

# The Rich Man and Lazarus

Luke 16:19-31

This is a parable that is not intended to advance the theory of the immortality of the soul, which said theory was first introduced by satan in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:3-5) and taught thereafter by his agents, the religionists of this world, to this very day.

At the time that this parable was spoken, all who had died were still dead and would have to remain dead until the last days, which Paul describes as the last trump (1 Cor. 15:52). This is not to be confused with the trumpet call of the Seventh Angel mentioned in Revelation 10:7, for by this time the final war will already have been fought because Yahshua<sup>1</sup> has complete control of the earth which is symbolically depicted by Him having His right foot on the sea and His left foot on the land. The last trump means that the last and only call has been sounded for the Heavenly Class. At this time the 144,000 would be sealed, or all accounted for. Those who had died would now be resurrected and those who were to make up the Remnant of this number and were still alive had already met with YAHWEH'S<sup>2</sup> approval and had been sealed. Revelation 6:9-11:

9 And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:

10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?

11 And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.

All of these had to remain in the grave until 1913 when their number was sealed. Therefore neither a heavenly nor earthly resurrection had taken place at this time, for John stated years later while recording the events in the life of Yahshua in John 3:13:

And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.

This means that none of the Heavenly Class had as yet been resurrected, and as for the Earthly Class of those who died before Yahshua shed His blood, Acts 2:29 informs us that David was still dead at this time as was Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (John 8:52), and at Paul's time the promise of a better resurrection, mentioned in Hebrews 11:35, was still in the future.

With proof given that both of the characters mentioned in this parable were still dead, a literal interpretation becomes impossible. Both Abraham and Lazarus did not exist at this time and if they did not exist, one who did not exist could not be speaking to the other who also did not exist.

We will now direct our attention to the parable of the rich man and Lazarus.

Luke 16:19:

There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day.

The rich man mentioned pictures a class of people who because of an overabundance of material wealth consider themselves far superior to the poor of the earth and a cut above all of the others of mankind, for in this unjust system, money is the answer to everything. Ecclesiastes 10:19, in *The Jerusalem Bible* (J.B.), states:

But meals are made for laughter. Wine gives joy to life. Money is the answer to everything.

These are not seeking a righteous kingdom, but love their lives as they are. Yahshua says in John 12:25, *Revised*

*Standard Version (R.S.V.):*

He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

Luke 16:20, 21:

20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,

21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

Lazarus pictures the very poor of the earth. The sores represent their agonizing, humiliating condition. They are also not acceptable in the circles of the rich as though they were unclean. These receive all of their sustenance from the rich, for the rich have it all. The crumbs falling from the rich man's table tells us that it is not the intention nor is it the desire of the rich man to see that this poor man gets what he needs, but he is fed more by accident, which pictures an unavoidable situation. The unavoidable situation is that the poor must be paid something if they are to continue to keep alive and work for the rich, that they may produce more wealth for them.

The dogs licking his sores represents the depth of mental and spiritual degradation that he has sunk to, believing himself to be below the human standard, which would place him on a level with the animals. Man, who is created in YAHWEH'S image, is a *god*, and he was meant to hold his noble head high. Psalm 82:6:

I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High.

He was meant to have dominion over the animal kingdom so that all animals would recognize him as lord and master and they would seek and receive their security, love and comfort from man, and not man from the animals as is apparent in this verse; for the dogs are licking his sores. This means that this is now the level of his association and source of comfort.

Luke 16:22:

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.

A true friend is one who will stick with you no matter what circumstances arise, providing, of course, that both parties are honorable in their intentions. The love of women may be fickle, but that of a true friend persists. David had such a friend. His name was Jonathan, the son of king Saul. When YAHWEH blessed David because of his zeal for his GOD and he became a national hero, king Saul became envious and tried to kill him. He became David's enemy. Continuously Jonathan proved his love for David by warning him and telling him to hide himself. He also proved this by speaking to his father on David's behalf, proving the merits of David to his father and bringing them together finally, after Saul swore that he would not kill David. They fought the enemies of YAHWEH side by side until Jonathan was slain. These words of lamentation are recorded in 2 Samuel 1:26 which states:

I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women.

