

## Abraham's Bosom and Sheol

by Ward Fenley

Much discussion has taken place concerning the nature of Abraham's Bosom, and Sheol. Luke 16 is a context which is regularly quoted to support the teaching that all those who died prior to the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ were in one of two separate compartments awaiting their final destiny. The passage uses such terms as Abraham's Bosom, hell, comfort, and torment. Many students and theologians isolate this context from Scripture to convey concepts of the afterlife which may not be accurate.

First, identifying the characters in the story plays an important role in establishing any doctrinal statements about death and the afterlife. The context begins:

Luke 16:19 There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day:

The clothing of this man is the first indicator of what he represents. This somewhat lengthy context gives peculiar insight:

Exodus 28:1-15 And take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office, even Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons. (2) And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother for glory and for beauty. (3) And thou shalt speak unto all that are wise hearted, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron's garments to consecrate him, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office. (4) And these are the garments which they shall make; a breastplate, and an ephod, and a robe, and a brodered coat, a mitre, and a girdle: and they shall make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, and his sons, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office. (5) And they shall take gold, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen. (6) And they shall make the ephod of gold, of blue, and of purple, of scarlet, and fine twined linen, with cunning work. (7) It shall have the two shoulderpieces thereof joined at the two edges thereof; and so it shall be joined together. (8) And the curious girdle of the ephod, which is upon it, shall be of the same, according to the work thereof; even of gold, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen. (9) And thou shalt take two onyx stones, and grave on them the names of the children of Israel: (10) Six of their names on one stone, and the other six names of the rest on the other stone, according to their birth. (11) With the work of an engraver in stone, like the engravings of a signet, shalt thou engrave the two stones with the names of the children of Israel: thou shalt make them to be set in ouches of gold. (12) And thou shalt put the two stones upon the shoulders of the ephod for stones of memorial unto the children of Israel: and Aaron shall bear their names before the LORD upon his two shoulders for a memorial. (13) And thou shalt make ouches of gold; (14) And two chains of pure gold at the ends; of wreathen work shalt thou make them, and fasten the wreathen chains to the ouches. (15) And thou shalt make the breastplate of judgment with cunning work; after the work of the ephod thou shalt make it; of gold, of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, and of fine twined linen, shalt thou make it.

The priesthood under the Mosaic covenant was symbolized by many materials and colors, not the least of which was purple and fine linen. Interestingly, the breastplate the priest would wear was called the breastplate of judgment. Over the course of history the Israelites would abuse their priestly authority and abuse their right to judge to the extent that when Jesus arrived, He admonished and reprimanded the Jews:

Matthew 7:1-2 Judge not, that ye be not judged. (2) For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

Luke 12:56-57 Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this time? (57) Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?

John 7:24 Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.

The Pharisees and Sadducees looked on the outward, judging according to appearance. But Jesus said of Himself:

John 5:30 I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

John 8:15-16 Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man. (16) And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.

In Ezekiel and Jeremiah false shepherds and priests are condemned for their harshness toward the congregation of Israel. This evil pattern continued to the time of Jesus. In fact, when one reviews the reproofs Jesus gave to the Pharisees, it is evident that His main contention was against them and not toward what we in 21st century fundamental Christendom would consider faring "sumptuously every day." We tend to think of lifestyles of the rich and famous from a modern perspective. But it was the religious, self-righteous Pharisees and Sadducees of Christ's day toward whom Christ directed His anger. They were the rich and the famous of their day. We must remember, a religious or theocratic governing body views things from an entirely different perspective than a capitalistic governing body. What so many in America or other monetarily based societies view as riches are not necessarily what religious Israel viewed as riches. When your judges are the religious leaders of the day and outward righteousness is the test of following that religion, then those who follow every jot and tittle will be regarded as those who are rich.

Matthew 23:27-28 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. (28) Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

James clearly identifies those who would undergo the judgment of God during the last days of the Old Covenant:

James 5:1-6 Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. (2) Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten. (3) Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. (4) Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth. (5) Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. (6) Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you.

James, writing to the "twelve tribes scattered abroad," addresses the self-righteous. In light of the above, consider who the 'rich' are here:

James 2:1-11 My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons. (2) For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; (3) And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: (4) Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts? (5) Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him? (6) But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats? (7) Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called? (8) If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: (9) But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors. (10) For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. (11) For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.

