


# THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS!

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**NOTE:** - All Bible texts are taken from the King James Version; and the compiler has supplied all emphasis throughout this Study Document.

Luke 16:19 - 31: - "There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in **hell** (Greek "hades") he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 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 tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that [would come] from thence. Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

 This passage is traditionally interpreted as "*proving conclusively*" that the *supposedly* departed souls or spirits of the dead are conscious, and when we die, we all go to our eternal reward, which for the wicked is to be cast into Hell (that is "Hades") which is the place of fiery punishment; whereas for the righteous they go straight to heaven. We shall now demonstrate clearly, that the traditional understanding of this passage is false, and is wresting the Scriptures.

There are two possible ways one can view this passage: -

1.] If we view this as a literal story, it is teaching that the dead shall receive their eternal reward at either the Resurrection of the Just or Unjust. We shall clearly establish this point from many plain texts of the Bible, and thus, this passage gives **no support at all** for the traditional belief that we all go to our eternal reward at death.

2.] It is a parable used by Jesus to teach certain spiritual truths, which again gives **no support at all** to the traditional belief that we all go to our eternal reward at death.

## VIEW NO. 1 – A LITERAL STORY: -

- The Biblical writers teach that there shall be the Resurrection of the Just and Unjust, when the dead shall be awakened from "*the sleep of death*" [Psalms 13:3] to receive their eternal rewards.  
Acts 24:15: - "And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, **that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.**"

John 5:28 & 29: - "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which **all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth**; they that have done good, **unto the resurrection of life**; and they that have done evil, **unto the resurrection of damnation.**"

Daniel 12:2: - “And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, **some to everlasting life, and some to shame [and] everlasting contempt.**”

**NOTE**: - There are going to be two resurrections from the dead – the Just first, and **then** the Unjust. This is exactly the order we have found as outlined in the above three passages of Scripture. And comparing the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus, Lazarus is rewarded first, and **then** the Rich Man.

### **LAZARUS' ETERNAL REWARD: -**

- In Luke 16:22, we find that Lazarus after his death, is carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. When do the angels gather the righteous for Christ's Kingdom? At the end of the world when Christ comes again.  
Matthew 13:39 - 43: - “The enemy that sowed them is the devil; **the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels.** As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; **so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels,** and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. **Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.** Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.”

Matthew 24:30 & 31: - “And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see **the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.**”

When will the righteous sit down with Abraham? When they enter into God's Eternal Kingdom.

Luke 13:28 & 29: - “There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, **when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God,** and you [yourselves] thrust out. And they shall come from the east, and [from] the west, and from the north, and [from] the south, **and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.**”

When do the righteous inherit God's Kingdom? At the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming of Jesus Christ, when he shall sit upon the throne of his glory.

Matthew 25:31 & 34: - “**When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him,** then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: ... **Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.**”

Luke 21:25 - 31: - “And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. **And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.** And he spake to them a parable; Behold the fig tree, and all the trees; When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. **So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.**”

2 Timothy 4:1: - “I charge [thee] therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead **at his appearing and his kingdom.**”

Is it any wonder that Jesus said that the righteous would be rewarded at the Resurrection of the Just?

Luke 14:14: - “And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: **for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.**”

## THE RICH MAN'S REWARD: -

- In Luke 16:22 & 23 we find that the Rich Man dies and is buried, and then he finds himself in **Hell** (Greek "hades"), in fire and torments.

The only time **Hell** (Greek "hades") could be a place of fire and torment, is when it (that is, "hades") is cast into the Lake of Fire at the Day of Judgment for the wicked, when the wicked dead have been resurrected to receive their eternal reward, at which time the dead shall stand before God's Great White Throne to be judged. And **then Hell** (Greek "hades") shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, with all those whose names are not found written in the Book of Life.

Revelation 20:11-15: - "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. **And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is [the book] of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell (Greek "hades") delivered up the dead which were in them:** and they were judged every man according to their works. **And death and hell (Greek "hades") were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.** And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

- The above proposition has to be the truth, because Jesus himself plainly stated that the whole body is to be cast into **Hell** (Greek "Geenna").

Matthew 5:29 & 30: - "And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast [it] from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not [that] **thy whole body should be cast into hell** ("Geenna"). And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast [it] from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not [that] **thy whole body should be cast into hell** ("Geenna)."

**NOTE:** - Jesus said that the whole body would be cast into **Hell** ("Geenna") for punishment, and that is why various body parts are mentioned in this passage in Luke 16, concerning the Rich Man in Luke 16:23 & 24. This then points us to the time of the Resurrection of the Unjust in Revelation 20:12 & 13 when the wicked receive their eternal reward.

