

***THE TRUTH***  
**about Purgatory**





## PURGATORY

Tonight we will discuss the Purification that occurs after death, the completion of our Sanctification, which occurs before we enter Heaven.

This state is generally called Purgatory.

# Hades

## Hades

### Function:

*noun*

### Etymology:

Greek *Aidēs*, *Āidēs*, *Haidēs*



- 1: **pluto** (*roman god*)
- 2: the underground abode of the dead in **Greek** mythology
- 3: **Sheol**
- 4 *often not capitalized* : **hell**

# Sheol

## Sheol - Sheoul

\shē-'ōl,

**Function:**

*noun*

**Etymology:**

Hebrew *Shē'ōl*



: the abode of the dead in  
**Hebrew** thought

# Sheol v. Hades

- Early Jewish and Christian writers translated Hebrew Sheol with the Greek word Hades. Later in Latin it is translated as 'infernos' and finally we receive it as the English word Hell.
- Hades has a god. Hades' god is whimsical extracting punishment or effecting reward according to his pleasure. One must pay a toll to cross the river Styx to enter it. One never leaves Hades.
- Theologically, Hades and Sheol are as dissimilar as the two cultures from which their names come.



Hades and Cerberus

# Sheol

## DIVIDED INTO TWO SECTIONS

- **Good** side – for the righteous
- Known as **Bosom of Abraham**
- Some aka Paradise
- Where the Patriarchs and the just who awaited the Messiah have their rest.

- **Bad** side – for the wicked (Psalm 9:17)
- A place of **torment** (Lk 16:23)
- A place of **Purgation**
- A temporary place from where one can be redeemed (1 Sam 2:6; Ps 86:13; Ps 49:15-16)

# A new view of the crucifixion

Jesus says to the good thief on the cross: “Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in ‘*paradeisos.*’” (Lk 23:43)

pä-rä'-dā-sos

The same St. Luke would also write about Jesus at 24:51 on the occasion of his Ascension: “As He blessed them he parted from them and was taken up to