In connection with the rich versus the poor, remember the story of the good Samaritan and those involved:

Luke 10:25-37 And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? (26) He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? (27) And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. (28) And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live. (29) But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour? (30) And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. (31) And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. (32) And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. (33) But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, (34) And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took

care of him. (35) And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. (36) Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? (37) And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

The Samaritan bound up the wounds. Samaritans were viewed as dogs:

Matthew 15:22-27 And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. (23) But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. (24) But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. (25) Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. (26) But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs. (27) And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.

The passage in Luke speaks of dogs licking the sores of the poor man and even the crumbs falling from the rich man's table:

Luke 16:20-21 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, (21) And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

These sores likely represent the judgments of the self-righteous upon the sinner. This was the pattern of the religious Pharisees among the Israelites. They stayed away from the 'sinners' and the 'unclean':

Luke 7:39 Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner.

This attitude was despised by God, as the prophet declares:

Isaiah 65:2-5 I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts; (3) A people that provoketh me to anger continually to my face; that sacrificeth in gardens, and burneth incense upon altars of brick; (4) Which remain among the graves, and lodge in the monuments, which eat swine's flesh, and broth of abominable things is in their vessels; (5) Which say, Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou. These are a smoke in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day.

The self-righteous ostracized the sinners of their day. For this they remained a stench in the nostrils of God. They oppressed the poor (the poor in spirit) and believed their sacrifices determined their righteousness. God calls these wicked men 'rulers':

Isaiah 1:10-17 Hear the word of the LORD, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the

law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah. (11) To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats. (12) When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? (13) Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. (14) Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. (15) And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. (16) Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; (17) Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

Isaiah is prophesying against Israel. Yet God refers to them as the rulers of Sodom. Their sacrifices were an abomination to God:

Proverbs 21:27 The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination: how much more, when he bringeth it with a wicked mind?

In fact, their sacrifices were viewed as exactly that which God viewed as abominable under the law of Moses:

Isaiah 66:2-4 For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word. (3) He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations. (4) I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not.

We see that these are the characteristics of the rich according to Scripture. But perhaps more convincing is within the context of Luke 16 itself:

Luke 16:25-29 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. (26) And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. (27) Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: (28) For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. (29) Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

First, Abraham refers to the rich man as a son. Even the rich man called Abraham when Abraham said that his brethren would not believe, "Nay, Father Abraham." No Gentile unbeliever would ever reckon Abraham as father. Yet the Jews described Abraham as such:

John 8:39 They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. John 8:53 Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself?

Even John the Baptist commented on their claim to the sonship of Abraham:

Matthew 3:7-9 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? (8) Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: (9) And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

It is highly unlikely that Abraham would refer to a far-removed non-religious Gentile as a son. But within an Israelite context it would be expected. But even more convincing that the context is referring to a self-righteous Pharisee is the fact that he pleads with Abraham to tell his brethren, which are described by Abraham as those who "have Moses and the prophets." According to Scripture, these are the ones who had Moses:

Matthew 23:1-7 Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, (2) Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: (3) All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not. (4) For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. (5) But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, (6) And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, (7) And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.

They loved to be noticed for their religious zeal, for their fine clothing; they loved the uppermost rooms, and chief seats in the synagogues. These were clearly the rich to whom Christ referred in Luke 16. "They have Moses and the Prophets." This does not seem to be referring to rich Gentiles. For the Psalmist says of the nations:

Psalm 147:19-20 He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel. (20) He hath not dealt so with any nation: and as for his judgments, they have not known them. Praise ye the LORD.

John 5:45-47 Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. (46) For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. (47) But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?

They trusted in Moses. They oppressed those who had the sores of sin evident in their lives. They had no mercy, and therefore as the rich and self-righteous they would be condemned. They loved their riches and their clothing and having the name

of Jew. But Paul made it explicitly clear:

Romans 2:28-29 For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: (29) But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

The rich Jews had praise of men but were not the real Jews with circumcised hearts. This is why John wrote in the Apocalypse:

Revelation 3:17-18 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: (18) I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.

Who were these people and what were they claiming?

Revelation 3:9 Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.

Stephen forcefully describes these evildoers:

Acts 7:49-53 Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what is the place of my rest? (50) Hath not my hand made all these things? (51) Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. (52) Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers: (53) Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it.

