

# Pentwater Bible Church

*Gospel of Mark  
Message 37*

*December 14, 2014*



The Last Judgment by Giotto Cir 1304-05

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# Pentwater Bible Church

The Book of Mark  
Message Thirty-Seven  
**JESUS TEACHES ABOUT HELL**  
December 14, 2014  
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THE ABYSS OF HELL BY SANDRO FILIPEPI BOTTICELLI CIR.1485

## JESUS TEACHES ABOUT ETERNITY

### Mark 9:42-50

*<sup>42</sup> 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. <sup>43</sup> 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: <sup>44</sup> where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. <sup>45</sup> 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: <sup>46</sup> where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. <sup>47</sup> 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: <sup>48</sup> where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. <sup>49</sup> For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt. <sup>50</sup> Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another (KJV).*

## ACTS OF MISGUIDANCE CARRY SEVERE PENALTIES

### Mark 9:42

*<sup>42</sup> 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 (KJV).*

This teaching that Jesus is bringing forth is closely tied to the two previous lessons where Jesus held up a little child as an example of servant hood and for judging our receptivity of Him and His Truth. Failure to deter others who would become believers has eternal penalties. Jesus condemned the Pharisees for this very practice.

Matthew 23:13-15

<sup>13</sup> *“But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in.”* <sup>14</sup> *“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows’ houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. Therefore you will receive greater condemnation”* <sup>15</sup> *“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves (NKJV).”*

Jesus still has the little innocent child in His arms embracing him while He teaches. A little child is an example of a person that does not know the truth but will be receptive to it. The same can be said of adults that are weak in the faith. They look to those who are experienced to tell them the truth. Jesus said that one who would misguide these people could experience severe penalties on both sides of eternity. In the example from Mark 9:42 Jesus said, *“it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea.”* This description that the text provides is strong language for a serious subject, our salvation and eternal destiny.

The millstone is more clearly described in the original Greek text as a *mylos onikos* or a donkey millstone. It was a very heavy stone, which was placed upon a round platform with a shaft that went through its center that was attached to a donkey that moved it around the platform to crush grain or olives. Commonly the stone used was black basalt because its rough and porous surface provided good cutting edges. This tool was so important to the life of the ancient Israeli that it was prohibited by law to take a man’s millstone as a pledge against the payment of a debt, for this would deprive his family of the means of making flour for bread (Deuteronomy 24:6). These stones were heavy enough to kill a man when thrown on his head (100 -1,000 Lbs.), as in the case of Abimelech (Judges 9:53; 2 Samuel 11:21). So if one were hanged around a person’s neck and he was cast into the sea it would mean certain death by asphyxiation. The process of drowning is accompanied by panic. As the water enters the lungs darkness and panic engulf the individual until they are rendered unconscious. Jesus used this description to indicate that this horror would be *better* for the person who led some innocent person away from eternal glory with Him.



Photo from <http://www.lugaresbiblicos.com/ejemplodeboletin.htm>

Punishment by drowning in this manner was a familiar practice to the first century Israelites. Josephus describes this as the end result of men affiliated with Herod in Galilee who were drowned in the lake.<sup>1</sup> This is exactly what Jesus also had in mind when He declared His woes on the Pharisees. They were also leading people who would have been saved to turn away from God and follow what they told them by example to do. He said to them that they *shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in.* This is in essence what happens to somebody who leads a person away from salvation in Jesus, they are not going in themselves and it would be better for them if a millstone were hung about their neck and they were thrown into the sea.

## THE LORD TEACHES ABOUT HELL

Mark 9:43-48

*<sup>43</sup> 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: <sup>44</sup> where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. <sup>45</sup> 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: <sup>46</sup> where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. <sup>47</sup> 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: <sup>48</sup> where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched (KJV).*

Before He cradled the child as an example of innocence He chided His apostles for their childish behavior over their exclusivity to perform works in Jesus name and their worldly ambition and status seeking. Here He is including anything that would cause another weak in the faith to stumble. A follower of Jesus must work to eliminate any personal stumbling blocks that can cause another of marginal (weak) faith or an unbeliever to turn away from God and potential salvation. As a consequence the conscience of a weak believer can be ruined and his capacity to distinguish right from wrong was lost (Titus 1:15) leading to his spiritual ruin and physical death (1 Corinthians 10:9-10; Romans 14:15).