Just such a friend to YAHWEH was Abraham, for he obeyed his GOD implicitly and gave his utmost to honor HIM at all times. Isaiah 41:8 has this to say:

But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend.

(See also 2 Chronicles 20:7 and James 2:23.)

Abraham, who was the forefather of the Children of Israel, typifies YAHWEH who is the GOD and FATHER of Israel. Romans 4:16:

Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all [or those who employ all of the attributes of YAHWEH as true children].

Within man's bosom is his heart, and YAHWEH employs the heart to represent the seat of motivation (Jer. 20:12; 24:7).

Within Abraham's bosom was a heart that cherished YAHWEH. He proved this by obeying YAHWEH'S voice and offering back as a sacrifice to YAHWEH his only begotten son through Sarah, whom YAHWEH had promised would be the seed of blessings. Genesis 21:12 states:

And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called.

(See also Genesis 22:15-18.)

The parable goes on to say that Lazarus died and was carried by the Angels to Abraham's bosom. This means that he was placed into the innermost recesses, containing the heart of a man that had proven his devotion to YAHWEH. He was placed in the bosom containing the heart of a man that cherished and loved YAHWEH above all. And this means that Lazarus was in line to receive the blessings promised to Abraham along with Abraham.

The rich man died and was buried--period. This means that this is the end and final reward of all those who have proven themselves to be selfish and self-centered, those who have no time for YAHWEH and HIS Purpose for mankind. Many of these men are active members of what they call christian congregations. But this is a mere decoy to impress and thereby deceive an ignorant and gullible population. Concerning this self-willed, egotistical and high-minded class of people, Yahshua has this to say in Matthew 23:5 which states:

But all their works they do for to be seen of men....

These men *use* religion to serve *themselves* and are not at all interested in finding or doing the Will of YAHWEH, the GOD of Israel--the ALMIGHTY.

The religionists of this world love to have these rich and influential men in their congregations more so than any of the average flocks, for it raises the status of their so-called church. This, in turn, will influence more members. And with the gifts from the rich coupled with the increase in donations brought about by the increase in membership, they engage in a very brisk and rewarding business. If they were truly interested in bringing people to the "Lord Jesus Christ" as they claim, they would find a way of doing it without cost, for this is what YAHWEH intended. Revelation 22:17, R.S.V., states:

The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come." And let him who hears say, "Come." And let him who is thirsty come, let him who desires take the water of life without price.

(See also Isaiah 55:1-3 and Revelation 21:6.)

The rich man uses religion and the religionists for his gain and the religionists use the rich man. Thus the service of YAHWEH is reduced to a remunerative contest and YAHWEH'S Name is reproached throughout the earth. Correctly did Yahshua speak to the religionists of His day, who were the prototypes of today's clergy, when He stated these words recorded in Matthew 21:13:

It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.

Sin is a transgression of the Law, the righteous Law of YAHWEH. Paul states in Romans 6:23:

For the wages of sin is *death*; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

And as is recorded in Ezekiel 18:4, the Prophet, under inspiration, stated that the soul (life) that sins, it shall *die* (R.S.V.). Furthermore, Ezekiel 33:11 states that YAHWEH has no pleasure in the *death* of the wicked. There is only one reward for the willfully wicked and that is *death*. YAHWEH stated this in the very beginning to Adam and Eve. Genesis 3:19:

In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

Luke 16:23:

And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

*Hell, hades* (in the Greek) and *sheol* (in the Hebrew) all have the same meaning--grave, or pit. Hell is also used figuratively representing the world of the dead. Whether individually or collectively, all in hell are dead. Revelation 20:13 states:

And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

This means that all those who had been overcome by man's greatest enemy, death, would be released from the power of death by a resurrection from the dead and a restoration to life. And hell, which is the grave, is symbolically opened to free the dead which are in it. Revelation 20:14 has this to say:

And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

The lake of fire symbolizes utter destruction, for no one could live in a literal lake of fire, and the second death is the death from which there is no returning. All those who willfully sin after they have been resurrected from the first death will have proven themselves willfully wicked and there will be no room for lawlessness in an enlightened and Holy Kingdom. Those who are thrown into the lake of fire are all those who do not meet with YAHWEH'S approval, symbolically referred to as not having their name written in the Book of Life.