Notice verse 49 and 50: "Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what is the place of my rest? (50) Hath not my hand made all these things?" These are the exact words cited earlier which preface the omen against the evildoers in Isaiah's day:

Isaiah 66:1-4 Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? (2) For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word. (3) He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations. (4) I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not.

God said He would choose the delusions of these wicked ones. Paul echoes this:

2 Thessalonians 2:8-12 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: (9) Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, (10) And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. (11) And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: (12) That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

Who is it that would be damned? Jesus could not have been clearer:

Matthew 23:29-33 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, (30) And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. (31) Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. (32) Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. (33) Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?

They killed God's people. The Pharisees were simply following the hypocrisy of their fathers. They were the children of those who killed the prophets, or as Christ also said, "Your father is the Devil (the adversary)." The self-righteous were the adversary from the beginning. Their chief characteristic was to accuse. They were the Accuser of the brethren. They accused God's people night and day. We see this in Zechariah in this beautiful prophecy concerning the kingdom of Christ:

Zechariah 3:1-10 And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. (2) And the LORD said unto Satan, The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan; even the LORD that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? (3) Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. (4) And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. (5) And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the LORD stood by. (6) And the angel of the LORD protested unto Joshua, saying, (7) Thus saith the LORD of hosts; If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by. (8) Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they are men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH. (9) For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone shall be seven eyes: behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day. (10) In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbour under the vine and under the fig tree.

Satan (the adversary, or the Jews) were ready to accuse, but God takes away the filthy garments and replaces them with the righteousness of Christ.

At this point we turn to some terms which often bring confusion when isolated from other biblical texts. The first of these is death, or in the context in Luke, the word, 'died' is used.

It is claimed by many that Abraham's bosom and Hell represent two distinct compartments in one general holding tank called Sheol for all who died prior to the advent of Messiah. Regardless of the consciousness of those in the parable, it conveys at least the idea that these were two entirely different *experiences*. Now, whether this is a parable or not, it is designed to help us understand the distinction between two eternal, final destinies, as opposed to addressing what was true of the 'dead' before the cross.

Luke 16:22-25 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; (23) And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. (24) And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. (25) But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

There are the experiences of torment and comfort. Many believe these are conscious experiences of both parties. Some believe the experiences shared are metaphors to describe the beauty of life after death for the believer and the shame of life after death for the unbeliever. The disagreement arises when we consider when these experiences (or places) transpire historically. As previously mentioned, most would argue that these represented a holding tank called Sheol which contained two compartments, one for the believer and one for the unbeliever. It is argued that the believer would be comforted in his compartment until the advent of Christ or the resurrection of the dead, and that the unbeliever would be tormented in his compartment until one of those same events. But in either case the two parties are believed to have been conscious in either Hades or Abraham's bosom. Again, it is not the consciousness of the individuals which is being called into question. It is the placement or timing, and perhaps even the nature of these experiences which is being called into question. Let us examine Old Testament Scriptures which describe the experience of those who died prior to the cross.

The book of Psalms speaks of the results of death more than any other book in the Bible. This particular reference pertains to animals:

Psalms 104:29-30 Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust. (30) Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth.

We must ask what the destiny of animals is after they die. Most would agree (other than memories of childhood fantasy) that animals simply die and turn to dust. But what does the Scripture say concerning those prior to the cross? Prior to the cross,

man was simply likened to beasts which perish. Therefore, man would simply "return to the dust" of the earth. This is plain from the books of Genesis and Job:

Genesis 3:19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

Job 34:13-15 Who hath given him a charge over the earth? or who hath disposed the whole world? (14) If he set his heart upon man, if he gather unto himself his spirit and his breath; (15) All flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again unto dust.

There are two significant factors Psalm 104:29-30 unveils: First, the animals return to dust when they die. Second, the phrase, "Thou sendest forth Thy Spirit, they are created," is used to describe the creation of those beasts. We must first dispel the idea that the spirit "went to heaven" when the person died. In this passage God sends forth the Spirit to make a beast or animal live. That is simply God giving breath (Heb., *ruach*) to all things:

Job 12:9-10 Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the LORD hath wrought this? (10) In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.

It is merely the same word (*ruach*) which is used in the following passage some interpret to refer to a "going to heaven" or an imagined compartment of comfort in Sheol:

Ecclesiastes 12:5-7 Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets: (6) Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern. (7) Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit (*ruach*) shall return unto God who gave it.

