

Week 6 - The Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-32)

How does this part of the parable fit into the context of Luke 15 and 16? Quick recap...

1. The Parable of the Found (Luke 15)
 - a. The Found Sheep (Repentant Sinners) vs The 99 Sheep left in the Wilderness (“just” people that need no repentance – Pharisees and Scribes)
 - b. The Found Coin (Repentant Pharisees – like Nicodemus) vs The 9 coins (still in the house – cp. 99 sheep – other Scribes and Pharisees)
 - c. The Found Younger Son (Repentant Sinners) vs The Elder Son (stayed in the house, but also lost - Pharisees and Scribes)
2. The Parable continues into Luke 16
 - a. The Unjust Steward = The Elder Son → also a ‘waster’ 16:1 – like the Younger Son (Luke 15:13)
 - b. He ‘wasted’ his Master’s goods by ‘marking down’ the debt (sins) of his Master’s creditors, and discounting the ‘words’ (bill = gramma (Greek) = Scripture) of his Master. (Pharisees and Scribes did this! Also includes the Lawyers and Sadducees – all guilty of these crimes)
3. Jesus bridges the Parable of the Unjust Steward and the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus with some very important teachings:
 - a. Note that in verse 14 the Pharisees were ‘covetous’ and derided Jesus after hearing about the Unjust Steward → they must have known that “he spoke of them”! (Cp. Luke 20:19)
 - b. Jesus calls out their self-righteousness: vs.15 “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.”
 - c. He continues to relate them to the Elder Son (angry when the Father was rejoicing) and the Unjust Steward (misusing God’s Word and grace) by saying to them “The law and the prophets were until John; since then the good news of the kingdom of God is preached, and every one enters it **violently**.” (v. 16 RSV) This is the behaviour of wicked stewards – abusing others, and using the Law to do so! This is a terrible indictment Jesus levels against the Jewish religious leaders! See Matthew 23 for example! Also, Matthew 24:45-51.
 - d. He reminds them that ALL of God’s word is important – every jot and tittle! (verse 17)
 - e. An example of their mis-use of God’s Word is that they used the Law to justify divorcing their wives “for every cause” (Matthew 19:3). Here Jesus sets them straight in verse 18.

So, this part of the parable (The Rich Man and Lazarus) completes the story that began with the “Lost Sheep” and now tells of the FINAL DESTINATION for the faithful believers (repentant sinners – found sheep, coin, and son = Lazarus) and the unfaithful (the unrepentant, hard hearted, wasters of God’s grace and mercy = The Rich Man)

1. Intro: Key Teaching / Main Points

You only have this life to get it right with God! There are no ‘second chances’ after death!
If you are not moved by the power of God’s Word, then no miracle will have any effect on you!

2. What the Bible teaches about Life after Death

Death is likened to sleep and unconsciousness (Ecclesiastes 9:4-10; 1 Thessalonians 4:14; Acts 13:36)
Hope after death depends on resurrection (Job 14:7-15; 19:25-27; John 11:24; 1 Corinthians 15:12-18)
At Christ’s Judgement Seat some will be accepted, and some rejected. (Daniel 12:2; 2 Corinthians 5:12)

3. This is what the parable is teaching!

This is the Divine ‘reversal’ Principle. It is the here and now (present) verses the promise to come (future)!
See Also: Matthew 20:16 (parable of labourers & pennies); Luke 13:28-30; 1 Corinthians 1:26-29

In Luke 16:19 the rich man = Pharisees/Scribes/Lawyers/Sadducees, and modern-day counterparts! Us?!

Jesus is especially targeting Sadducees; renowned for their wealth, lose living and disbelief of resurrection (See Mark 12:18)! Yet they were supposed to be the Shepherds in Israel → The Sadducee Caiaphas was High Priest!

“purple” – harlot system clothed in purple (Revelation 17:4, 18:12) – also ‘fine linen’ in Revelation 18:12

‘rich man’ – hard to enter Kingdom (Matthew 19:23) & already have received consolation (Luke 6:24)

v20 – Lazarus = Publicans/sinners (Gentile ‘dogs’) and ultimately the believer class (consider the end!)

