

# The Bottomless Pit

*How It All Ends*

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**Bible Text:** Revelation 9:1; Revelation 20:1-2

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Let's talk about that word behind "bottomless pit" that we're going to get to. It is a different word. Remember, the Bible was not written in English but the Greek word behind "bottomless pit," we're going to find it in Luke 8, is where we get our word "abyss" from. What does "abyss" mean? It means "a place of deepness"; it refers in the Old Testament almost exclusively to the floor of the ocean and sometimes it is used interchangeably with the ocean itself.

Luke 8, let me give you a little background here: Jesus comes into the area of Gedara and verse 26, "And they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee. And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in any house, but in the tombs." So, please notice who is behind this idea of not wearing any clothes. Let's move on.

Verse 28, "When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not. (For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man." Now, please notice the demon is asking for what in verse 28? He's asking for the Son of God not to torture him. Do you get that? That's a strange thing for a demon to ask.

Verse 29, "(For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man," Jesus did. "For oftentimes it had caught him: and he was kept bound with chains and in fetters; and he brake the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.) And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion: because many devils were entered into him." So, this man had many devils, perhaps hundreds, perhaps thousands, because he called himself "Legion." A legion of soldiers, anyways, and the sources are mixed. Some people say a legion of Roman soldiers was 6,000 and some say 2,000. In any case, I think 2,000 is enough if that's how many he had in him.

Verse 31, "And they besought him," so the devils besought Jesus, "that he would not command them to go out into the deep." Alright, so they asked for two things: they did not want to be tormented and they did not want to be sent into the deep. The word behind "deep" there is that word "abyss." It is translated differently in the book of Revelation; it

is translated “bottomless pit.” So, if you want to you can, if you would like to, you can say that the demons asked, if you want to use the same language all through the five usages we’re going to use today, you could say that the demons asked not to be tormented in the bottomless pit. It’s the same word, that word “abyss” is used here.

Now, there are those who would say that perhaps they are asking not to be thrown into the nearby Sea of Galilee. It’s possible. Let’s keep reading. Verse 32, “And there was there an herd of many swine feeding on the mountain,” so right away you know they’re probably not in Israel, right? They’re actually on the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee. “There were swine feeding on the mountain and they besought him that he would suffer them,” or allow them, “to enter into them.” So, these demons wanted to go into the pigs.

Verse 33, “Then went the devils,” or the demons, “out of the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked. When they that fed them saw what was done, they fled, and went and told it in the city and in the country.” Yeah, I probably would have left quickly as well.

Verse 35, “Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid.” So, as you’re coming to this passage, you would probably say, “Well, you already told us that the abyss was indicative of the deepest part of the ocean or of the ocean itself at times in the Old Testament,” and that’s true. So, if you had just that, you could say that the demons were asking not to be dumped into the lake. But the fact that they asked not to be tormented tells me that’s not what they were getting at. There was a particular place that they were afraid of going to be tormented and they called it the “abyss.” So, I don’t believe they were talking about the lake. Contextually, I don’t think it fits.

(When they allude to the pigs, did they voluntarily run to the lake?...) I don’t know. I think that’s a good point, that if they were asking to go into the swine, I don’t know why they asked to go into the swine. Maybe I’ll think that through and come up with a good answer. Maybe there is a good answer in the room somewhere? But what we do know is that if they were hoping for freedom from this place known as the “abyss” and they were hoping that they could live forever or at least for along time until they found a new host, they would live in these pigs, well, that backfired because the pigs drowned in the sea. So, there were enough pigs, anyways, to inhabit an entire herd of swine. I never thought of swine being a herd, maybe a bevy or a school but no, I’m just kidding.

(Report from China two weeks ago, 6,000 pigs that were found on the side of the river.) Is that right? (They can’t figure out why they were there.) Are they dead? (Yeah.) Really? (6,000 pigs) You’re late! I needed that this morning. Thanks a lot. I would’ve put that up on the screen. Now, forget it. Send me the link, will you? I’d appreciate it because I’d like to see that. That’s interesting. That was in China? Anyone else see that? Jim can’t be lying then. It’s in the paper.

