

# Is the Apostle's Creed's "he descend into Hell"... scriptural?

by

Anthony V. Gaudio

This has been the subject of disagreement for centuries, but it can be resolved with the scriptures a little research, and plain common sense.

The English word 'Creed' comes from the Latin 'Credo' = 'To believe' Today's creeds began as a recitation by baptismal candidates to affirm the unscriptural doctrine of the Trinity, itself a word NOT in the scriptures.

Those who were to be baptized had to have reached 'the age of reason.' They had to realize they must repent of their sins for them to be covered, blotted out, washed away through the shed blood of Yeshua the Anointed. And, if obedient and faithful to the end, they would qualify for salvation, and receive eternal life.

Most bible versions show that John the Baptist (Greek Baptismo = to immerse) and the others, immersed adults, not infants or children. Infant baptism was NOT performed in the early church because of these reasons. Years later immersion gave way to sprinkling. Various recitations became blended over the years and became known as 'The Old Roman Form.' In 336 Marcellus recorded this form in Greek from perhaps the 2<sup>nd</sup> century.

The recitation known as the Old Roman Form was changed by the early Roman Catholic Church Fathers in the West, into what was called the 'The Received Form.' It is known today as the so-called 'Apostle's Creed.'

The changes in the form of the recitation led to much disagreement in various churches and was not adopted universally for many years. In some areas changes in the wording of the creeds led to a schism.

The so-called 'Apostle's Creed' is NOT in the scriptures. It was obviously NOT written by the Apostles. In fact, the recitations which led up to the so-called 'Apostle's Creed' did not appear until about 400 years *after* the death of our Savior.

The so-called Apostle's Creed was not used universally until the 16<sup>th</sup> century. These facts are NOT admitted to by mainstream religions today which teach the Trinity Doctrine.

But the very title 'Apostle's Creed' was enough to make people *assume* the Apostles authored it. One can find on the Internet suppositions by those who favor the clause 'he descended in to Hell' in what can be clearly described as manmade doctrine without scriptural support.

Compare the 'The Old Roman form' and the 'Received form,' line by line. Note there are twelve changes. The 'Received form' of the Roman Catholic Church cannot be traced earlier than about the 6<sup>th</sup> century. It was chosen over other drafts amid much discussion, becoming finalized in the 8<sup>th</sup> century.

Is it not unusual that what started out as a simple recitation by a baptismal candidate took approximately *six-hundred years* to become the so-called Apostle's Creed?

The clause '*he descended into hell*' was believed to have been first reported in the West by Rufus Aquileia (390). In the East, the clause is found in the Arian Creeds (about 360) by Venantius Fortunatus (590). The difference between 'Eastern' and 'Western' churches occurs in the literature from the Schism within the early churches.

In the so-called 'Apostle's Creed,' the word mistranslated as 'descended' is the Greek word *katotata* and its root simply means *down*. The word translated 'descended' corresponds to *katoteros* which means *lower*, as in Ephesians 4:9 "...But what does "He went up" mean, except that He also went down into the lower parts of the earth?"

The English word 'Hell' means essentially an excavation in which vegetables are put during the winter. It is underground and dark. Variations are also called 'root cellars.'

The word Hell has been a sort of catch-all English word for four separate words in the ancient manuscripts. Hebrew word *Sheol* and the Greek word *Hades* simply mean 'grave,' a hole in the ground where a dead person is placed. The other Greek words translated 'Hell' are Tartaroo where Satan and his legions will be incarcerated for 1000 years, and Gehenna, the lake of fire in which everything thrown into it, is burnt to ashes.

Had the word 'grave' been used for the tomb where our Savior was placed, a great deal of muddled thinking would probably have been prevented. Yeshua's body was technically 'lowered' vertically down into its resting place inside the tomb.

Our Savior's *first-person* statement, recorded in the scriptures, is:

"there shall be no sign given to this evil and adulterous generation save the sign of Jonah, for as Jonah was three days and three nights in the great fish, so shall the son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth"

This clear, *first-person statement* out of the mouth of our *Savior* is universally disbelieved. Yet, the erroneous clause in the unscriptural manmade creed "he descended into Hell," is believed.