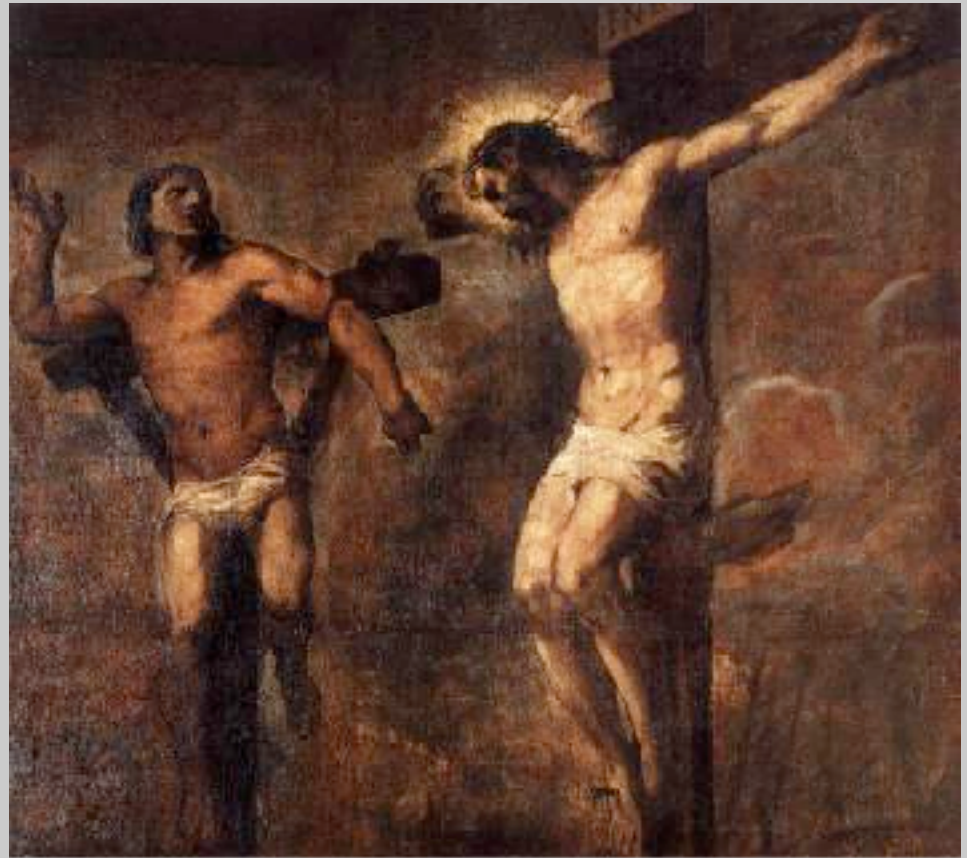
‘*ouranos*’ (heaven). ü-rä-nos

cf. Luke 10:18 Jesus says: “I beheld Satan as lightning falling down from ‘ouranos.’”



# A new view of the crucifixion

- Jesus was promising the good thief that his repentant faith would cause him to avoid the torment and purgation that should have otherwise awaited him, and which we would call Purgatory.





# Jewish Belief in Purgatory

- Even today, **Orthodox Jews continue to believe in a Purgatorial Place.** They believe the soul must be purged of its sin and purified, before going to heaven. Their purgatory – continues to be the historically bad side of **Sheol**. Jews do not believe in the **permanent Hell** that Jesus taught as **Gehenna**.
- Jews believe Jesus invented this state which has little or no precedent in the Old Testament.

# Jewish Belief in Purgatory

<http://www.jewfaq.org/death.htm>



- “In Judaism, **death is not a tragedy**, even when it occurs early in life or through unfortunate circumstances.”
- “Death is a natural process. Our deaths, like our lives, have meaning and are all **part of G-d’s plan.**”
- “In addition, we have a **firm belief in an afterlife**, a world to come, where those who have lived a worthy life will be rewarded.”

# Jewish Belief in Purgatory

- “**Jewish mourning practices** can be broken into several periods of decreasing intensity.”
- “When a close relative (parent, sibling, spouse or child) first hears of the death of a relative, it is traditional to express the **initial grief by tearing one’s clothing.**”
- “The mourner **recites the blessing** describing G-d as “the true Judge,” an **acceptance of G-d's taking of the life of a relative.**”



# Jewish Belief in Purgatory



“The final period of formal mourning ... is observed only for a parent. This period lasts for twelve months after the burial. During that time, mourners avoid parties, celebrations, theater and concerts.

- For eleven months of that period, starting at the time of burial, the son of the deceased recites the **Mourner's Kaddish** every day.”

# Jewish Belief in Purgatory

## KADDISH

יְתַגַּדַּל וְיִתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא.

בְּעֻלְמָא דִּי־בְרָא בְרֵעוּתָהּ וְנִמְלִיךְ מְלַכּוּתָהּ,

בְּתַחֲיִיבוֹן וּבִיוֹמֵיכוֹן, וּבְחַיֵּי רַבְּל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל,

בְּעַגְלָא וּבְזִמְנֵי קָרִיב, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ, לְעָלְמֵי וּלְעָלְמֵי עָלְמֵיָא.

דְּחַבְרָךְ וְדִשְׁמַעְתָּהּ, וְדִתְפָאֵר וְדִתְרוּמָב וְדִתְנַשְׂא,

וְדִתְהַבֵּר וְדִתְחַצְּקָהּ וְדִתְהַלְלָהּ, שְׁמֵהּ דְּקוּדְשָׁא, בְּרִיךְ הוּא.

לְעִילָא מִן כָּל [ From Kosh Heshana through Tom Riggur substitute ] לְעִילָא וּלְעִילָא מִכָּל

בְּרַבְתָּא וְשִׁירְתָּא, תְּשַׁבְּחָתָא וְתַחֲמַתָּא,

וְהַאֲמִידֵן בְּעֻלְמָא, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

יְהֵא שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא מִן שְׁמַיָא, וְחַיִּים,

עֲלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִדְרוֹמֵינוּ,

הוּא יַעֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם עֲלֵינוּ,

וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

**Kaddish** - begins

*"May His great Name grow exalted and sanctified in the world that He created as He willed. May He give reign to His kingship in your lifetimes and in your days ..."*

and continues in much that vein.