So, that's the first time we see it is that the demons were afraid to go there. Now, I would like to just suggest that the reason they were afraid to be tormented in the abyss is because they knew some people that had gone there or they knew some beings that had gone there. And like I told you, 2 Peter 2:4 uses the word "Tartarus" behind that word "hell" and it's the only place it's used and it's used to describe a particular class of angels that sinned prior to the flood of Noah.

So, let's look at Romans 10 next and let's confirm this. Apparently, this is guesswork folks, remember the Bible doesn't tell us everything, but I'm going to suggest first of all that abyss = Tartarus. In other words, they are at the same location or at least there is some overlap like if some of you math crazies out there enjoy Venn diagrams, it's possible that maybe part of the abyss is Tartarus or part of Tartarus is the abyss. But, in any case, we've spent an entire lesson teaching that angels were put in Tartarus, a particular class of demons were put in Tartarus, and yet these people, these demons, I keep saying people, I guess they're personalities, these demons are asking not to be tormented in the deep. So, I would suggest that the abyss of Luke 8 and the Tartarus of 2 Peter 2 are probably the same. That's my best guess right now.

Look at Romans 10 and let's see its usage here. Romans 10:1, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them. But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:)" Verse 7, "Or, Who shall descend into the deep?" or the abyss or the bottomless pit is how it's translated in Revelation, "(that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach." And you know, of course, verses 9 and 10, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved," and so on.

So, many of you are familiar with that but probably you haven't thought about verse 7. Paul actually says that Christ went where when he was dead? The deep, the abyss. That's what Paul says. Now, a lot of people say, "Why doesn't Paul talk about Hades and Sheol too much?" Well, he just uses a different word, a different word in the language and I don't know how to explain it. Sometimes you know how we use synonyms often in our language and we're not always sure why we're using those particular synonyms but I showed you in Psalm 16 when Jesus said through the Psalmist, "you will not leave my soul in Sheol or suffer thy holy one to see corruption." Peter is preaching it at Pentecost and says that that Psalm is about Jesus and since he's speaking in Aramaic and it's inspired by the Holy Spirit into the Greek language and the same passage is used and, of course, since it's quoting and translating it uses the word "Hades," we know that Christ

went to Hades when he died from that particular passage and from that lesson I flashed up on the screen.

Now, I have to tell you: you don't have to study as much as I do to get the main point here, but there is a possibility that if you don't listen to some extra lessons here and there that I send to you, you might get lost in these lessons that we have in person. But what we have described here is that the abyss of Romans 10:7 appears to be equal with the Hades of Acts 2. Now, remember we already talked about how Christ definitely went to Hades. Now, right away some of you who might be a little newer with us are thinking, "Okay, alright, let's go through this together. He already said that the demons were afraid of torment in the abyss and we already know what we think about when we think of hell, we think of Dante's Inferno, right? Where people go there and they just get burned with really creative ways and we think that all of Hades is torment and all of the abyss is torment and all of Tartarus is torment," but that's not true. There was a time, all we have to do is re-teach that lesson. I don't want to but there was a time when everyone who died went to the place of departed dead. Remember that? Give me a story in the Bible where even a righteous man went to Hades. The rich man and Lazarus.

So, there's no need to go off the deep end here and say, "Well, first of all, the rich man and Lazarus was a parable." There is no need to say that, that's ridiculous. That's a liberalism and we're not going to say it if Jesus doesn't say it. So, the rich man and Lazarus is an occurrence that took place and we have a man who is simply known as Lazarus, not the one who is raised from the dead in John 11, but a different one, who was seen in or near Abraham in Hades. So, the issue is: did Abraham go to a place of torment? No. He was a saint; Hebrews 11 says he was a saint; Romans 4 says he was a saint; James 2 says he was a saint; Genesis 15 says he was a saint. There is no need to think that any person who's ever been saved in any age went to a place of torment. But if Hades means, and it does, "the place of departed dead," well, then, it's okay for us to say that Christ went to the place of departed dead but was not tormented in the flames.

So, when I say that the abyss of Romans 10, where Jesus went when he was dead according to Paul, and the Hades of Acts 2, which is where Jesus went when he was dead according to Peter and David, there is no need to say that Christ was tormented there simply because a portion of abyss or the portion of Hades or the portion of Sheol is torment. We will grant you that a portion of it is but apparently not all of it. Apparently not all of it. If it means the place of departed dead, then there are certain words that were used by certain authors at a particular time to relay the fact that it was not a pleasant place.

