

~ABYSS (290)

[Greek, *a'bys-sos* means very or exceedingly deep]

.. Scriptural Significance Of The Abyss

- According to Parkhurst's Greek and English Lexicon to the New Testament [London, 1845, p. 2], the Greek *a'bys-sos* means very or exceedingly deep. According to Liddell and Scott's Greek-English Lexicon [Oxford, 1968, p. 4], it means unfathomable, boundless. The Greek Septuagint uses it regularly to translate the Hebrew *tehothm'*, watery deep, as at (Genesis 1:2) watery deep, as at;
- In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on this day all the springs of the vast watery deep were broken open and the floodgates of the heavens were opened. (Genesis 7:11)
- *A'bys-sos* occurs nine times in the Christian Greek Scriptures, seven of them being in the book of Revelation. It is from the **abyss** that the symbolic locusts come forth under the headship of their king, Abaddon or Apollyon, the angel of the **abyss**.
- And the fifth angel blew his trumpet. And I saw a star that had fallen from heaven to the earth, and the key of the pit of the **abyss** was given him. (Revelation 9:1)
- And he opened the pit of the **abyss**, and smoke ascended out of the pit as the smoke of a great furnace, and the sun was darkened, also the air, by the smoke of the pit. (Revelation 9:2)
- And out of the smoke locusts came forth upon the earth, and authority was given them, the same authority as the scorpions of the earth have. (Revelation 9:3)
- They have over them a king, the angel of the **abyss**. In Hebrew his name is Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name Apollyon. (Revelation 9:11)
- The wild beast that makes war against the two witnesses of God and kills them, is also spoken of as coming out of the **abyss**.
- And I will cause my two witnesses to prophesy a thousand two hundred and sixty days dressed in sackcloth. (Revelation 11:3)

- And when they have finished their witnessing, the wild beast that ascends out of the **abyss** will make war with them and conquer them and kill them. (**Revelation 11:7**)
- And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven with the key of the **abyss** and a great chain in his hand. (**Revelation 20:1**)
- And he seized the dragon, the original serpent, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. (**Revelation 20:2**)
- And he hurled him into the **abyss** and shut it and sealed it over him, that he might not mislead the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After these things he must be let loose for a little while. (**Revelation 20:3**)
- Describes the future casting of Satan into the **abyss** for a thousand years, something that a legion of demons urged Jesus not to do to them on a certain occasion.
- And they kept entreating him not to order them to go away into the abyss. (**Luke 8:31**)

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- It is noteworthy that the **Greek Septuagint** does not use *a'bys-sos* to translate the **Hebrew she 'ohl'**, and in view of the fact that spirit creatures are cast into it, it cannot properly be limited in meaning to Sheol or Hades, inasmuch as these two words clearly refer to the common earthly grave of mankind.
- If I keep waiting, **Sheol** is my house, in the darkness I shall have to spread out my lounge. (**Job 17:13**)
- To the **pit** I shall have to call out, You are my father! To the maggot, My mother and my sister! (**Job 17:14**)
- So where, then, is my hope? And my hope, who is it that beholds it? (**Job 17:15**)
- To the bars of **Sheol** they will go down, when we, all together, must descend to the very dust. (**Job 17:16**)

- It does not refer to the lake of fire, since it is after Satan's release from the **abyss** that he is thereupon hurled into the lake of fire.
- And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven with the key of the **abyss** and a great chain in his hand. (**Revelation 20:1**)
- And he seized the dragon, the original serpent, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. (**Revelation 20:2**)
- And he hurled him into the **abyss** and shut it and sealed it over him, that he might not mislead the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After these things he must be let loose for a little while. (**Revelation 20:3**)
- Now as soon as the thousand years have been ended, Satan will be let loose out of his prison. (**Revelation 20:7**)
- And he will go out to mislead those nations in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war. The number of these is as the sand of the sea. (**Revelation 20:8**)
- And they advanced over the breadth of the earth and encircled the camp of the holy one's and the beloved city. But fire came down out of heaven and devoured them. (**Revelation 20:9**)
- And the Devil who was misleading them was hurled into the **lake of fire and sulphur**, where both the wild beast and the false prophet already were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. (**Revelation 20:10**)
- Paul's statement at;
- Or, Who will descend into the **abyss**? That is, to bring Christ up from the dead. (**Romans 10:7**)
- In which he speaks of Christ as being in the **abyss**, also precludes such possibility and shows as well that the **abyss** is not the same as Tartarus.