Jesus is making several strong points in these verses. *One*, He describes the other side as life, which we call eternity. *Two*, it is entered by belief in Him. *Three*, He is not endorsing physical mutilation and *four*; He clearly describes one characteristic of Hell the eternal fire.

## ETERNITY

Jesus had been teaching His apostles about the reasons for His coming to this earth and making Himself a sacrifice. He had to cleanse the Heavenly Tabernacle (Hebrews 9) and provide a means for mankind to enter Heaven after the Fall. They were not to receptive to these instructions as He frequently would get frustrated with them and say things like *perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened?*<sup>18</sup> *Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember?* (Mark 8:17a-18)

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<sup>1</sup> Josephus, F., & Whiston, W. (1987). *The works of Josephus: complete and unabridged*. Peabody: Hendrickson. Antiquities 14. 15.10

He had a mission that is the most important one for all of mankind. He answers the question that has plagued men for many centuries, what happens to me when I die and where to I go?

We refer to the other side as eternity, which is a word that is tied to the time domain. It refers to some activity continuing forever. However, eternity is a place, which has many more dimensions than the three spatial and time that we experience here. Once we are released from these bodies we will then immediately realize where Jesus lives and its magnificence. Many such as Nachmonides the twelfth century Jewish Rabbi taught that there are many more dimensions on the other side than the four we experience here. Scripture occasionally gives us a glimpse into the other side. Two examples are the Transfiguration and Jesus' and His physical characteristics after He was resurrected. Both of these instances demonstrated a clear departure from the physical constraints of living here in time and space. This section of Mark describes some characteristics of the other side.

#### HEAVEN IS ENTERED AT DEATH THROUGH BELIEF IN JESUS

There is no time there as Paul states to Timothy in II Timothy in describing the plan of the Gospel was made in eternity before time began (II Timothy 1:9). Isaiah describes God as the High and Lofty that inhabits the place that is of continual existence (Isaiah 57:15). Eternity has least two sides, the side close to God and that separated from Him. Jesus called side one Paradise to the thief on the cross next to Him that became a believer (Luke 23:43). In the Old Testament and up to the time Jesus opened Heaven with His death and resurrection the dead went to Sheol (Hebrew) or Hades (Greek). There were two sides Paradise also known as Abraham's Bosom and the place for those who are separated from God. It had three compartments, Hell, Tartarus and The Abyss (See Chart in Appendix). For the believer in the Gospel of Christ Heaven (Paradise) awaits us. We have the blessed assurance that we will be with Jesus when we leave these bodies (John 3:16; Romans 6:23; John 14:2-3). Paul who was carried away to the 3rd Heaven saw it and could not describe it. He could only say, "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him" (I Corinthians 2:9). Jesus in His discussion with His apostles gave us additional insight.

John 14:1-7

*Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in me. <sup>2</sup>In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. <sup>3</sup>And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. <sup>4</sup>And whither I go, ye know the way. <sup>5</sup>Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; how know we the way? <sup>6</sup>Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father, but by me. <sup>7</sup>If ye had known me, ye would have known my Father also: from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him (ASV 1901).*

#### JESUS DISCUSSES AVOIDING HELL

In describing the methods of avoiding Hell He says to take drastic measures to avoid sinning to the extent that you do not believe. Since one enters through belief in the Lord

Jesus' Gospel, it is not a matter of behavior (Works) that gets one into Heaven but just a heartfelt belief. So what Jesus is saying when He uses terms such as cutting off a part of our bodies is to take drastic measures for one desiring to become a believer so we can enter Heaven. Some will forsake belief because it is accompanied with seeing our sins and renouncing them. Once the Spirit enters us at belief He convicts us and we immediately see our sins and begin the life long process of Sanctification or becoming more Christ Like. Some outside the body of Christ see us being converting and the realization of our sinfulness and they shirk from us not understanding how we cannot any longer participate in the activities of the Old Man. Jesus is not saying one can lose his or her salvation by sinning. But adherence to our sins instead of believing on the Gospel will keep us out. Many people who have seen this have not been willing to renounce their sins in favor of eternal life.

Eternity is the many other dimensions or Paradise where Jesus said life is, on the other side. He did not say it was here. Jesus was saying that the judgment he had just spoken of was so serious that it would be better to sacrifice yourself than to sin. Do not cause others to sin and do what you have to do to keep from sinning yourself. Sin is so serious that it calls for drastic measures to remove it from our lives. Jesus never meant to actually sever one of your body parts. This is making use of a literary technique known as hyperbole. Hyperbole is a deliberate exaggeration for effect or emphasis. Hyperboles are found in all languages, and they are frequently used in the Bible. For example, "*My soul is crushed with longing*" (Psalm 119:20). There are a lot of other Biblical examples of caring for our bodies so Jesus is not saying to actually amputate some body part.