Now, I don't want to re-teach that lesson. Are there any questions, though, maybe answers I can give you about these two passages? (...speculating that Christ went to hell to testify to the dead?) Good question. There are some questions you wish people would ask and so that is fantastic right there. I don't mean to be baiting you. In any case, Ephesians 4 says that Christ went to the lower parts of the earth when he was dead to lead the captivity captive, to lead the captive ones away, to take something out of the center

of the earth, the lower parts of the earth, to rescue them. They were captive, they were imprisoned and he led them out.

(So, to gather the Old Testament saints?...the door is now open.) That's right. Now you can be in the presence of God because your sins have been paid for. Before that, it was simply the blood of an animal that was an atonement. God allowed it to be sort of a lay-away payment, if you will. But it never washed away sins. When Christ died, he washed away sins, "It is finished." Now all saints of all ages can live in the presence of God because Christ, the righteous one, gave them his righteousness, his holiness.

So, the major function, it seems, of him going to Hades was to let the righteous ones out. And Revelation 1:8 says that Jesus said, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I...have the keys of Hades and death." So, he has keys and then Colossians 2 says that when he was there he spoiled the demons, he whipped them, "made a show of them openly," it says. 1 Peter 3:19 says, "he went and preached unto the spirits in prison," while he was dead. So, there is a lot of understanding, a lot of activity, a lot of information in the Bible about what happened when Jesus was dead.

Rest assured, though, it is a lie, it is a fallacy whether purposeful or not, it is a fallacy to say that Jesus had to go to hell and burn for our sins. That's ridiculous. When he said, "It is paid for. It is finished," it's a banking term meaning the accounts are settled. And then he died, that's what it says in John 19.

(...recognize a lot of what we're reading concerning the spirit world is that translucency that you talked about...) Right, it's translucent, not transparent. That is: not everything is perfectly clear. But my best guess is that if these are not equal, they are at least overlapping in some manner. There is some part of both that are the same.

(...) Yes, it was as good as done. Right, it is attention and these Old Testament saints though saved in the same way we are with a minor difference in that they were trusting prophecy, we're trusting history, the work of Christ in prophecy for them, the work of Christ in history for us, it's the same object of faith. The fact is that they were not allowed in the presence of God because their sin was not dealt with. It just wasn't dealt with.

Revelation 9 and we covered this somewhat two weeks ago so we won't stay here long, especially since we're incredibly limited on time. Revelation 9, look at verse 1. If you want to listen to this and see what we said about the fifth trumpet discussed in Revelation 9:1-11, we can do that. I just want to point out, verse 1, "And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven," remember a star is otherwise identified as an angel in the book of Revelation, "I saw an angel fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth," and we discussed in that lesson how that these appeared to be demonic locusts coming out of the bottomless pit. Now, if that is the case and if we're dealing with

the same group of demons here that we have coming out of the pit in Revelation 9, they are going to be anxious to inflict problem. They are going to be anxious to inflict catastrophe and chaos. If they have been chained since Genesis 6, they are not happy and they are being let loose, it says, “to torment for five months,” in verse 10. Verse 11, “And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon,” or destroyer.

So, that’s the first time we see the term “bottomless pit” but I need to remind you, folks, that that is a good effort at translation. So, think about how much doctrine if you’ve been in church for a decade or so, how many funny pieces of art you’ve seen that have tried to identify a bottomless pit. Remember, that is an English translation that simply comes from a word that means “the great deep.” So, it might look bottomless, but that’s not the point of the translation. So, you could say, “I saw a star fall from heaven,” verse 1, “and to him was given the key of the abyss.” Or, “the key to Tartarus.” And, again, the only demons I know that are in a place of confinement right now are the ones of 2 Peter 2:4, the ones that sinned with human beings in Genesis 6. So, I don’t know why these wouldn’t be them coming out of that place. You see them going in, in Genesis 6, and coming out in Revelation 9.

(And then back in later on.) No, I don’t think so but we’ll get to that.

