

Does the Old Testament ever refer to heaven and hell?

In the Old Testament the word for the abode of the dead is *sheol* [שְׁאוֹל] which means: pit (e.g. Nu 16:30, 33 Jb 17:16, etc.), grave (e.g. Ge 37:35 1 Sa 2:6; Jb 7:9, 14:13, Ps 6:5, 49:14, Is 14:11, etc.) or hell (e.g. Deut 32:22 Ps 9:17, 18:5 Is 14:9, Am 9:2, etc.).

The place for the righteous dead is described as: paradise (Ge 2:1–25, Ne 2:8, Ecc 2:5, So 4:13, Is 51:3, 4 Mac 13:7), Abraham's bosom (4 Mac 13:17) or heaven (Ge 1:1, Deut 10:14, 26:15, 2 Sa 22:7-8, 1 Ki 8:27-30, Ne 9:6, Ps 148:4, Is 65:17, 66:1, 22).

Jesus spoke about hell more than any other person in the bible. It is not his will that any should go there (2 Pe 3:9). For one to avoid hell and go to heaven, he must repent (Eze 18:30-32; Ac 17:30) and be born again (Jn 3:7).

Satan, the prince of this world, is the father of men in the flesh (Jn 8:44, 16:11, 1 Jn 5:19). Jesus did not dispute the fact that the world belongs to him (Mt 4:9, Re 12:9). Unregenerate men are of him¹ (Ps 82:6-7). To live in a right relationship with God, one must be born of incorruptible seed² (Ge 3:15, 1 Pe 1:23) which was provided for by Christ (Ga 3:16, 19) after his condemnation of sin in the flesh (Ro 8:3). He offers life to all who would believe (Jn 3:16, 1 Co 15:36–49). Jesus did what man could not do by living a perfect life (1 Pe 2:22) and breaking down the wall of separation between God and man (Eph 2:14).

Though men still live in sinful flesh³, they are able to overcome as they walk in the spirit (Ro 8:14). One knows he has passed from death and Satan's kingdom into life and God's kingdom when he has love for the brethren (1 Jn 3:14).

When one has escaped the world's collective, locust-type mind (Ps 109:23, Col 1:21)⁴, the hive knows. Unregenerate men persecute believers because of their: sinful nature (Ga 4:29), hatred of God (Jn 15:20–23), ignorance of God (Jn 16:1–3), hatred of Christ (1 Thess 2:15; Re 12:13), the preaching of the cross (Ga 5:11, 6:12) and godly living (Mt 13:21; 2 Tim. 3:12).⁵ The children of God have been adopted by God (Jn 17:14)⁶ and called out of the world (Mt 16:18); therefore, the world hates them (Ps 2:3, Jn 15:19).

¹ Ps 51:5

² Or seed of the woman [Christ] (Ge 3:15). It took a woman who believed to save the world (Lk 1:38).

³ Man is a carbon-based life form (e.g. 666 [6 electrons, 6 protons and 6 neutrons])--himself an abomination of desolation (e.g. Mk 3:24). All men who have not received life (Pr 10:6, 1 Ti 1:16) will worship Satan (Re 13:8, 14:9). The redeemed stand in holiness (Ex 14:13-14, 2 Chron 20:17, Ps 33:11-12, 93:5, 119:89-91, Pr 10:25, 1 Co 15:58, 16:13, 2 Co 1:20-22, 24, Eph 6:10-14, Phil 4:1-2, Ga 5:1, 1 Ti 6:12, Mt 10:22, 24:13, Lk 21:19, Jas 4:7, 5:8).

⁴ Those held captive (2 Ti 2:26) by the coming locust army (Re 9:3,7). Reprobates are naturally repelled from saints and attracted to sinners (Ge 3:15, 2 Ti 3:8, 2 Pet. 2:9–22).

⁵ Thomas Nelson Publishers. (1996). Nelson's quick reference topical Bible index (p. 483). Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

⁶ Children are adopted from another family not their own. Christians have received the spirit of adoption (Ro 8:15).