The same is true here:

Ecclesiastes 3:18-20 I said in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts. (19) For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; *even one thing befalleth them*: as the one dieth, *so dieth the other*; yea, they have all one breath (*ruach*); so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast: for all is vanity. (20) All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.

The breath returning to God is simply saying, "the Lord gives and the Lord takes away." It has nothing to do with the consciousness of man after he died.

Was there really a separate compartment which divided the believer from the unbeliever? This does not appear to be the case according to Scripture:

Psalm 49:10-12 For he seeth that wise men die, *likewise* the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others. (11) Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations; they call their lands after their own names. (12) Nevertheless man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish.

Job agrees with this:

Job 21:22-26 Shall any teach God knowledge? seeing he judgeth those that are high. (23) One dieth in his full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet. (24) His breasts are full of milk, and his bones are moistened with marrow. (25) And another dieth in the bitterness of his soul, and never eateth with pleasure. (26) *They shall lie down alike in the dust*, and the worms shall cover them.

As we noted, even the wisest man, Solomon, confirmed this:

Ecclesiastes 3:18-20 I said in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts. (19) For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; *even one thing befalleth them*: as the one dieth, *so dieth the other*; yea, they have all one breath (*ruach*); so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast: for all is vanity. (20) *All go unto one place*; all are of the dust, *and all turn to dust again*.

Solomon, with the utmost clarity, says that they all are like beasts and they all go to one place. This place is called Sheol, the grave, or the pit. In Job we see the same idea:

Job 17:13-16 If I wait, the grave is mine house: I have made my bed in the darkness. (14) I have said to corruption, Thou art my father: to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister. (15) And where is now my hope? as for my hope, who shall see it? (16) They shall go down to the bars of the pit, when *our rest together is in the dust*.

Since we have determined that all went to the same place, we must now determine whether that place was a place of consciousness prior to the cross:

Let us consider several profound statements pertaining to death and what would happen upon death:

Psalm 30:9 What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit? Shall the dust praise thee? shall it declare thy truth?

During his life David continually praised God:

Psalm 7:17 I will praise the LORD according to his righteousness: and will sing praise to the name of the LORD most high.

Psalm 9:2 I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High.

During his life, David continually declared God's truth:

Psalm 73:28 But *it is* good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, that I may declare all thy works.

Psalm 75:9 But I will declare for ever; I will sing praises to the God of Jacob.

But in death David said there would be no praise of God, and no declaration of truth. We know they all went to the dust. David here asks the rhetorical questions, "Shall the dust praise thee? Shall it declare thy truth?" If Abraham's bosom was the holding tank of the believers prior to the cross, and those believers were comforted, how is it that they could not praise God or declare His truth? Were they conscious enough to be comforted but unable to praise God? Why would they not be able to declare God's truth? David equates the pit with dust. It is plain that this place of dust, to which all went upon physical death, was a place of no praise and no declaration of truth. But if it were a place of conscious comfort, wouldn't this presuppose that they were also conscious enough to hope? During his life David was full of hope:

Psalm 31:24 Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD.

Psalm 38:15 For in thee, O LORD, do I hope: thou wilt hear, O Lord my God.

Psalm 33:22 Let thy mercy, O LORD, be upon us, according as we hope in thee.

Psalm 71:14 But I will hope continually, and will yet praise thee more and more.

But Isaiah is hopeful in the prospect of a future resurrection, however, solemn in regard to death:

Isaiah 38:16-19 O Lord, by these *things men* live, and in all these *things is* the life of my spirit: so wilt thou recover me, and make me to live. (17) Behold, for peace I had great bitterness: but thou hast in love to my soul *delivered it* from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back. (18) For the grave cannot praise thee, death can *not* celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. (19) The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I *do* this day: the father to the children shall make known thy truth.