*Kaddish is a prayer of praise*

# Jewish Belief in Purgatory



- Why is Kaddish recited by mourners?
- “Judaism requires a mourner to **stand up every day, publicly** (i.e., in front of a minyan, a quorum of 10 adult men), and reaffirm faith in G-d despite this loss.”
- “To do so inures to the merit of the deceased in the eyes of G-d, because the deceased must have been a very good parent to raise a child who could express such faith in the face of personal loss.”

# Jewish Belief in Purgatory

- Then why is Kaddish recited for only 11 months, when the mourning period is 12 months?
- “According to Jewish tradition, the soul must spend some time purifying itself before it can enter the World to Come.”
- “*The maximum time required for purification is 12 months, for the most evil person.* To recite Kaddish for 12 months would imply that the parent was the type who needed the full 12 months of purification!” Eleven months, therefore, would not **insult** the memory of the deceased.

# Jewish Belief in Purgatory

<http://www.jewfaq.org/death.htm>

**TRIVIA – Why is a tombstone not put up to mark the grave during the first 12 months?**

According to Jewish custom, during the period of the Mourner's Kaddish, the family would remember the decedent daily in prayer. To put a tombstone up at that time would be to suggest the family has already forgotten the decedent even before the Kaddish period expires. A clear insult to the son responsible for Kaddish!





# Jewish Belief in Purgatory

## SUMMARY

- Jews believe in an after-life.
- Jews believe in remembering the dead in prayer.
- Jews believe the merits of the Kaddish apply to the decedent & thereby cause G-d to view the decedent in a better light.
- Jews believe in a Purgatory (and heaven).
- Jews don't believe in Hell (Gehenna)

# Jesus' teaching on Gehenna

- '**Gehenna**' is derived from the Hebrew, '*Gai-Hinnom*', as a Greek contraction for the region known as the *Valley of Hinnom*.
- It was in the **Valley of Hinnon**, just outside of Jerusalem that many **idolatrous Jews burned their children alive to the pagan gods Moloch and Baal**.
- Even **King Manasseh, a Davidic King (660BC)** – sacrificed his own child to a god at Hinnon. (2 Ki 21:6).

# Jesus' teaching on Gehenna

- The **Valley of Hinnon** is where dead bodies of the diseased were thrown after death. Almost certainly all **lepers** ended there.
- It was a dump where bodies and trash were burned, and smoldering smoke always present.
- Jesus would describe its permanence as the place where the **worm dieth not, (Mk 9:48)**.
- **Gehenna**, Jesus described, was a visual representation of the total **destruction of soul and body (Mt 10:28)**.

# Jesus' teaching on Gehenna

- Jesus would say that Gehenna is so bad that if one's right **eye** causes one to sin, that it would be **better to pluck one's eye out**, than have have the whole body go to Gehenna **(Mt 5:29)**
- Likewise, one should **cut off one's hand** if that should prevent entry into Gehenna **(Mt 5:30)**
- Finally that if your **foot** causes you to sin, cut it off. **Better to enter into life crippled** than with two feet **be thrown into Gehenna. (Mk 9:45)**
- ***Gehenna is what we understand as HELL.***

# Gehenna - Hell



# Purgatory in the Old Testament

## The understanding precedes the NT

- Jesus believed in the Tanach as Scripture - (Lk 24:24) - Law, Prophets and Psalms. In this sense He was more of a Pharisee than a Sadducee.
  - Jesus taught the resurrection of the dead for instance. (Mt 22:23)
  - This was a *disputed understanding* at the time of Jesus, as shown by the confrontation on the subject by the Sadducees who did not believe in it.
- Jesus would have been familiar with the stories contained in **2 Maccabees 7 and 12**