Some people suppose that Yeshua went to heaven after his entombment and was there until his resurrection. They cite the statement in their bibles which Yeshua made in Luke 23:43 to the penitent thief,

"Truly, I say to you, today you shall be with Me in paradise"

Most do know that Hebrew and Greek manuscripts are written continuously, without breaks between words or punctuation. But, they had natural pauses. Translators put a comma where they *thought* a natural pause should be, with a notable exception. They inserted a comma in this verse where their erroneous 'going to heaven or hell at death' upbringing erroneously indicated.

Correctly punctuated, Yeshua's statement is:

“Truly, I say you today, you shall be with me in Paradise...”

The thief was being told his repentance that day would earn him eternal life at Yeshua's second coming.

Notice the number of Anti-Nicene creeds which *DO NOT* contain the erroneous clause ‘he descended into Hell’: Ignatius of Antioch (107), Ireanaeus (180), Tertullian (200), Cyprian of Carthage (250), Novation of Rome (250), Origen of Alexandria (230), Gregorius Thaumaturgus of Neo-Caesarea (270), Lucian of Antioch (300), and Eusebius of Caesarea (325); The Post-Nicene Creeds include those of Cyril of Jerusalem (350), and Epiphanius (374).

The erroneous assumption that Yeshua went to Hell after he was put into the tomb, comes about only because of clause “he descended into Hell” in the so-called Apostles Creed.

The most common support of those who advocate Yeshua left the tomb is Matt 5:25, and 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3: 19 and 2:46: “...he preached to the spirits in prison...” never continuing with the verse “...in the *time of Noah*.” This reveals that in Antediluvial times, the punishment for Satan and the one-third of rebellious ‘stars’ (spirit beings) was to be cast down to Earth and here imprisoned. The scriptures clearly say the preaching occurred “in the time of Noah,” NOT within the three days and nights of our Savior's entombment.

Because of the unscriptural Trinity Doctrine, most people cannot understand that Yeshua, by the will of his Father Yahweh, created all things. Yeshua is a separate being from his father. They have separate wills but are united in thought, word, and deed.

The Father Yahweh anointed his only begotten son, Yeshua, after his fleshly birth. Yeshua did the work of his Father, in the name of his father, and by the power of his father. The two created and sustain the universe. The works done by Yeshua are recorded in the Old Testament, as being done by Yahweh. The ONE, ONLY, name of the deity given to the Hebrews by Moses was Yahweh. It was not the erroneous no-name ‘God’ which has been substituted in most bibles for the divine name.

Even Augustine, a Roman Catholic Theologian, was uncertain about the clause ‘he descended into Hell.’ He remarked quite logically: “Why should these sinners [in Hell] be single out for such an honor [being preached to by our Savior]?” And, “who, if anyone [already condemned in Hell], was saved”? The thinking at the time was that those who had been baptized were now separated from those condemned.

But Thomas Aquinas, another Roman Catholic Theologian, said that our Savior descended into *two* places: HELL and PURGATORY. The former is shown herein to be a mistranslation, and the latter is a totally unscriptural doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church.

A most interesting thing is that even though the Apostle's Creed is a product of the Roman Catholic Church, after the Protestant Reformation, Martin Luther also believed the Savior had descended into 'Hell,' but would offer no explanation about the matter.

The Presbyterian John Calvin went so far as to describe the descent into 'Hell' as symbolic, pointing to the experience of Yeshua's suffering and death on the torture stake.

At least one modern day preacher claims it was the descent into HELL, not the shedding of blood that redeems sinners.

The statement in the Apostle's Creed that our Savior, Yeshua the Anointed, during the three days and nights he was entombed, 'descended into Hell,' is **NOT** scriptural. When Yeshua the Anointed returns, "his reward [of salvation for the chosen] is with him," then will come the judgement.

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Suggested reading from Roman Catholic sources:

The Apostle's Creed

The Nicene Creed

The Athanasian Creed