According to Isaiah, those pre-resurrection could not do three things: They could not praise God (as David agrees), they could not celebrate God, and they could not hope for God's truth. Again, we must ask this important question: If Isaiah were to be comforted, what comfort would there be in not being able to praise God, not being able to celebrate God, and not being able to hope in God's truth? The answer is, there would be no comfort whatsoever if indeed they were conscious but unable to do these things. They all went to the dust, Sheol, the Grave, the Pit. There was no consciousness. They were awaiting a resurrection out of this place to which all went. They were awaiting a resurrection out of the dust of the earth:

Daniel 12:1-2 And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. (2) And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

Many of those who were *sleeping* in the dust of the earth would awake—the righteous would awake and the unrighteous would awake. But they both were in one place: the dust of the earth. Now, upon resurrection they would be awakened to either everlasting life, or they would awake to shame and everlasting contempt. But both are said to be awakened at the resurrection. In the parable in Luke, the rich man is tormented. This would seem to be equivalent to shame. But Daniel is clear that the shame takes place at the resurrection. Those who affirm a compartment in Sheol of torment essentially have a resurrection to shame before the resurrection was to take place.

Some may stoop to this argument: That perhaps they could not praise God, celebrate God, or hope in God, but that they simply *thought* about God and gave thanks and thus were comforted. But David is outspoken concerning the fear of death:

Psalm 6:4-5 Return, O LORD, deliver my soul: oh save me for thy mercies' sake. (5) For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?

In death, God was not even remembered. In the grave they could not even remember God, let alone give Him thanks, praise, celebrate Him, or hope in Him. They were, simply, dead. There was nothing. They were dust. But because of resurrection power, God calls those things which do not exist as though they existed:

Romans 4:16-17 Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all, (17) (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.

Also, what is the wicked rich man doing conversing with Abraham if David's prayer was a reality prior to the cross?:

Psalm 31:17 Let me not be ashamed, O LORD; for I have called upon thee: let the wicked be ashamed, *and* let them be silent in the grave.

David actually prayed for their shame while they lived and then their silence in the grave. Were they talkative in the grave or were they simply...silent?

Hannah and David were confident of the coming resurrection from the dust:

1 Samuel 2:8 He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth are the LORD'S, and he hath set the world upon them.

Psalm 113:7-8 He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of

the dunghill; (8) That he may set him with princes, even with the princes of his people.

But prior to the resurrection, Job was vexed:

Job 7:21 And why dost thou not pardon my transgression, and take away mine iniquity? for now shall I sleep in the dust; and thou shalt seek me in the morning, but I shall not be.

Job 10:9 Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as the clay; and wilt thou bring me into dust again?

Job and David and Isaiah feared death:

Hebrews 2:14-15 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; (15) And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

There would be no fear of death if conscious comfort immediately followed death. But for these righteous men, praise of God, thanksgiving, celebration of God, hoping in God, and remembering God was joy. They craved an existence solely devoted to enjoying God. They loathed the thought of having the absence of those things. David, however, was confident. Though cognizant of the fact that in death he could not hope, he knew, while he lived, that one day he would awake from the dust with the likeness of God:

Psalm 17:15 As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.

Again, this awakening was from the dust of the earth into the righteousness of Christ, a righteousness which first-century believers obtained through faith in Jesus Christ:

Romans 3:21-22 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; (22) Even the righteousness of God *which is* by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

This righteousness or perfection of the Old Testament believers would not be attained without the first-century believers:

Hebrews 11:13-19 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of *them*, and embraced *them*, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. (14) For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. (15) And truly, if they had been mindful of that *country* from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. (16) But now they desire a better *country*, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city. (17) By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten

*son*, (18) Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: (19) Accounting that God *was* able to raise *him* up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure. Hebrews 11:39-40 And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: (40) God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

Paul equated this perfection, or completeness, with righteousness:

Philippians 3:8-12 Yea doubtless, and I count all things *but* loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them *but* dung, that I may win Christ, (9) And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: (10) That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; (11) If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. (12) Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

During the first century prior to the Parousia they were being transformed into the image into which David desired awakening:

2 Corinthians 3:18 But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are being changed into the same image from glory to glory, *even* as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Again, this was a reality which was taking place upon those in the first century. Let us remember David's words:

Psalms 17:15 As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.

They all would be completely changed at the Parousia:

1 Corinthians 15:34 Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak *this* to your shame.

Those who had physically died prior to the cross would awaken from the dust of unconsciousness; and those who were living would be awakened from this same separation through faith in Christ:

1 Corinthians 15:51-52 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, (52) In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

This change or awakening was that for which David longed. It was the awakening or arising to the righteousness of Christ:

Ephesians 5:14 Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

Here, Paul commands real, physically living people to awake from their sleep, and arise from the dead, and Christ would give them light. This is the awakening and arising of which David spoke. Before the cross no one had this awakening. No one had this arising or this light.

