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# BIBLE TALK

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This week the question is: **Did Jesus go to hell when He died?**

There are three verses of scripture which cause some people to think that Jesus went to hell when He died.

## **Passage #1**

### **(KJV) Acts 2:27**

<sup>27</sup> Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

This verse says that Jesus' soul was not left in "hell" (KJV).

This certainly sounds as though Jesus went to hell when He died. But this is the wording of the old KJV. Any modern translation clears this passage up by translating correctly "Hades."

The KJV is simply not an accurate translation of this passage. The word "Hades" does not mean hell in the sense of a place of eternal torment for the wicked. Jesus did not go to the abode of the Devil himself when He died on the cross.

Instead, Jesus went to Hades – which means "place of departed spirits." There are two divisions in Hades: (a) "Paradise" and (b) "Torments." Those who are wicked, like the rich man of Lk 16, go to "torments." Those who are righteous, like Lazarus in Lk 16, go to "paradise" or as it is also called, "Abraham's bosom." This is where Jesus went when He died. He told the thief on the cross that they would both be in paradise that very day (Lk 23:43).

## **Passage #2 & 3**

(I'm lumping these next two passages together because they are close to each other and discussing the same thing.)

### **1 Peter 3:18-19**

<sup>18</sup> For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, <sup>19</sup> by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison,

### **1 Peter 4:6**

<sup>6</sup> For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.

Although the word "hell" is not in either of these two passages, the word "prison" supposedly means hell – we are told.

The Mormon Church says these two passages are teaching that Jesus went to hell when He died and He preached the gospel to people after they died and went to hell.

Now ... before I explain this, I have a question to ask. Suppose the Mormons are right. Suppose for a moment that Jesus went to hell where the Devil is at. In hell are men and women suffering in torments and in fire for the sins they committed. There they are suffering and now here comes Jesus to preach to them and offer them a way out of hell.

I ask: What person in hell would rather stay there and suffer in hell rather than accept an offer to get out?

If the Mormons are right, hell would have been emptied a long time ago.

But an empty hell is not the description the Bible gives in Mt 7:13-14. The Bible says there that many people will be in hell.

Furthermore, if Jesus had to go and preach to people in hell one time, what about all the ones who go to hell after Jesus preached the first time. Wouldn't it be unfair that some heard Jesus preach, but others didn't? It would seem Jesus would need to keep going back to hell on missionary trips every so often and He would need to keep preaching to all the new ones who end up there.

This entire idea that Jesus went to hell and preached to people who died lost is absurd. Neither 1 Pet 3 or 1 Pet 4 is teaching anything close to this ridiculous position. The Bible plainly teaches that when men die, their destiny is sealed. They have no more opportunities to become saved.

### **2 Corinthians 5:10**

<sup>10</sup> For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done **in the body**, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

Now ... if Jesus didn't go to hell and preach to lost people, what does 1 Pet 3:18-19 and 1 Pet 4:6 mean? If you will look closely at these passages and pay careful attention to the tense of the verbs, the entire matter is cleared up.

Jesus preached (past tense) to people who are (present tense) in prison.

In other words, the preaching was done in the past to people who are now in prison at the time Peter wrote these words. The point being made in 1 Pet 3 is that, although Jesus was put to death in the flesh, He was raised back to life by the Holy Spirit. This same Spirit which raised Jesus from the dead also inspired Noah to preach to sinners in his day. Noah was an inspired preacher. But those people who heard Noah preach are now dead. They are now in prison – at the time Peter wrote this epistle.

So the preaching was done in the past to people who since died and are currently in prison at the time Peter wrote his epistle.

In conclusion: ***Jesus did not go to hell – the place of eternal torment – when He died.***

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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