(Lazarus (Grk) = **Eleazar** (Heb) = El surrounds, protects, helps!) cp. Rich man who ‘helped himself’!

v21 – crumbs – See Matthew 15:27 – also the connection to ‘dogs’ – Lazarus was with Gentiles, and being ignored by the ‘Spiritual Leaders’. They ‘fared sumptuously’ yet would not share. (cp. Matthew 23:13-15)

The organised religion of the Christ’s day was actually HINDERING people from coming to God. That was the ‘rich man’. It is also true today! Christianity (and sometimes our brand of it) does NOT save!!

v22-23 is the big reversal!! (Explained in v 25) – See Luke 6:21-26 – now vs Kingdom

‘Abraham’s bosom’ = secure in the promises made to Abraham! Galatians 3:26-29

Jesus had told the religious leaders that they would see Abraham GO INTO the Kingdom while they were thrust out! (Luke 13:28)

‘Hell’ = hades – the grave! He goes from death in the grave to a ‘living hell’ – tormented with regret and misgivings

Note: This is a picture of the resurrection since the Rich Man later states that if Lazarus goes to his brothers they will believe after being visited by one ‘risen from the dead’. (v. 30)

v 24 – The Rich Man’s pitiful cry. How easy it is to see things in hindsight!!

“Father Abraham” – the Pharisees thought Abraham was their Father – Jesus corrected them! (John 8:39)

Irony: dip..finger..water: Matthew 23:4; Mark 9:41-44 – The Pharisees never moved a finger to help others – not even giving a cup of cold water – so their end was total destruction! (Rich Man now wants comfort from Lazarus!)

This type of torment is described in Revelation 16:10 – God’s judgement on the earth!

v26 – This lifetime is the ONLY time you have to prepare for judgment!! Hebrews 9:27

vs 27-31 – the conclusion.

Note: Josephus gives the names of Annas' five sons as Eleazar, Jonathan, Theophilus, Matthias, and the younger Annas. These were brothers-in-law to Caiaphas the High Priest, who had married Annas’ daughter.

This parable is a picture of the Judgment Seat of Christ:

Lazarus = those accepted, the sheep on the right, the ‘good and faithful’ entering the joy of the Lord, and sitting and eating with Abraham!! Aside: Lazarus also = Jesus (despised and rejected) but later exalted.

Rich Man = those rejected, the goats on the left, weeping and gnashing teeth. No 2nd chance! Luke 13:28

The torment = the lake of fire (Revelation 19:20; 20:10,14,15; 21:8) See also Matthew 13:41-42

This is Europe/the world in turmoil. The rejected are sent back to the world they never left!! They had too much stuff in their house, they looked back, and they will suffer the fate – the great tribulation!

4. Conclusion and Lessons

What were the sins of the rich man? They were his thoughtlessness, his heartless indifference to the needs of others, his self-satisfied ego, his godless existence, and, above all, his complete ignorance of his true spiritual state which he "knew not" (see Revelation 3:17).

Ironically an actual Lazarus did rise from the dead – and as Jesus predicted – they still didn’t believe! In fact they tried to kill him!! (John 11:47; 12:10), and they knowingly denied Jesus’ resurrection! Matthew 28:11-15

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Aside:

1. What the parable is NOT teaching!

The 'traditional' heaven and hell teaching is NOT supported here:

- Immortal souls contacting each other??
- Physical body parts?? Bosoms, eyes, fingers, tongues.
- Can someone in Hell appeal to "God" in Heaven – Would the Devil allow it??
- Where would resurrection and judgment fit in? Decision already made! (1 Cor 15:17-18; 2 Cor 5:10)

Note: No mention of 'Heaven, Hell or Souls', also: Abraham has NOT yet received his reward (Heb. 11:8,13,39,40)

2. Quote from Brother John Thomas, in which he uses this parable:

When the unprofitable servants, are cast into outer darkness, they disperse themselves over the countries of the Dragon, the Beast, and the False Prophet; which, by the judgments coming upon them, are to be kindled into a lake of fire. "Now will I rise, saith YAHWEH; now will I be exalted; now will I lift up myself. And the people shall be as the burnings of lime; as thorns cut up shall they be burned in the fire" — in the European lake of fire (Isa. 33:10- 17). Because of poverty, famine, pestilence, war, and the consciousness of what they have lost by their unfaithfulness, they will find there only "weeping and gnashing of teeth;" and though they may call upon Abraham to send a Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool their tongues, tormented in the flame; were Abraham to reply to them he would not grant their request; but addressing them as sons, would say, Remember that in your lifetimes ye received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and ye are 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" (Luke 16:24). Abraham being in the kingdom when this answer is returned, shows that the place of torment is not accessible at will, nor territorially continuous with Palestine; in other words, the Mediterranean Gulf separates the Lake of Fire countries from the kingdom of Israel. (Bro. John Thomas Eureka Vol 5 – full context below)

11. The Lake of Fire

"The two had been cast alive into the Lake of Fire burning with brimstone".