Yahshua the Messiah was in hell, and if hell is a place of burning torment, why should YAHWEH send HIS loving and obedient Son to this place of torture, which the religionists of this world claim is reserved for the wicked only? Psalm 16:9, 10 states:

9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory [soul] rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope.  
10 For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

An explanation of this is given in Acts 2:26-32.

The verses recorded in the Gospel of Mark, Chapter 9:43-48 would seem to lend credence to the religionists of this world in their acceptance of a literal fiery hell. Mark 9:43-48:

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.

However, these religionists, because of their apathy, and not really caring whether they are teaching the Word of YAHWEH correctly or not, fail to tell you that the word translated *hell* in these verses by many English translations is

an entirely different word and is not *hades* at all but is *gehenna*, which Yahshua uses figuratively as a place of everlasting destruction. For what could live or be restored to life in a place of continual flame? Or what man could be raised up if the worms were continually feeding on his carcass and what absurd type of reasoning could accept, without reservation, the existence of literal worms or maggots in this continual flame? Benjamin Wilson, in his translation of the original Greek text titled *The Emphatic Diaglott*, concerning the word translated *hell* in these scriptures, has this to say: "The Greek word translated *hell* in the common version, occurs 12 times. It is the Grecian mode of spelling the Hebrew words which are translated, 'the valley of Hinnom.' This valley was also called *Tophet*, a detestation, an abomination. Into this place were cast all kinds of filth, with the carcasses of beasts, and the unburied bodies of criminals who had been executed. Continual fires were kept to consume these. Sennacherib's army of 185,000 men were slain here in one night. Here children were also burnt to death in sacrifice to Molech. *Gehenna*, then, as occurring in the New Testament, symbolizes *death* and *utter destruction*, but in no place signifies a place of eternal torment." The carcasses that were not thrown directly into the flames, but happened to land on a cooler ledge, were subsequently devoured by maggots. Thus, these verses are neatly, correctly and satisfactorily interpreted and it silences the incoherent chattering of the religionists of this world. That which Yahshua was very clearly demonstrating was the fact that these people were facing everlasting destruction, for where they were going, there could be no life. The translation of these verses by James Moffatt is herein inserted for the benefit of the sincere student who is reaching out to find his GOD. Mark 9:43-48, *The James Moffatt Translation*:

43 If your hand is a hindrance to you, cut it off: better be maimed and get into Life, than keep your two hands and go to Gehenna, to the fire that is never quenched.  
45 If your foot is a hindrance to you, cut it off: better get into Life a cripple, than keep your two feet and be thrown into Gehenna.  
47 If your eye is a hindrance to you, tear it out: better get into God's Realm with one eye, than keep your two eyes and be thrown into Gehenna,  
48 where their worm never dies and the fire is never put out.

These are not the only verses where *gehenna* is mistranslated as *hell*. The following list of verses should all read *gehenna* in place of *hell*: Matthew 5:22-30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15, 33; Luke 12:5 and James 3:6.

Luke 16:23:

And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

The word translated *hell* in this verse is actually *hades* and is so translated in most other versions of the Scriptures. This word is not *gehenna*. It is not to be associated with a place of continual flames and worms that do not die. The word means grave, or pit--*hades* in the Greek, *sheol* in the Hebrew. To the living, the thought of everlasting destruction is a dreadful anticipation. Could there be any greater cause of agony to one than to know that soon one must die, and that others will walk over his grave throughout eternity and that he will never again be able to join them? Could there be any greater punishment for the wicked, for those who will not obey the All-righteous YAHWEH ELOHIM? Would it benefit them in any way if they were literally burned in flames throughout eternity with no chance of redemption? NO, it would not. Would it honor YAHWEH, proving that HE is a Just GOD and that the wicked had it coming to them? NO, it would not, for these individuals did not ask to be created. They find themselves here without choice. They have made no contract with YAHWEH to obey HIM. Therefore, the true course of justice would be to allow them to leave as the free moral agents that they are. They did not exist before they came into the world and they will return to non-existence, "for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Gen. 3:19). To torture someone throughout eternity because he does not go along with YAHWEH'S Purpose for mankind (righteous and loving as it is) would constitute cruel and unjust punishment. It would be a sentence that could not proceed from YAHWEH who is a GOD of love, justice, wisdom and power. Such a doctrine could only originate from the father of all liars, satan the devil himself, and those who teach it are serving satan whether they realize this fact or not. It is the purpose of satan to turn all creatures against YAHWEH, and how more effective could his campaign be than if he could prove that YAHWEH is a cruel and unjust GOD!

