

Sunday, November 13, 2011—Mark Dispensationally Considered—Mark 9:42-50: Did Jesus Believe in Hell and Eternal Punishment?

Introduction

- This morning we are going to be looking at some things Jesus had to say about Hell. It is important to realize that Jesus not only believed in Hell, but had more to say about it than any figure in the Bible.
- Unfortunately in our day the doctrines of Hell and eternal punishment are under attack from influential voices within the Christian community. Even within the greater grace movement there are many who have adopted the Universalist heresy.

Mark 9:42-48

- *And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea. 43) And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: 44) Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. 45) And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: 46) Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. 47) And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: 48) Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.*
- Mark 9:42—remember that in the context of the passage the Apostles had been arguing about who would be the greatest (Verse 34). Jesus then produced to teach them a lesson in humility by taking a child into his arms (Verses 36-37). It is important to realize that verse 42 appears in this context. Jesus is literally saying that anyone who offends one of the children if a millstone was hung around their neck and they were thrown into the sea.
- *Webster's 1828 Dictionary* offers presents seven meanings for the word offend. The seventh definition uses Matthew 5:29-30 which is a very similar passage to the one we currently studying in Mark to support its meaning. “To draw to evil, or hinder in obedience; to cause to sin or neglect duty.”
- Mark 9:43—the Greek word translated “offend” is the same word throughout this passage. If ones hand is found offensive, i.e., it causes one to be draw to evil, hindered for obedience, caused or sin, or neglect ones duty it needs to be cut off. In the passage the same could be said for one’s foot as well as their eye.
 - Verse 45—“if they foot offend thee, cut it off”
 - Verse 47—“if they eye offend thee, pluck it out”

- Why? Why should one cut off his/her hand or foot and pluck out their eye if it is found offensive? It is better for someone to enter into life maimed or halt then remain whole and be cast into hell. In the context entering into life is synonymous with getting into the kingdom.
 - Verse 43—“enter into life”
 - Verse 45—“enter halt into life”
 - Verse 47—“enter into the kingdom of God”

- The picture of Hell that is painted in these verses is quite frightening. Christ describes hell as a place of everlasting and unquenchable fire where their worm dieth not. This morning want to consider the following points regarding Hell:
 - The Existence of Hell
 - The Nature of Suffering in Hell
 - The Location of Hell
 - Hell: A Two Compartment Chamber
 - The Second Death

The Existence of Hell

- The doctrine of Hell is like the trinity in that it was revealed progressively throughout Scripture. The concept of Hell is more implied (implicit) in the Old Testament and more explicitly developed in the New Testament. In short, the Old Testament establishes a basic framework and the New Testament elaborates on it.

- The word Hell appears 54 times in 54 verses in the King James Bible

- The Hebrew word for Hell (sheol) occurs 65 times in the Old Testament:
 - Grave—31
 - Hell—31
 - Pit—3

- Deuteronomy 32:22
 - Genesis 35:18—the Biblical Definition of death is the Soul and Spirit departing the body.
 - Body—Grave
 - Soul—Hell
 - There is more involved in Hell than the body’s burial in the grave. Death is also the Soul’s entrance into the spiritual realm.

- Psalm 9:17, 16:10, 18:5, 116:3

- In the New Testament three Greek words are associated with Hell.
 - *Hades*

- *Gehenna*—Jude 7— putrid dump outside Jerusalem that perpetually burned.
- *Tartaroo*—II Peter 2:4
- While everyone who ends up in Hell will be punished eternally, Hell and the Lake of Fire are not the same place.
 - Revelation 20:13-14—Hell is the intermediate place of punishment for the lost whereas the Lake of Fire is where one serves out their final eternal sentence.