- This truth is further reinforced by the fact, that the wicked are **reserved** to the Day of Judgment to be punished. And thus, they are **NOT** punished when they die.

Job 21:30: - "**That the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction?** they shall be brought forth to the day of wrath."

2 Peter 2:9: - "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, **and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.**"

2 Peter 3:7: - "But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, **reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.**"

- We also note that Jesus said that the wicked would be cast into the furnace of fire, **at** the end of the world, and **NOT** at the time of their deaths.

Matthew 13:40 - 42: - "As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; **so shall it be in the end of this world.** The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; **And shall cast them into a furnace of fire:** there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."

Matthew 13:49 & 50: - "**So shall it be at the end of the world:** the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, **and shall cast them into the furnace of fire:** there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."

- Concerning the common misconception based upon this passage that the patriarch Abraham's soul **supposedly** departed to heaven when he died, the following Biblical facts are relevant on this point.

Abraham when he died was gathered unto his people.

Genesis 25:8: - **"Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full [of years]; and was gathered to his people."**

Comparing the above statement concerning the time when Abraham actually died, with an earlier statement made by the Lord himself to Abram in the Book of Genesis, we find that the expression "*and was gathered to his people*" means "*thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace*". Abraham at his death was to be gathered to his forefathers who had died previously before him.

Genesis 15:15: - **"And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age."**

The above two common Hebrew expressions referring to one's death, are also described in another common Hebrew expression in the following statement concerning the death of king David, who was "*to sleep with thy fathers*".

2 Samuel 7:12: - **"And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom."**

☞ These are all common Hebrew euphemisms meaning simply "*to die as your forefathers have died*".

Abraham's father and forefathers were idolaters.

Joshua 24:2: - **"And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, **Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, [even] Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods.**"**

The New Testament Scriptures make it clear that idolaters cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, but shall have their part in the Lake of Fire and Brimstone.

1 Corinthians 6:9 & 10: - **"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, **nor idolaters**, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, **shall inherit the kingdom of God.**"**

Revelation 21:8: - **"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, **and idolaters**, and all liars, **shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.**"**

☞ Therefore, Abraham's *supposed* immortal soul could not go to heaven when he died, other wise, we are forced to draw the absurd conclusion that the *supposed* immortal souls of Abraham's idolatrous forefathers would also be in heaven, because wherever Abraham was gathered to, it was to be the same place as his forefathers were gathered to at the time of their deaths. But the popular theory that leads to such an absurd conclusion must be abandoned.

☞ Clearly then, if this is a literal story, it is pointing forward to the time of the two resurrections of the dead – of the Just and the Unjust, as the time when people are to be given their eternal reward.

## VIEW NO. 2 – IT IS A PARABLE: -



If this story is a parable, what are the spiritual truths that Jesus wished to convey?

- In Luke 16:19, we find the expression “***There was a certain rich man***” is used to introduce this story. In Luke 12:16; 13:6; 14:16; 15:11; 16:1 & 20:9, this same expression or “***a certain man***” is used to introduce several acknowledged parables, and therefore it is consistent to interpret this expression in Luke 16:19 to be an introduction to a another parable.
- Earlier in this same chapter of Luke 16 Jesus warned that no person could serve God and mammon. The Pharisees who were covetous, on hearing this teaching of Jesus’, derided him. Jesus then rebuked them for justifying what God considered to be an abomination (that is, covetousness).  
Luke 16:13 - 15: - “No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. **Ye cannot serve God and mammon. And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him.** And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: **for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.**”

Jesus then tells the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, to illustrate the following truth found in the Book of Proverbs.

Proverbs 11:4: - “**Riches profit not in the day of wrath: but righteousness delivereth from death.**”

- This parable also teaches the solemn truth, that there is **NO** probation after death, and that when we die, our eternal destiny is fixed, this being the great gulf between the Rich Man and Lazarus found in Luke 16:26.
- The final spiritual truth that Jesus wanted to convey in this parable, is the fact that if a person does not hear Moses and the prophets (that is, what we call today the Old Testament Scriptures), they will not be persuaded to believe though one should rise from the dead. Which of course is exactly what happened to the Pharisees in the days of Christ. Because they did not understand correctly the Old Testament writings, they could not accept Jesus as being the Christ, or believe that he rose from the dead. Thus they will be lost, and share the same eternal reward of the Rich Man in the parable.