It has been proven that those prior to the cross were simply dead, with no praise of God, no celebration of God, no hope in God, no remembrance of God, and no declaration of God's truth. Therefore, it is impossible that Abraham's bosom and hell (hades=the Greek equivalent of the Grave) were existing prior to the cross. We must explain that to which the parable in Luke 16 refers.

First, let us look at the language used to describe the ascent of the poor man to Abraham's bosom:

Luke 16:22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom

First, Abraham's bosom is designated as such because those who are of faith are the children of Abraham:

Galatians 3:7-8 Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. (8) And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, *saying*, In thee shall all nations be blessed.

Galatians 3:29 And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Children typically sit in the bosom or lap of their father:

Numbers 11:11-12 And Moses said unto the LORD, Wherefore hast thou afflicted thy servant? and wherefore have I not found favour in thy sight, that thou layest the burden of all this people upon me? (12) Have I conceived all this people? have I begotten them, that thou shouldest say unto me, Carry them in thy bosom, as a nursing father beareth the sucking child, unto the land which thou swarest unto their fathers?

Through faith, Abraham's children would be carried into his bosom and into the land of promise:

Romans 4:13-16 For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, *was* not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. (14) For if they which are of the law *be* heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: (15) Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, *there is* no transgression. (16) Therefore *it is* of faith, that *it might be* by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,

Some might argue that this promised land had been entered prior to the cross, but Hebrews, again, flatly declares:

Hebrews 11:35-40 Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: (36) And others had trial of *cruel* mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: (37) They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (38) (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and *in* mountains, and *in* dens and caves of the earth. (39) And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: (40) God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

And the context of Romans speaks of this "better resurrection":

Romans 4:16-25 Therefore *it is* of faith, that *it might be* by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all, (17) (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, *even* God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were. (18) Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. (19) And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb: (20) He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; (21) And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. (22) And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. (23) Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; (24) But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; (25) Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

The resurrection is that which believers have obtained through faith in Jesus Christ:

Matthew 25:46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

This corresponds with Daniel and John:

Daniel 12:2 And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame *and* everlasting contempt.

John 5:25-29 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. (26) For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; (27) And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. (28) Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, (29) And shall come forth;

they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

(Please see [One Resurrection](#))

Also, we must note that Lazarus was carried by angels into this place of blessing and comfort. There are significant references to angels ministering in this way:

Hebrews 1:13-14 But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? (14) Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

How do they minister?

Genesis 28:10-14 And Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran. (11) And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put *them for* his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. (12) And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. (13) And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, I *am* the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; (14) And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. There is a clear relationship between the receiving of the land and the families of the earth being blessed through this ladder reaching to heaven. Genesis 17 tells us that this same promise was made to Abraham, and Paul says this is fulfilled through faith in Christ:

Galatians 3:7-8 Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. (8) And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, *saying*, In thee shall all nations be blessed.

Jacob's dream in Genesis of the angels ascending and descending upon the ladder to heaven is unfolded in John:

John 1:51 And he [Jesus] saith unto him [Nathaniel], Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.

What is at the other end of the Ladder, or the Son of man? The answer is heaven. Heaven is opened and those brought into it are those who come by the Ladder, namely Jesus Christ. With these references, Luke 16 is elucidated:

Luke 16:22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom [heaven]:

Just these facts alone tell us that Abraham's bosom represents the eternal destiny of

those who have faith in Christ. Upon faith in Jesus Christ we are immediately brought into the house of God (the church, or body of Christ):

Hebrews 3:2-6 Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses *was faithful* in all his house. (3) For this *man* was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. (4) For every house is builded by some *man*; but he that built all things *is* was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; (6) But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

This is predicted in Jacob's dream:

Genesis 28:12-17 And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. (13) And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, I *am* the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; (14) And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. (15) And, behold, I *am* with thee, and will keep thee in all *places* whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done *that* which I have spoken to thee of. (16) And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew *it* not. (17) And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful *is* this place! this *is* none other but the house of God, and this *is* the gate of heaven.