#### JESUS DESCRIBES HELL

Jesus in this Mark text uses terms such as *the fire that never shall be quenched, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched* to describe eternal separation from God. The first term is the one that is most prevalent in Scripture. Jesus characterized is that way in His story of the rich man and Lazarus.

#### Luke 16:19-31

<sup>19</sup>Now there was a certain rich man, and he was clothed in purple and fine linen, faring sumptuously every day: <sup>20</sup>and a certain beggar named Lazarus was laid at his gate, full of sores, <sup>21</sup>and desiring to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table; yea, even the dogs came and licked his sores. <sup>22</sup>And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and that he was carried away by the angels into Abraham's bosom: and the rich man also died, and was buried. <sup>23</sup>And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. <sup>24</sup>And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am in anguish in this flame. <sup>25</sup>But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things: but now here he is comforted, and thou art in anguish. <sup>26</sup>And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, that they that would pass from hence to you may not be able, and that none may cross over from thence to us. <sup>27</sup>And he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house; <sup>28</sup>for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of

torment. <sup>29</sup>But Abraham saith, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. <sup>30</sup>And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one go to them from the dead, they will repent. <sup>31</sup>And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, if one rise from the dead (ASV 1901).

Clearly the rich man was in a torment of fire and pain from which there was no escape. It is important to see the effect of his decisions on earth while in his body. He chose not to follow God but himself and his own desires. He was put into an environment in which he could not escape and it would inflict pain associated with fire on him with no end. Jesus further quotes Isaiah with the term *the worm never dies and the fire never goes out*. God is describing the end of the Tribulation and the beginning of the Messianic Kingdom through Isaiah where He speaks of observing the dead. This is how God concludes His prophecies through the Prophet Isaiah.

Isaiah 66:22-24

<sup>22</sup>For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith Jehovah, so shall your seed and your name remain. <sup>23</sup>And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith Jehovah. <sup>24</sup>And they shall go forth, and look upon the dead bodies of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.

Isaiah describes the doom of the wicked after the battle of Armageddon and Israelites who are returning home to Jerusalem will look on the dead corpses of the ones who transgressed against the Lord in that final battle. These were the ones who were killed in battle assaulting Jerusalem in the last segment of the Campaign of Armageddon (Zechariah 12:2-9; 14:2-4; Revelation 16:13-16; 19:11-21). The scene depicted here is what Jesus describes also as the final destination of all sinners with their consignment to Gehenna. It is there where *their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched*. This is strong imagery where dead bodies left unburied in the burning garbage dump outside Jerusalem called Gehenna shall have decaying bodies rife with maggots that burn but never get consumed and the maggots do not die. Making all this worse is the fact that the rich man is experiencing complete consciousness of this state forever.

JESUS FINAL WORDS

Mark 9:49-50

<sup>49</sup>For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt. <sup>50</sup>Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another (KJV).

Each person shall be salted with fire so to speak. The believer's works will be tested with fire at the bema seat of Christ, which Paul describes in I Corinthians chapter 3. Each sacrifice made in the temple was to be seasoned with salt (see Leviticus 2:13). To salt a sacrifice meant to purify it. Fire also purifies that to which it is applied or it perishes. This is a vivid description of the believer's works judged at the bema seat. Jesus then implores

His apostles to keep their salt. Salt is a preservative in that it will combat deterioration. The illustration here He is making to them is to not lose faith in God as the Pharisees and Scribes had. The Pharisees and scribes advocated a formal, legalistic rabbinic religion in place of the true religion proclaimed in the Old Testament in the name of the Lord. Thus by and large the salt had lost its flavor in the religious life of Israel. Many “sons of the kingdom” would be cast out (Matthew 8:12). The implication is real clear just as salt can lose its saltiness and cannot be restored, people can have no effect on promulgating the truth from one generation to the next. That is, if they do not have a personal relationship with God and pass it on as truth they cannot be restored. Some will become hardened because they just do not believe and will be like salt that lost its saltiness. Finally if there is no salt within us (fruits of the Holy Spirit) we cannot be effective for God. We will not be the salt of the earth (Matthew 5:13) and our speech will not have been seasoned with Grace, with salt (Colossians 4:6). In other words we will be useless for use by God for His work.