## 2 Maccabees 12: 38-46

### Expiation for the dead



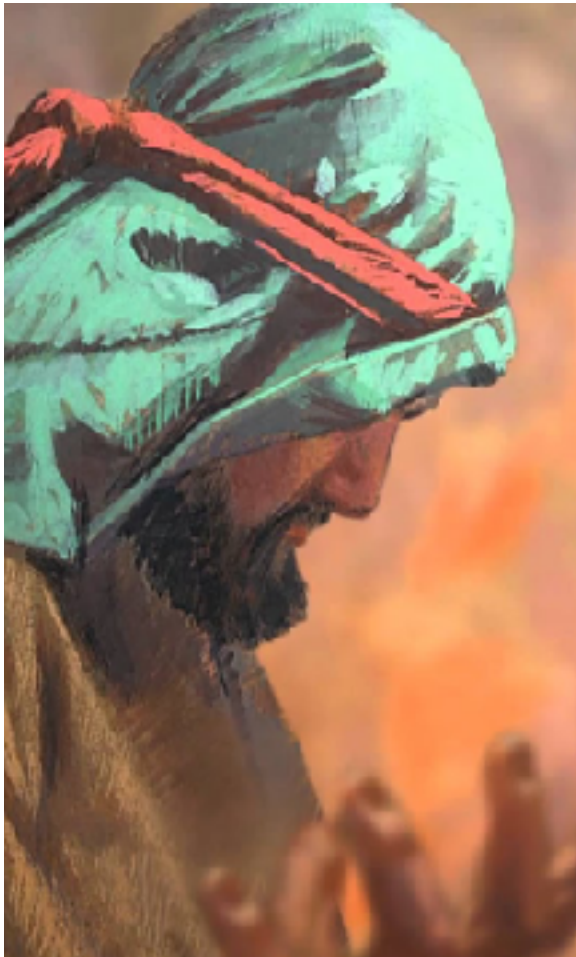
Background: Some of Judas' army wore **amulets** sacred to the **idols of Jamnia**, which the law forbid the Jews to wear.

After a battle, as they were seeking to bury the dead before the Sabbath, these **amulets were discovered under the dead men's robes.**

**verse 40: "So it was clear to all that this was why these men had been slain."**

# 2 Maccabees 12: 38-46

## Expiation for the dead



2 Mac 12: 41-46

- <sup>41</sup> They **all therefore praised the ways of the Lord**, the **just judge** who brings to light the things that are hidden.
- <sup>42</sup> Turning to **supplication**, they **prayed** that the **sinful deed might be fully blotted out.**



# 2 Maccabees 12: 38-46

## Expiation for the dead

The noble Judas warned the soldiers to keep themselves free from sin, for they had seen with their own eyes what had happened because of the sin of those who had fallen.

<sup>43</sup> He then **took up a collection** among all his soldiers, amounting to **two thousand silver drachmas**, which he sent to Jerusalem to provide for an **expiatory sacrifice**.



## 2 Maccabees 12: 38-46

### Expiation for the dead

In doing this he acted in a very excellent and noble way, inasmuch as he had the **resurrection of the dead** in view;

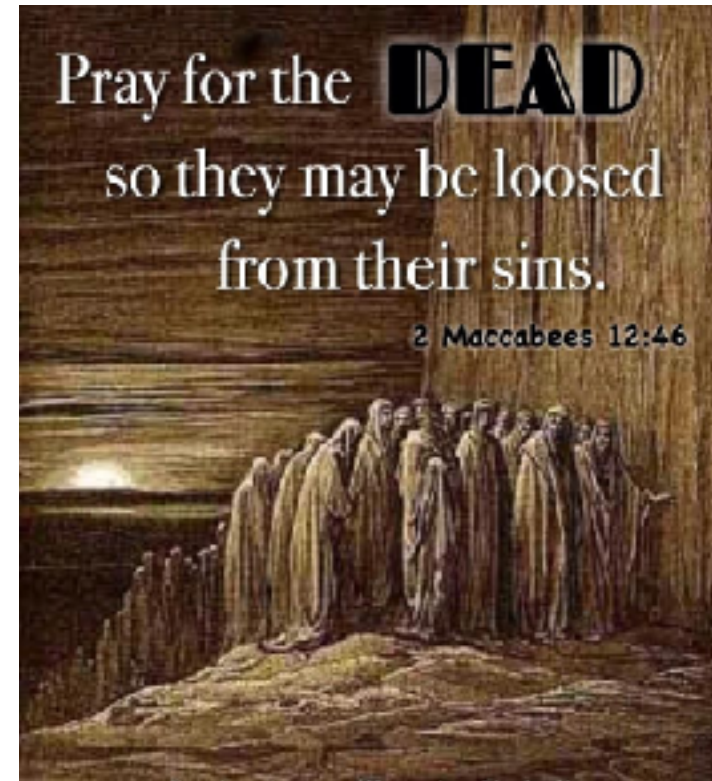
<sup>44</sup> *for if he were not expecting the fallen to rise again, **it would have been useless and foolish to pray for them in death.***