In order for YAHWEH to illustrate to us the folly of these headstrong, incorrigible individuals in their choice not to obey YAHWEH, HE portrays them as being conscious in death, realizing the disastrous course they have chosen and

the everlasting judgment that has been poured upon them. An example of this is found in Isaiah 14:9-11, wherein the dead rulers of this world, all of them, are in hell to be joined later by their king, satan the devil. Isaiah 14:9-11, J.B. :

9 On your account Sheol beneath us is astir to greet your arrival. To honor you he rouses the ghosts of all the rulers of the world. He makes all the kings of the nations get up from their thrones.

10 Each has something to say and what they will say to you is this, "So you too have been brought to nothing, like ourselves. You, too, have become like us.

11 Your magnificence has been flung down to Sheol with the music of your harps; underneath you a bed of maggots, and over you a blanket of worms."

The torment mentioned is merely a figurative representation of the heartfelt pain associated with the everlasting death sentence that has been passed upon these selfish, willfully ignorant egotists. Those who are devoted to righteousness and, therefore, meet with YAHWEH'S approval are shown, through this parable, the vast distance (representing an unreachable distance) between Abraham and his Seed, and the seed of the devil. The rich man now recognizes that this poor beggar, Lazarus, whom he considered unworthy to associate with, has met with YAHWEH'S approval, symbolized by seeing him in Abraham's bosom.

In Luke 16:24 YAHWEH reveals to HIS People the hopeless situation that the dead would now feel if they were conscious.

Luke 16:24:

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.

They now recognize and appeal to Abraham for mercy, for it is now Abraham and his Seed that has received YAHWEH'S blessing and is everlastingly established on a firm foundation. The flame pictures the torture of the everlasting death sentence. For Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool the tongue of the rich man would certainly not put out the flames that surrounded him or remove the pain of the everlasting death sentence. YAHWEH represents the heartfelt craving with the words "thirst" or "hunger." Matthew 5:6 states:

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

The water that appeases this craving, or thirst is first placed on the tongue and this sensory organ is the first to feel the sensation of relief. Lazarus dipping his finger in water and placing it on the rich man's tongue also means that the rich man would desire even the most minute measure of blessings from Lazarus, for now Lazarus has been blessed and the rich man is now the beggar.

YAHWEH has decreed that HE shall bring about a complete overturning. Ezekiel 21:26, 27:

26 Thus saith the Lord GOD [YAHWEH]; Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: this shall not be the same: exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high.

27 I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him.

It is Israel who has now inherited everything from YAHWEH. (See also Isaiah 19:25.)

Luke 16:25:

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.

Abraham explains that YAHWEH'S sentence is just, for the rich man obtained all that which he sought for and YAHWEH did not prevent him from obtaining all of his heart's desires. He received all that he craved. He did not receive that which he did not crave, and that was YAHWEH'S approval and blessing which would come about by

seeking and finding the Will of YAHWEH and becoming submissive to that Will.

In sharp contrast Lazarus received none of the world's blessings through wealth. For True Israel does not exert their total effort, nor do they use all of their energy in this direction. And in this system of competition (which is no more than animal behavior), those who try harder seize the advantage over the more conscientious competitors, and these are soon reduced to a position of servitude to the rich.

This does not mean that all poor people are righteously disposed (although Lazarus pictures those who are), but it does show that all who have become demoralized by the invincible power of the ruling rich, will have a full opportunity to live in a system of absolute righteousness where all men will be truly equal.

Luke 16:26, R.S.V. :

And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.

Not only was it now not right to give to the rich man that which he had not sought for throughout his entire life, but it was now *impossible* for him to cross over to regain his former estate, symbolized by the great chasm, or gulf between them. This means that those who are sentenced to death can never cross over and gain life with Abraham and his Seed who are the blessed of the earth. Neither will those who gain life everlasting ever cross over to hell, hades, sheol, or the place of the dead, for YAHWEH makes this impossible by granting them everlasting life.

