

The Words for Hell

1. The Origin of Our English Word 'Hell'

2. Say Hello to Sheol

Used 65 times in OT.

From a root meaning 'ask for, demand' and is linked to insatiableness and never satisfied.

Some see it from a root meaning 'to be hollow' - so never satisfied or full.

Proverbs 27:20

(NAS) Sheol and Abaddon are never satisfied, Nor are the eyes of man ever satisfied.

(NIV) Death and Destruction are never satisfied, and neither are the eyes of man.

(NKJV) Hell and Destruction are never full; So the eyes of man are never satisfied

Proverbs 30:15 & 16

(ESV) 'The leech has two daughters; "Give" and "Give," they cry. Three things are never satisfied; four never say, "Enough" **Sheol**, the barren womb, the land never satisfied with water, and the fire that never says, "Enough."

Sheol is used for:

- i) Death or the grave generally
- ii) The state or place ALL go to at death –

Psalms 89:48

(NAS) What man can live and not see death? Can he deliver his soul from the power of Sheol?

(NIV) What man can live and not see death, or save himself from the power of the grave?

1 Samuel 2:6

(NAS) The LORD kills and makes alive; He brings down to Sheol and raises up.

(NIV) The LORD brings death and makes alive; he brings down to the grave and raises up.

- iii) A place of punishment

Job 21:13

(NAS) They spend their days in prosperity, And suddenly they go down to Sheol.

(NIV) They spend their years in prosperity and go down to the grave in peace.

(NKJV) They spend their days in wealth, And in a moment go down to the grave.

Job 24:19

(NAS) Drought and heat consume the snow waters, So does Sheol those who have sinned.

(NIV) As heat and drought snatch away the melted snow, so the grave snatches away those who have sinned.

Psalm 9:17

(NAS) The wicked will return to Sheol, Even all the nations who forget God.

(NIV) The wicked return to the grave, all the nations that forget God.

Proverbs 5:5

(NAS) Her feet go down to death, Her steps lay hold of Sheol.

(NIV) Her feet go down to death; her steps lead straight to the grave.

BUT there is hope for God's people expressed in OT – *Psalm 49:15*

(NAS) But God will redeem my soul from the power of Sheol; For He will receive me.

(NIV) But God will redeem my life from the grave; he will surely take me to himself.

All are to be warned:

Ecclesiastes 12: 14

(NIV) 'For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil.'

Deuteronomy 32:22

(NAS) For a fire is kindled in My anger, And burns to the lowest part of Sheol, And consumes the earth with its yield, And sets on fire the foundations of the mountains.

(NIV) For a fire has been kindled by my wrath, one that burns to the realm of death below. It will devour the earth and its harvests and set on fire the foundations of the mountains.

3. Shades of Hades

Hebrew 'Sheol' = Greek 'Hades'

Hades = something hidden or unseen; gloomy or gruesome or all receiving.

Used 11 times in NT – *allowing for textual variation in 1 Corinthians 15:55*

Jesus' use of 'Hades':

- Contrast to heaven e.g. *Matthew 11:23 & 24*
(NAS) "And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You shall descend to Hades; for if the miracles had occurred in Sodom which occurred in you, it would have remained to this day. Nevertheless I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for you."

- Place of punishment for the ungodly e.g. *Luke 16:23* (ESV) and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side.
- The place of evil and opposition – *Matthew 16:18* (NIV) “And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.”

Peter’s use of ‘Hades’ is for the place of the dead – *Acts 2:27 & 31*

(ESV) For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One see corruption.

(NIV) because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay.

(ESV) he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption.

(NIV) Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay.

Paul used ‘Hades’ only once – *1 Corinthians 15:55*

(NKJV) O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?

John's use of ‘Hades’ in the book of Revelation:

1:18 (NIV) I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.

6:8 (NIV) I looked, and there before me was a pale horse! Its rider was named Death, and Hades was following close behind him. They were given power over a fourth of the earth to kill by sword, famine and plague, and by the wild beasts of the earth.

20:13 & 14 (NIV) The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death.

4. A Goner In Gehenna

Origin of the word: Valley of Ben Hinnon – *2 Chronicles 28:3*

Ge Ben Hinnon = Valley of the Sons of Hinnon and was shortened in Hebrew to Ge Hinnon, which in the Greek became Gehenna

Used 12 times in the NT and of those it was used 11 times by the Lord Jesus Himself.