# 2 Maccabees 12: 38-46

## Expiation for the dead

<sup>45</sup> But if he did this with a view to the **splendid reward that awaits those who had gone to rest in godliness,** it was a holy and pious thought.

<sup>46</sup> Thus he made **atonement for the dead** that they might be **freed from this sin**.



## 2 Tim 1: 15-18

### St. Paul likewise prays for a dead friend

- <sup>15</sup> You know that everyone in Asia deserted me, including Phygelus and Hermogenes. <sup>16</sup> May the Lord grant mercy to the family of **Onesiphorus** because he often gave me new heart and was not ashamed of my chains. <sup>17</sup> But when he came to Rome, he promptly searched for me and found me.
- <sup>18</sup> **May the Lord grant him to find mercy from the Lord on that day.** And you know very well the services he rendered in Ephesus. cf 2Tim 4:19

# Jesus speaks of Sheol

## Parable of Rich Man and Lazarus – Lk 16:19

- <sup>19</sup> “There was a **rich man** who dressed in purple garments and fine linen and dined sumptuously each day.
- <sup>20</sup> And lying at his door was a poor man named **Lazarus**, covered with sores,
- <sup>21</sup> who would gladly have eaten his fill of the scraps that fell from the rich man’s table. Dogs even used to come and lick his sores.



# Jesus speaks of Sheol

## Parable of Rich Man and Lazarus – Lk 16:19

- <sup>22</sup> When the **poor man** died, he was carried away by angels to the **bosom of Abraham**. The **rich man** also died and was buried,
- <sup>23</sup> and from **Hades** [*the netherworld*] (**Sheol of the unjust**), where he was in torment, he raised his eyes and saw **Abraham** far off and **Lazarus** at his side.

# Jesus speaks of Sheol

## Parable of Rich Man and Lazarus – Lk 16:19

- <sup>24</sup> And he cried out, **Father Abraham, have pity on me.** Send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am suffering torment in these flames.’  
(cf Mk 15: 33-37)
- <sup>25</sup> Abraham replied, My child, remember that you received what was good during your lifetime while Lazarus likewise received what was bad; **but now he is comforted here, whereas you are tormented.**

# Jesus speaks of Sheol

## Parable of Rich Man and Lazarus – Lk 16:19

- <sup>26</sup> Moreover, between us and you a **great chasm** is established to prevent anyone from crossing who might wish to go from our side to yours or from your side to ours.'
- <sup>27</sup> He said, **'Then I beg you, father, send him to my father's house, <sup>28</sup> for I have five brothers, so that he may warn them, lest they too come to this place of torment.'** (*Disbelief didn't prevent his entry into Sheol*)



# Jesus speaks of Sheol

## Parable of Rich Man and Lazarus – Lk 16:19

- <sup>29</sup> But Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the prophets. Let them listen to them.’
- <sup>30</sup> He said, ‘Oh no, father Abraham, but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.’
- <sup>31</sup> Then Abraham said, **‘If they will not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded if someone should rise from the dead.’”**

# Hell v. Purgatory

- Some Jews today believe that there is a portion of Purgatory, so deep for the person who is very bad, that they may never be purified (never get out).
- This portion would resemble what Jesus called Gehenna.
- In this image, prison/pit (sheol) has levels.

