



Heaven and Hell: In the Bible, the Apocrypha and the Dead Sea Scrolls

Robert C. Jones

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Part One of this book examines early Jewish and Christian thought on the topic of heaven. In the Old Testament, heaven is a place where God and the angels reside - but not (seemingly) a place where the righteous go when they die. By the time of the New Testament, heaven is starting to assume its modern connotation as a paradise where the righteous go to be with God when they die. This view becomes even more prominent in apocryphal writings in the early church. Part Two of this book focuses on the antithesis of Heaven - Hell. It also takes a look at Satan and his minions. In the Old Testament, there is not really a concept of Hell as Christians know it today. Rather, Sheol is a place where people go after they die - good or bad. In most references to Sheol, it is not clear that beings have any consciousness there. It is simply the "abode of the dead". By the time of the New Testament, however, Hell as we know it today has become a hot (or cold) place of punishment for the unrighteous, ruled over by Satan, a fallen angel. The inter-Testamental writings (Dead Sea Scrolls, Apocrypha) help bridge the theological gap between Sheol and Hell. An appendix which discusses the origins of the Apocrypha and the Dead Sea Scrolls rounds this book out.

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