The punishment of the wicked is as never-ending as the bliss of the righteous. The wicked are not given a second chance, nor are they annihilated... Jesus indicates that the punishment itself is everlasting - not merely the smoke and flames. The wicked are forever subject to the fury and the wrath of God. They consciously suffer shame and contempt and the assaults of an accusing conscience - along with the fiery wrath of an offended deity - for all eternity... [from notes on Matthew 25:46 in *The MacArthur’s Study Bible*]

**The above commentary echoes the standard Christian view on this subject of what happens to evildoers. It presents God as a rather monstrous character, tormenting souls through a never-ending infinity. Common sense would tell us this cannot be the right conception; God would not be so negligent or incompetent as to forget all about the souls He has had to penalize in what is known as the Lake of Fire... or whatever purgatorial realm in which they may be incarcerated.**

**And as this study will endeavor to show, this is what the Scriptures do, in fact, teach. What has happened though, unfortunately, this aspect of God's truth lies hidden, buried under a rubble of man-made misunderstanding.**

Continue to [\*\*A-6: Salvation by Works? \(Part 1\)\*\*](#)