See Also TARTARUS

See Also HADES

See Also SHEOL

- **But the righteousness resulting from faith speaks in this manner; Do not say in your heart, Who will ascend into heaven? that is, to bring Christ down. (Romans 10:6)**
- **Or; Who will descend into the **abyss**? That is, to bring Christ up from the dead. (Romans 10:7)**
- **Aids in clearing up the meaning of the **abyss** in stating: But the righteousness resulting from faith speaks in this manner; Do not say in your heart; Who will ascend into heaven? That is, to bring Christ down, or, Who will descend into the **abyss**? That is, to bring Christ up from the dead.**
- **For this commandment that I am commanding you today is not too difficult for you, nor is it far away. (Deuteronomy 30:11)**
- **It is not in the heavens, so as to result in saying; Who will ascend for us into the heavens and get it for us, that he may let us hear it that we may do it? (Deuteronomy 30:12)**
- **Neither is it on the other side of the sea, so as to result in saying; Who will pass over for us to the other side of the sea and get it for us, that he may let us hear it that we may do it? (Deuteronomy 30:13)**
- **It is evident that the **abyss** here refers to the place in which Christ Jesus spent part of three days, and from which place his Father resurrected him.**
- **Your righteousness, O God, is up to the height, as respects the great things that you have done, O God, who is like you? (Psalms 71:19)**
- **Because you have made me see many distresses and calamities, may you revive me again, and from the watery deeps of the earth may you again bring me up. (Psalms 71:20)**
- **For just as Jonah was in the belly of the huge fish three days and three nights, so the Son of man will be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights. (Matthew 12:40)**
- **Now as soon as the thousand years have been ended, Satan will be let loose out of his prison. (Revelation 20:7)**

- Refers to the **abyss** as a prison, and the confinement of absolute restraint resulting from death in the case of Jesus certainly harmonizes with this.
- But God resurrected him by loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to continue to be held fast by it. (**Acts of Apostles 2:24**)
- For deadly breaking waves encircled me, there were flash floods of good-for-nothing men that kept terrifying me. (**2 Samuel 22:5**)
- The ropes of Sheol themselves surrounded me, the snares of death confronted me. (**2 Samuel 22:6**)
- Have you come to the sources of the sea, or in search of the watery deep have you walked about? (**Job 38:16**)
- Have the gates of death been uncovered to you, or the gates of deep shadow can you see? (**Job 38:17**)
- Show me favor, O Yehowah. See my affliction by those hating me, O you who are lifting me up from the gates of death. (**Psalms 9:13**)
- Their soul got to detest even every sort of food, and they were arriving at the gates of death. (**Psalms 107:18**)
- The ropes of death encircled me and the distressing circumstances of Sheol themselves found me. Distress and grief I kept finding. (**Psalms 116:3**)
- Concerning the root meaning unfathomable as characteristic of the abyss, it is of interest to note the statement in Hastings **Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics (1913, Vol. I, p. 54)**, which, in commenting on;
 - But the righteousness resulting from faith speaks in this manner; Do not say in your heart; Who will ascend into heaven? that is, to bring Christ down. (**Romans 10:6**)
 - Or, Who will descend into the **abyss**? That is, to bring Christ up from the dead. (**Romans 10:7**)

- **Says; The impression conveyed by St. Paul's language is of the vastness of that realm, as of one that we should vainly attempt to explore. Paul contrasts the inaccessibility of heaven and of the abyss with the accessibility of righteousness by faith. The use of the related word *ba'thos* made by Paul at;**
- **O the **depth** of God's riches and wisdom and knowledge! How unsearchable his judgments are and past tracing out his ways are! (**Romans 11:33**)**
- **Illustrates this: O the **depth** [*ba'thos*] of God's riches and wisdom and knowledge! How unsearchable his judgments are and past tracing out his ways are!**
- **For it is to us God has revealed them through his spirit, for the spirit searches into all things, even the **deep** things of God. (**1 Corinthians 2:10**)**
- **In order, that you may be thoroughly able to grasp mentally with all the holy one's what is the breadth and length and height and **depth**. (**Ephesians 3:18**)**
- **And to know the love of the Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the **fullness** that God gives. (**Ephesians 3:19**)**
- **So, in harmony with;**
- **But the righteousness resulting from faith speaks in this manner; Do not say in your heart; Who will ascend into heaven? that is, to bring Christ down. (**Romans 10:6**)**
- **Or, Who will descend into the **abyss**? That is, to bring Christ up from the dead. (**Romans 10:7**)**
- **The place that is represented by the **abyss** would also evidently imply being out of the reach of anyone but God or his appointed angel with the key of the **abyss**.**
- **And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven with the key of the **abyss** and a great chain in his hand. (**Revelation 20:1**)**
- **Liddell and Scotts *Greek-English Lexicon* (p. 4) gives as one of the meanings of the word *a'bys-sos*; the infinite void.**

- The plural form of the **Hebrew** word *metsoh-lah'*, or *metsu-lah'* is translated large abyss in;
- You have put me in a pit of the lowest depths, in dark places, in a **large abyss**. (**Psalms 88:6**)
- And literally means **abysses**, or depths.
- And he must pass through the sea with distress, and in the sea he must strike down the waves, and all the depths of the Nile must dry up. And the pride of Assyria must be brought down, and the very scepter of Egypt will depart. (**Zechariah 10:11**)
- It is related to *tsu-lah'*, meaning watery deep.
- The One saying to the **watery deep**, Be evaporated. And all your rivers I shall dry up. (**Isaiah 44:27**)