Luke 16:27, 28:

27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house:  
28 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

That which the rich man is asking for is to give his family that which amounts to more than a full opportunity, to force them by threats of death to do YAHWEH'S Will. YAHWEH forces no one. YAHWEH would not be honored with this type of heart condition for "The eyes of YAHWEH are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry" (Ps. 34:15). YAHWEH looks upon the heart, and those who possess a righteous heart are the True Children of an All-righteous GOD. These honor HIM by freely choosing to do what is just and right, and becoming one with their CREATOR and remaining immovable on HIS side in the controversy that YAHWEH has with these demonized nations (Jer. 25:31).

Luke 16:29:

Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

This shows that having Moses and the Prophets would indicate that they have the entire Word of YAHWEH, for Moses was used to fashion typical Israel and the mystery of YAHWEH'S Purpose is explained by HIS Prophets. They reveal that the Israel of the flesh was merely typical of a far greater Israel of Promise which, when fully established, will fulfill entirely the heart's desire of the righteous, and that this is HIS Kingdom for which HIS Son taught us to pray, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:10, R.S.V.). YAHWEH will give everyone an opportunity to understand the Truth and to make a freewill choice of their own on whether to accept it or reject it. Accepting the Truth with their whole heart means that they have accepted YAHWEH with their whole heart and they become HIS Children and Citizens of HIS Kingdom. These will renounce all worldly ties and give their full allegiance to the New Jerusalem which is in the heavens and is made up of 144,000 Kings and Priests, over which Yahshua is the Head.

Luke 16:30:

And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

The rich man again asks that overwhelming and undeniable evidence be given to his brothers. He does this because

he knows that they are too selfishly occupied with living their own lives to the fullest to ever take the time to study and understand the Truth and to accept it fully without reservations. This is denied him because a righteous heart longs for and seeks after righteousness, and rejoices when he finds Truth and does not reject it. The righteous possess a quality that they themselves choose to possess, for they are free moral agents. This quality is not forced on anyone, for YAHWEH would receive no honor from robots, but only from those who strive for HIS blessing. These make up YAHWEH'S Israel of Promise, which is selected from all races and tongues, for YAHWEH is a Just GOD and shows no partiality toward HIS creatures (Acts 10:34).

If the unrighteous were forcibly gathered into HIS Kingdom, would they later prove to be an honor to YAHWEH? NEVER! In the resurrection from the dead, YAHWEH will, for our sakes, bring back many whom HE knows are truly selfish and wicked, but we do not know this. We reason within ourselves that if all were brought back into HIS beautiful Kingdom, all would be only too glad to have the opportunity to obey YAHWEH and to honor HIM. YAHWEH, who knows the end from the beginning, tells us exactly what is going to happen. In Isaiah 26:10, J.B., HE states:

If favor is shown to the wicked, he does not learn the meaning of integrity. He does evil in the land of uprightness, he fails to see the majesty of YAHWEH.

Many of Israel, while zealously explaining the Scriptures to others, have heard, as I have many times, this remark from them, "You have something in you that I just do not possess." This quality that most do not have is the quality that Israel possesses. This is the quality that leads to everlasting life and everlasting blessings. Yahshua had this to say concerning these two classes of people, recorded in Matthew 13:12 which states:

For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.

Luke 16:31:

And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

As was mentioned previously, Moses and the Prophets refers to the entire Word of YAHWEH, both typified by Israel under the Law given through Moses and the mystery revealed through HIS Prophets in the last days. This offers them the complete Purpose of YAHWEH'S Understanding. If they do not come in by having what should be their heart's desire fulfilled in having the beautiful Purpose of YAHWEH revealed to them, then they are not seeking righteousness. And if they are not, then they are unworthy of being one of Zion's Children, for a wicked heart condition does not change through miracles. It may frighten them momentarily, but the wicked heart does not change - it arises again to pursue its evil course.

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Note: the names of different portions of Satan's organization are not capitalized because we show no respect for Satan's doomed system.

<sup>1</sup>Yahshua, composed of the Names YAH and Hoshua, signifying YAHWEH-Savior in the Hebrew language, and presently known as Jesus from the corrupted Greek version Iesous.

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