

Mike Parsons on 'Hell'

These transcript points are a continuance of our revision on 'Is there a Hell?'

VIDEO: "Hell? Journey Testimony Part 1"¹

(By: Mike Parsons)

SHEOL/HADES: "The other words are Sheol, which is the place of the grave or the pit, literally. If you go back into the original Hebrew, it says, 'grave' or 'pit'. If you go into a concordance or, say Strong's Concordance of that word, it will say 'grave', 'pit', and then add 'hell' on the end. Hell is put there because of the understanding of the interpreter, not because it was there in the original. It had no Hebrew meaning of 'torment' or 'punishment' or anything else. It was where people went after they died, to Sheol, the place of the dead, the grave. It could be just the grave. In context, "They went into the grave, so we buried them in the grave." Putting someone in the grave isn't putting them in Hell.

The pit obviously has a meaning which is deeper. So, if they're not just being put into the earth, they're going down under the Earth, somewhere. So, that you have that concept. But again, you don't get the concept of punishment or torment or torture. That was added later. When the Hebrews started to take on Greek culture and the Greek language, they started to adopt some other thoughts about it.

Then you've got the obvious Hades, which is the Greek equivalent of Sheol. That literally means a place of being out of view, out of sight. So, when you die, you're no longer in view to the real world. That's the root meaning. But we then have added on to it, obviously, Hades being the Greek god of the underworld. So that again, has this sort of picture of a mythology to it."²

GEHENNA: "Jesus used Gehenna, I think, 13 times. Virtually every time he spoke of Gehenna, he was talking to the religious leaders or the Jewish people, who were opposing him or arguing with him, and everything else. Literally, it's a place, the Valley of Hinnom, outside of Jerusalem. It was their rubbish dump and it was on fire. It had been burning for hundreds of years, because all the rubbish was in there, continually burning. (It's like our tyre mountains today. Some of them are on fire and they just can't possibly put them out.)

It was also a place where you know the rubbish decomposed. So, it was a place where they described it as, where the fire and the worms were operating.

And that has a history. If you go back into history, where there was child sacrifice, where the Valley of Hinnom was seen as a bad place because of what they did there. Even the Hebrews sacrificed their children to Molech in the Valley of Hinnom. In Jeremiah, it prophesied that this would be a place where this fire would burn and the worm would eat the [dead] bodies. So, Jesus then uses this place, which everyone knew. Everyone in the New Testament who heard Jesus talk about Gehenna, knew exactly what he meant – this was the physical rubbish dump. So, if you said to someone, like the Jewish leaders, you're gonna end up in Gehenna, it was totally offensive to them, of course. So, he warned them, physically, "If you do not change your perspective on this and follow me, you're gonna end up in the rubbish dump, and (literally), they did. Some of those who Jesus spoke to (literally) were crucified in AD 70 in the destruction of Jerusalem. They were put into the rubbish dump. Hundreds of thousands of them.

So, that was physical. It was nothing to do with the future, 2,000 years later. Jesus meant it for them then, not now. That's what he meant. It was like, "This is where you can end up." Some of it was very figurative of [their] whole lives. "You think you're so righteous, but your self-righteousness is gonna end up...you're gonna end up losing your life." So when Jesus said, "What does it benefit if you gain the whole world, but lose your soul." That's what he was saying to them. "What's the benefit of all your kingdom stuff, of all your self-righteous religious beliefs, if you're gonna end up in the rubbish dump." So, he was talking about the Kingdom now, (now for them) he was talking to them about what was going

1 – www.youtube.com/watch?v=VZGMC7k_FXU [0:56-40:02]

2 – [5:50- 7:40]

on then. So, if they were operating in the Kingdom, and he said, “I’m going to take the Kingdom away from you lot, because you’re not producing [good] works and I’m gonna give it to a people who will. And he said, “Well actually, the wrath of the Covenant is coming. The consequences of you breaking covenant are the curses of the [Old] Covenant of Deuteronomy 28 which were horrendous.”³

HELL: “So those are the four different words that are translated ‘Hell’, and none of them actually mean Hell, in the concept that we have in evangelical Christianity today. If you go back to the early church – and this is so my journey in this was, “Okay, I’m looking at the words. The words don’t mean ‘hell’”. We’ve just put out a blog post on this, ‘The Hell Delusion’⁴ and we’re getting a lot of flack’ as you can imagine, from more evangelical circles and religious people, which is ‘par for the course’ – but just looking at the words. Then you’ve got to look at Jesus’s words and his using things that people have interpreted Hell, like parables, and see what was he talking about? So when Jesus used Hades, what was he meaning? Some of them are just multiples [of] the same story in the different Gospels. There’s only one story, but it’s spread over two or three Gospels. So, the number of uses isn’t really different, it’s just applying to the same thing.

So, Jesus told parables and he told parables to represent spiritual principles, that had a meaning. One of them has been taken to apply to the life after death, which would be Lazarus and the rich man. So the rich man, he’s in Hades, although it doesn’t say that. Again it doesn’t use the word Hell or Hades, it just describes the rich man who is in torment, and then it describes the poor man who’s in Abraham’s bosom. Now, what Jesus was saying was, he was trying to illustrate the reality of rich and poor, and what they were supposed to do with poor people. They weren’t supposed to take all the money for themselves and not help anybody. He was making a point.”⁵

(Permission to quote Mike Parsons received on 20-7-2020)

NOTE: This transcript has been edited to remove extraneous text and repetitions to make it readable.

MORE INFORMATION: “What is Salvation? '22 – An Important Recap” – [LINK](#)

MIKE’S BOOK: “My Journey Beyond Beyond” – [LINK](#)

MIKE’S BLOG: List of articles – [LINK](#)

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(Readers will need to look up for themselves any scriptures alluded to in this document)

3 – [7:56-11:15]

4 – freedomarc.blog/2018/03/03/the-hell-delusion/

5 – [12:30-14:32]