# Jesus descends to Sheol

The Apostle's Creed says that of Jesus: "He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day He rose again.

St. Peter speaks of this in his first Epistle, saying "Put to death in the flesh, He was brought to life in the spirit. In it he also went to preach to the spirits in prison." (1 Ptr 3:20)

And in **Luke 23:43** – He states He will go to **Paradise** on the day of His crucifixion.

# But isn't Sheol now empty?

- The question naturally arises that even if we understand that Sheol existed at one time, now that Christ has come and died for our sins, and redeemed mankind – is Sheol / Hades (or even its Purgatory understanding) still viable?

**Does Sheol / Hades still exist?**

**If it does, then a place of Purgation still exists.**

# St. John's vision of Judgment

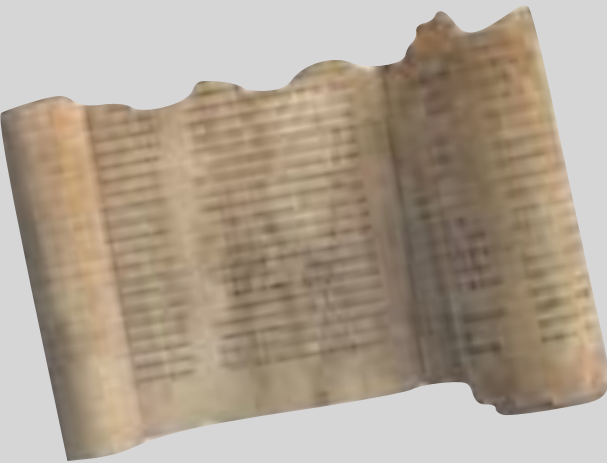
## White Throne Judgment Rev 20



- <sup>10</sup> The **Devil** who had led them astray was **thrown into the pool of fire and sulfur**, where the beast and the false prophet were. There they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.
- <sup>11</sup> Next I saw a **large white throne** and the one who was sitting on it. The earth and the sky fled from his presence and there was no place for them.

# St. John's vision of Judgment

## White Throne Judgment Rev 20



<sup>12</sup> I saw the dead, the great and the lowly, standing before the throne, and scrolls were opened. Then another scroll was opened, the **book of life**. The dead were judged according to their deeds, by what was written in the scrolls.

<sup>13</sup> The sea gave up its dead; **then Death and Hades gave up their dead**. *All the dead were judged according to their deeds.*

# St. John's vision of Judgment

## White Throne Judgment Rev 20

- <sup>14</sup> Then Death and Hades were thrown into the pool of fire. *(This pool of fire is the second death.)*
- <sup>15</sup> Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the pool of fire.



# Physical to the Theological

## Why is there a Purgatory?

- We are judged according to our deeds. Our deeds include our response or lack of response to grace. (Mt 7:21-23, Eph2:8-10)
- Scripture is clear that we must be totally pure and clean to enter heaven (Rev 20:27)
- We cannot see God until we are perfected in our holiness. (Mt 5:8 and Heb 12:14)
- The story in Isaiah 6: 1-8 illustrates purgation as precondition for seeing God.



# Theological

- There is a reality that even after we are forgiven, there is an accounting for our sin. (2 Sam 12: 13-18)
- We cannot even be forgiven unless we forgive others. (Mt 18: 32-35 – Master and wicked servant)
- We are called to be perfect as Our Father in heaven is perfect. (Mt 5:48)
- And we know that ‘the spirits of just men’ are made perfect after death (Heb 12: 22-23)

# Theological

- Purgation is sanctification (purification) after death. (1 Cor 3: 10-17)
- The Holy Spirit will simply complete the work He has begun in you, (Phil 1:6) *even if it must occur after your death.*
- Hebrews 12:29 says – **Our God is a consuming fire.**

# Theological

**Final Thought:** The very fire that purifies us and refines us is God's love.

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**about Purgatory**

