

However, if there's clear evidence that it means a place, then we want to see who uses this reference of this place and see how much light can be gained thus on the nature of the thing as to what it is.

These are vital questions. Now immediately there comes to mind one of the early references to sheol. I believe it's where Jacob says to his sons after the death of Joseph, "you will bring down my gray hairs to sheol" - my "hoary head" to sheol. Now the mention of gray hairs and hoary head suggests gray, doesn't it? You don't take the gray hairs or the hoary head to a disembodied state. But, of course, it is not necessary to consider that when he says gray hair or hoary head he is speaking in a literal language. He is referring to the fate which is to take place to that bit of matter which composes his head. It is altogether reasonable for a man to use the phrase head or gray if he has gray hair, gray beard. You say here comes an old gray beard, what's he got to say? Well, the gray beard doesn't say anything. The term is used as a figure for an individual who has certain characteristics that are suggested by it. And to bring his gray hairs down to sheol doesn't necessarily mean put his body in the grave. They mean to put a man who is in that state of life characterized by gray hairs and thus is venerable and somewhat feeble to bring him to a disembodied state or to bring him to a place where he no longer has a physical body through which to express himself.

So that it seems to me that those matters are rather important in finding out what the Scripture ^{really} means by the term sheol. We often hear statements made which are based upon ~~the~~ mythology, taking a Greek idea and carrying it over into the Hebrew, something like that. Of course, we do have in Babylonian mythology we have a place called the "land of no return" and this "land of no return" is represented as a place where people eat dust, where everything is gloomy and dark. There are a few Babylonian texts dealing with it. But reason do we have to say that