The Lord is in this place (the church, or the House of God), and the ladder is the gate of heaven: "In my Father's House are many dwelling places [believers as individuals]; I am the way the truth and the life [the gate, or Ladder] and no one comes to the Father [to the Father's House] but by Me." God. (5) And Moses verily

Compare:

John 10:7-9 Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. (8) All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. (9) I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

Even the theme of comfort is a theme restricted to those under the Messianic kingdom, not those prior to the cross. The predictions of a kingdom which was future to Old Testament believers abound:

Isaiah 49:10-13 They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them. (11) And I will make all my mountains a way, and my highways shall be exalted. (12) Behold, these shall come from far: and, lo, these from the north and from the west; and these from the land of Sinim. (13) Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the

LORD hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted.

There is the comfort of God's people. Isaiah associates this comfort with no more hunger and no more thirst. Jesus said this is fulfilled through faith in Him:

John 6:35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

Isaiah also associates this comfort with springs of water. Jesus claims this to be fulfilled in Him:

John 4:14 But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

Isaiah again predicts this same comfort elsewhere:

Isaiah 52:9-10 Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the LORD hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. (10) The LORD hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

Isaiah associates comfort with salvation and redemption. Lazarus was comforted in Abraham's bosom, which means redemption and salvation had already come. Therefore Abraham's bosom could not have taken place under the timeframe of the Old Covenant and prior to the cross.

Perhaps Jesus Christ draws His parable from this beautiful passage in Isaiah:

Isaiah 51:2-3 Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah *that* bore you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him. (3) For the LORD shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.

Finally, and certainly not to end on a negative note: Nowhere in Scripture is torment used to describe the consciousness of unbelievers who died prior to the cross. In fact, consider these references. Even the unclean spirits cried:

Matthew 8:29 And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?

The everlasting fire was prepared for the Devil and his angels.

Matthew 25:41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

Therefore, what is the Rich man doing there before the Devil and the angels got there? Not to mention, the rich man associates flames with this torment:

Luke 16:24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

“Cool my tongue” refers to the guilt and shame of the words he used to condemn Lazarus. As Jesus promised:

Matthew 7:1-2 Judge not, that ye be not judged. (2) For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

Matthew 12:37 For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

The harsh and judgmental words this rich man used toward Lazarus (a ‘sinner’) were now condemning him with the fires of hypocrisy. This should have been known to the hypocrite:

Psalms 5:10 Destroy thou them, O God; let them fall by their own counsels; cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions; for they have rebelled against thee.

Psalms 10:2 The wicked in *his* pride doth persecute the poor: let them be taken in the devices that they have imagined.

Psalms 59:12 For the sin of their mouth *and* the words of their lips let them even be taken in their pride: and for cursing and lying *which* they speak.

Psalms 109:29 Let mine adversaries be clothed with shame, and let them cover themselves with their own confusion, as with a mantle.

Proverbs 12:13-14 The wicked is snared by the transgression of *his* lips: but the just shall come out of trouble. (14) A man shall be satisfied with good by the fruit of *his* mouth: and the recompense of a man's hands shall be rendered unto him.

Proverbs 18:7 A fool's mouth *is* his destruction, and his lips *are* the snare of his soul.

Proverbs 22:22-25 Rob not the poor, because he *is* poor: neither oppress the afflicted in the gate: (23) For the LORD will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of those that spoiled them. (24) Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go: (25) Lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul.

We can see how his tongue was hot against him. He had much desire to take back the harsh condemnation he imposed upon Lazarus. His words were his torment. His words became that which plagues the self-righteous, and that is the lake of fire. They would fall under the punishment of their words, brought to their remembrance by the Lamb:

Revelation 14:10-11 The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: (11) And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.

Regardless of whether torment continues post-Parousia, it is evident that Abraham's bosom and Hell were not two compartments of Sheol, nor were they holding tanks for conscious spirits prior to the resurrection. Hell or Hades seems to be the equivalent of the Hebrew word, Sheol. Both are said to have been cast into the lake of fire where there is torment. So then, it appears that those in Sheol were awakened to be thrust into the place of torment, so that in the Lake of Fire, the shame of disbelieving the Gospel (See [The Judgment of God upon the Nations](#)), Sheol is contained. To the contrary, Abraham's bosom represents the comfort and blessing of the Gospel, the righteousness of Christ, the house of God, and heaven itself, into which all those of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham, with eternal life which begins at faith and continues on, even after physical death, in the presence of Jesus Christ.