NEXT WEEK: MARK: JESUS CONTRADICTS THE PHARISEES ABOUT THEIR TEACHING OF MARRIAGE & DIVORCE

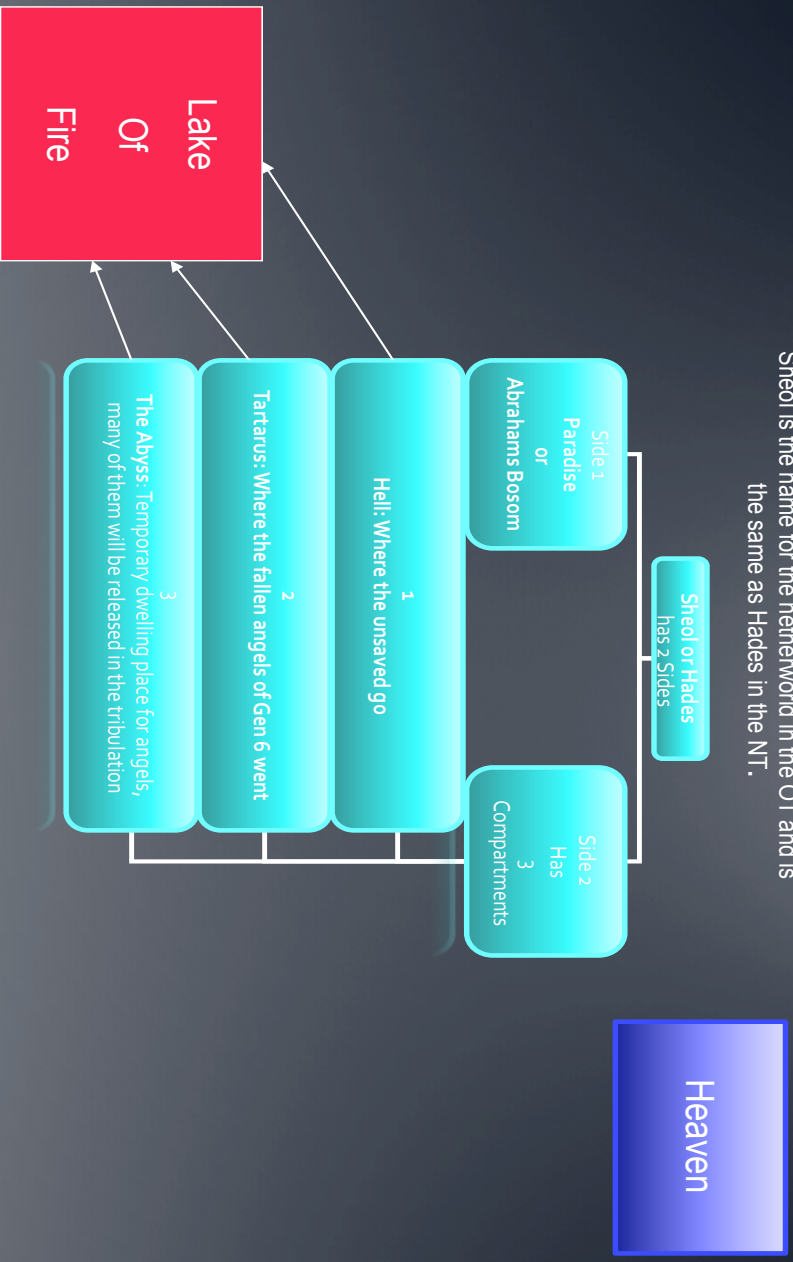
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### Spirit World Destinations after Death

Sheol is the name for the netherworld in the OT and is the same as Hades in the NT.



When an Old Testament Saint died, his body went into the ground and his soul went to Abraham's Bosom because the sacrifices were insufficient to get him into Heaven. They were sufficient to keep him out of Hell. Their sins have to be removed the same way ours are; by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Old Testament Unsaved who died went to Hell. When Christ died he went to Hades (side 1); not Hell to free the captives. Today when a New Testament Saint dies his body goes into the ground and his soul goes straight to Heaven. The unbelievers go straight to Hell. After the 1,000 year reign of Christ on the earth (Millennium), the inhabitants of Hell, Tartarus, and the Abyss will be cast into the **Lake of Fire**. (The Greek word is Gehenna which means a burning garbage dump)