Amos - Commentaries by Unknown Author

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, Our Lord in the Abyss? Saints in Sheol? Location of Sheol?

Article from https://bibletruthpublishers.com/bible-truth-study-bible/btsb

Question: With reference to the Queries and Answers in the May issue of The Bible Treasury regarding Sheol or Hades, what are we to understand from the following scriptures—

“Who shall descend into the abyss, that is, to bring Christ up from among the dead” (Romans 10:7). Does this imply that our Lord was in the abyss?

“That through death he might annul him who has the might of death, that is, the devil; and might set free all those who through fear of death, through the whole of their life, were subject to bondage” (Hebrews 2:14, 15, New Translation). Is it that the setting free refers to Old Testament saints who had lived and died and went to Sheol?

“Though they dig into Sheol” (Amos 9:2). Would this teach that the locality of Sheol is in the heart of the earth?

J. C. B.

Answer: Our Lord not only died, but was buried. His body lay in the grave (in the words of Matthew 12:40) “three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.” And of this the prophet Jonah was a sign, who himself confesses (2:5), “The waters compassed me about, even to the soul; the depth (or, abyss) closed me round about” (, LXX.). Christ’s “soul” was not left to Hades; and His “spirit” He committed into the hands of His Father.

The scripture quoted by the querist warns against saying in the heart, “Who shall descend into the abyss,” of which the signification is given, “that is, to bring up Christ again from amongst () the dead.” “God raised Him from amongst the dead.” Spirits and souls are not dead, for all live unto Him. “God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.” The inanimate “body” it is that is the subject of resurrection. It is raised, and by the union with it of “spirit” and “soul” —both immortal—becomes living, whether here or hereafter, whether for eternal felicity, or everlasting torment. Does scripture ever speak of the soul, or the spirits of men, having place in the abyss? Is it correct to say that the abyss is “the habitation of (Satan and his angels, and) the spirits of the wicked”?

Neither the metaphorical language of Ezekiel 31:15, nor the imagery of the latest prophecy, affords sufficient basis, it appears to us, for such an inference.

The “abyss” is a Greek word (), meaning, “bottomless,” which occurs in the New Testament nine times, and is rendered in our Authorized Version as follows— “deep,” in Luke 8:31; Romans 10:7; “bottomless,” in Revelation 9:1, 2; and “bottomless pit,” in Revelation 9:11; 11:7; 17:8; 20:1, 3. In the Septuagint Version of the Old Testament, out of the thirty-four1 occurrences of its use it is the rendering, in thirty-one instances, of the Hebrew word t’hOhm— “the deep,” “deep places,” “the depth.” We give at the foot of this page all the references in the Old Testament, from which the general sense of the word is plain. And so also the New Testament gives no warrant whatever for such a thought as a descent of our Lord into the bottomless pit! Our Lord “descended into the lower parts of the earth.” He was buried, and He raised from the dead by the glory of the Father.

The setting free is not after death, but the deliverance from the fear of death in this life. Before redemption was accomplished, all was more or less dark to the pious Jew, and death had not been robbed of its terrors. Now even death is ours (1 Corinthians 3:22), for it is the gateway (if put to sleep) into the presence of the Lord. And, says the apostle, we are always confident—pleased rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

It is no question of locality. But we “dig” into the ground, as if we “climb,” we climb upwards. Whether man goes below or above therefore in his efforts to escape judgment when the lintel is smitten is alike futile (compare Psalm 139)

The Springing Well: Volume 5 (1902), Short Study in Scripture: A Threatened Famine, A

1. “BEHOLD, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land. Not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water: but of hearing the words of the Lord. And they shall wander from sea to sea: and from the north even to the east: they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it” (Amos 8:11, 12). “The law shall perish . . . and counsel” (Ezek. 7:26). “The Lord hath spoken it” (Is. 22:25).

2. In Eli’s “day the word of the Lord was precious: there was no open vision” (1 Sam. 3:1, 21). Saul had to make the sad confession, “God is departed from me, and answereth me no more: neither by prophets, nor by dreams” (I Sam. 28:15, 16). He was without light, without guidance: utterly forsaken. God had forsaken him. To faithless Israel God said, “I called you, but ye answered not: therefore . . . I will not hear thee” (Jer. 8:13, 16). “As I live. . . I will not be enquired of by you” (Ezek. 20:3). “Though they cry in Mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them” (Ezek. 8:18).

3. “Where there is no vision the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he” (Prov. 29:18). David found God’s word more precious than gold (Ps. 19:7-10). Job esteemed His word more than his necessary food (Job 23:12). Jeremiah says: “Thy words were found, and I did eat them: and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by Thy name” (Jer. 15:16). A beautiful reason! “Happy is

that people whose God is the Lord” (Ps. 144:15). “Do not My words do good to him that walketh uprightly?” (Micah 2:7).

4. (a) The word of the Lord gives life.— “Man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live” (Deut. 8:3).

(b) The word of the Lord gives light. —The Psalmist says: “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path” (Ps. 119:105); “The entrance of Thy words giveth light” (Ps. 119:130).

(c) The word of the Lord is a guide.— “Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying: This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left” (Is. 30:21).

E. A. H.

Correspondence, Correspondence: Amos 8:11-12; Luke 22:19 A Command or Request?; Souls Sleep?

Ques. When will be the time spoken of in Amos 8:11,12, a famine for the Word of the Lord?

Ans. When judgments are falling on Israel in the coming tribulation, they will seek for some word from God for guidance and comfort; but will not find it. God will for a time leave them in darkness and perplexity.

Ques. When the Lord said, "This do in remembrance of Me" (Luke 22:19), was it a command, or a request?

Ans. To those who truly love Him, it was more than either of them. It was love's gift to express to us His love; and in our remembering Him, we express our love to Him. Precious privilege!

Ques., Do the souls of believers sleep when they die?

Ans. The idea of the souls of believers being asleep when absent from the body, is at once unscriptural and absurd.

“Today shalt thou be with Me in paradise." Was this to be in an unconscious state? Has the soul of the thief been asleep for the last 1900 years?

“Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Has Stephen been asleep ever since?

“Absent from the body, present with the Lord." Is this to be asleep?

“Having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better." Why not say, "Having a desire to be asleep"? Is it far better to be asleep, to be unconscious, than to be enjoying Christ, and working for Him here?

“Sleep in Jesus", and "shall not prevent them which are asleep" refer to the raising of the bodies of those who are now with Him, waiting for their glorified bodies (1 Thess. 4:14; 15).

“The dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." 1 Cor. 15:52.

clickbible.org