Revelation 11. We’re going to spend a lot of time on this when we get to it but look at verse 3. Again, we’re going to talk about this when we get to chapter 11. “And I will give power unto my two witnesses.” Look at verse 7, “And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.” So, right away, this antichrist figure, this beast, we’re told where he comes from. Look folks, that’s not said about anyone else in Scripture as far as I know. There is something particular about this antichrist figure known as “the beast.” He is known as the one who came from the bottomless pit. That means he was put there at one time. I don’t know of anyone that started out there.

Look at chapter 17. We’re going to see this again. He is identified this way twice. Chapter 17:8, “The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world.” So, what do we take from this? Well, again, a second time now, Revelation 11, Revelation 17, we see that this beast, this antichrist figure in the book of Revelation. Why do I keep saying it like that? Because the word “antichrist” is not in the book of Revelation. That shocks some of you prophecy interested folks. He’s not called “the antichrist” in the book of Revelation, he’s called “the beast.” And, apparently, it says twice, he comes out of the bottomless pit. Chapter 17 says he shall, “go into perdition” or “destruction” but for the second time, we’re told that he comes out of the abyss or out of the great deep or out of the bottomless pit.

Let's review: we have demons who have been chained there, we have demons that are coming out of there in the future, we have a particular figure of some kind coming out of there and he is going to deceive the whole world, generally speaking, and then he's going to go back into destruction.

(...) John says anyone who teaches the doctrine that Christ did not come in the flesh is antichrist. He says that in the first epistle of John, the first letter, a few books before Revelation but he never says in the book of Revelation, never even uses the word "antichrist." We do. Just like the word "tribulation period" is not found in the Bible. Just like the word "Trinity," "rapture," there is a myriad of them that we've added to make it identifiable to those of us who are in the guild what we mean. Identify what we mean quickly in some sort of shorthand.

Look at chapter 20 and let's look at the last time this bottomless pit, this abyss, this great deep is used in the Bible. Revelation 20:1, "And I saw an angel come down from heaven." Now, I need you to know right away, this is different than 9:1 where the angel falls from heaven, chapter 20:1, he comes down from heaven. That's why I supposed and proposed to you that probably 9:1 is dealing with the fall of Satan. "I saw an angel come down from heaven," this is a different angel, "having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand." Remember, 9:1 that angel that fell from heaven was given the key, so apparently it was reaped because now we have an angel coming down from heaven after the seven year tribulation period and he has the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand, "And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years." Now, a lot of people think, "Well, a thousand years, that's just figurative." Really? It says thousand six times here.

"And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him," there it is again, "a thousand years. And when the," there it is again, "thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison."

So, we get this idea from Revelation chapter 20 that the devil will be in the bottomless pit or the abyss or the great deep or the place Jesus was when he was dead, or the place the demons were chained before the flood, Satan will be bound there for a thousand years during what is know to us, another trade word, as the millennium. It is the thousand year reign of Christ on the earth that will take place upon his return and he will return after the tribulation period. It's what we're told in the book of Revelation so far.

So, we've learned something about the bottomless pit today, hopefully we have, and that is that the devil will be there temporarily. What happens to him after that? Look at verse 8, and the Satan that had just been loosed out of his prison after the thousand years, "shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea." So, there will be one last battle. Look at verse 10, "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever." And that's when we see the last of the devil.

(...) You can go with me if you want to but I don't think we have time so I'm going to read it and then I'm going to tell you where it is. Here we go, "Dare any of you have in a matter against another go to law before the unjust and not before the saints? Do you not know that the saints will judge the world and if the world is to be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters?" In other words, you guys are suing each other. That is dumb. Take it before the church. He says, "Don't sue each other. You're part of the same body of Christ. Don't sue each other." He says, "Aren't you going to judge the world? Then why are you going to do that? Can't you handle this stuff?" No, you can't.

Look at verse 3, "Know you not that we shall judge angels? How much more things that pertain to this life." So, just in passing, Paul says in 1 Corinthians 6:3, that you, if you are a believer, will not only judge the world but you will have a hand in judging the angels. That's pretty cool, huh?

Let's have a word of prayer.

*Lord, thanks for the opportunity to study your Word. I pray that we will continue to be teachable. I know that many believers struggle, including myself, at remaining teachable by the Spirit of the Lord. I pray that you'd help us to remember that you wrote this book and you ought to be the one that tells us what it means. So, help us to be submissive to your Holy Spirit and the Word of God. In Jesus' name. Amen.*