The Nature of Suffering in Hell

- Revelation 14:10-11—teaches that the lost will be tormented with fire and brimstone.
- *Torment*: Extreme pain; anguish; the utmost degree of misery, either of body or mind, 2) that which gives pain, vexation or misery. *Webster's 1828 Dictionary*
- Matthew 8:6—the same words that are used to describe physical suffering are also used to describe the agony experienced of eternal punishment.
- Revelation 14:10—notice that they are tormented with fire and brimstone. The fire is responsible for their torment.
- I Peter 3:19—hell is a prison of confinement not an eternal party.
- Matthew 8:12—darkness, and solitude where all you have to think about is your rejection of God.
- The torments of Hell and the Lake of Fire are not forced on people against their will. Rather the torment is self inflicted. In other words, people who exercise their volition (free will) to not accept Christ suffer the consequences of their own poor choice.
- God would rather not send anyone to Hell which is why He sent Christ to do for our sins.
- Part of the torment of Hell will be the anguish of realizing that one used their freedom for evil and chose wrongly. Everyone in Hell will know that the pain he or she is experiencing is self-induced; hence, the “weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Location of Hell

- Hell is maximum security prison located in the center of the earth.
- The Bible always speaks of Hell as being down or of being brought down to Hell.
 - Psalms 55:15, 86:13
 - Proverbs 7:27, 9:18, 15:24
 - Isaiah 5:14
 - Ezekiel 31:17

- Jonah 2:2—we have already seen that Jonah died inside the whale and went to Hell.
- Jonah 2:6—states that Jonah was help prisoner by the bars of the earth.
- Matthew 14:20—when Jesus died he went to Hell like Jonah. Where did Jesus says he was going to go after He died? To the heart of the earth. Where is Hell located? In the center or Heart of the Earth.

Hell: A Two Compartment Chamber

- Hell in the Old Testament is described as a place where both the wicked and righteous go upon physical death.
 - Number 16:30—the wicked go to Hell when they died in the O.T.
 - Psalm 16:10—David a saved person also went to Hell when he died.
 - Jonah 2:2—Jonah went to Hell when he died.
 - Matthew 12:40—the same thing that happened to Jonah happened to Christ upon his death. He went to Hell and spent three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.
- If Hell is a place of Torment, why did David, Jonah, and Christ go there?
- Luke 16:19-21—Jesus tells the true story of two men: the rich man and Lazarus.
 - The Rich Man—lived a life of luxury and faired sumptuously.
 - Lazarus—was a beggar who had ate the crumbs which fell from the rich man’s table.
- Luke 16:22-23—both men die physically but their souls go to two different compartments of the same place, Hell:
 - Lazarus—is carried by the angels into a place called Abraham’s bosom.
 - Rich Man—finds himself in torments and sees Lazarus Abraham afar off and Lazarus in his bosom
 - Notice that both men are said to be in hell.
- Luke 16:24—the rich man is being torment in flames. This matches the nature of suffering in Hell that we studied last week.
- Luke 16:25—notice how in Hell the rich man receives the discomfort in the torments of flame while Lazarus in Abraham’s bosom is comforted.
- Luke 16:26—Hell is time past contained two chambers that were separated by a great gulf between them making it impossible for those in torments to access those in Abraham’s bosom (comfort).

The Second Death: Their Worm Dieth Not

- The phrase Second Death is mentioned 4 times in the Bible all of which are found in the book of Revelation.
 - Revelation 2:11
 - Revelation 20:6, 14
 - Revelation 21:8—clearly the Lake of Fire is the second death (eternal separation from God).
- There is a strong indication in Scripture that the second death is more than just eternal separation from God.
- Job 25:6—man is a worm according to this verse.
- Isaiah 66:24—second coming passage about Hell during the millennium.
- Psalm 22:1, 7-18—what is this passage a prophetic description of? Christ on the cross.
- Psalm 22:6—what does the person on this cross call himself as he hangs upon it? A worm.
- The indication from the verses is that Jesus Christ suffered the second death in his soul as he hung upon the cross.
- John 3:14
- Galatians 3:13
- II Corinthians 5:21—upon the cross Jesus Christ was made sin for us and suffered the wrath of almighty God against sin for us up to and including suffering our second death in his soul.
- This is why God the father turned his back on him.
- In the second death people are totally abandoned by God to the degenerative effects of sin. So much so that they are ultimately reduced to the most basic of form of complex life. While there is not a loss of consciousness or personal identity there is a loss personal identification in a physical sense.