A lake is a tract of standing water. The lake into which the Beast and the False Prophet are to be cast, is not, however, of water, but of fire. A lake of fire is a tract of land in a state of fiery ignition. A tract of land may be in a state of conflagration, or it may not. When a country is in its normal state, it is Apocalyptically neither a lake of water nor of fire, but simply "the earth," out of which the Beast came; but, if that country be thrown into a state of destructive conflagration, it becomes Apocalyptically a lake of fire. Hence, the lake into which the Beast and False Prophet are cast, is all that tract of country upon which they exist as the secular and ecclesiastical constitution of the inhabitants. To cast such into the lake of fire in which they are destroyed, is to kindle an intense conflagration in the territory of their dominion, which is not extinguished, or quenched, until they are consumed; and the remnant of their subjects, who survive the fiery ordeal, transfer their allegiance to the tormenting and conquering power. The Dragon, the Beast, and the False Prophet, with their officials, are the symbols of what the Lord Jesus in his discourse recorded in Matt. 25., styles "the Devil and his Angels;" for whom *to pur to aionion*, the fire of the aionian judgment has been prepared. The Beast and the False Prophet are symbols of relation, and comparatively modern developments upon the original Dragon-territory. Their essential spiritual attributes **are the same — *Sin-Flesh Iniquity in secular and ecclesiastical manifestation upon the Roman Habitable. This is the Apocalyptic arena***, with a dominion, however, considerably augmented in modern times. The title, "the Devil and his Angels" is, in effect, inscribed upon the Dragon in the words, "the Dragon, the old Serpent, who is Devil and Satan". His origin is enrooted in rebellious human nature, and therefore he is "Devil;" and being always, in whatever form he may exist, the enemy of the Truth and righteousness of the Deity, and the adversary of its adherents, he is "Satan". Upon these principles, the Dragon, the Beast, and the False Prophet, with their Horn-appendages, are "the Devil and his Angels". These are *the fuel* of the fiery lake, or "TOPHET ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared; YAHWEH hath made it deep and large; the pile thereof is fire and much wood: the breath of Yahweh, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it" (Isa. 30:33). The effect of the fire upon the Dragon-king, or power, is its suppression for a thousand years; upon his horns, the appropriation of their kingdoms by the Saints, and the destruction of all armies; but upon the Beast and False Prophet organizations, their utter annihilation and eternal extinction. The things represented by these symbols, however, are not the only wood, or fuel, of the lake of fire. The reader will remember that before the Judgment Seat of Christ in the wilderness of Teman, there were two classes of saints in Christ Jesus constitutionally; the one class consisting of "the called, the chosen, and faithful;" or as Paul styles them in 1 Cor. 3:12, "gold, silver, and precious stones," which are made manifest as such in the day when things are revealed by fire; and the other class consisting of "the called," but not "chosen," because not "faithful," or, as Paul styles them in the same place, "wood, hay, and stubble". The constitution and destiny of these two classes, though originally built upon the same foundation, is widely divergent. The gold, silver, and precious stones, of the New Jerusalem community, are fire proof. Like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, they can dwell with devouring fire, and with the burnings of Olahm; fire having no power over their bodies to singe a hair of their heads, nor to leave its smell upon them. Not so, however, the wood, hay, and stubble. They cannot continue to exist in fire, being in nature destructible. The judicial inspection of his household, having separated the refuse and the vile, from those "accounted worthy to obtain of the *aion*, and of the resurrection;" the rejected, by virtue of the sentence pronounced upon them by Christ, saying, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into the *aionian* fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels," forthwith enter upon their journey to the place of exile or torment; or, in the words of Jesus, "they go away into *aionian* punishment;" while the righteous, by their being quickened, enter into ***aionian* life**. It may be well to remark here, that *aionian* punishment; is so called, not as expressive of its *duration*, but of its *epoch* of execution. The epoch of judgment is the forty years of the Seventh Vial, which precede the commencement of the thousand years. These forty years are *the course* of time, or *aion*, constituting the epoch in which punishment is inflicted upon resurrected individuals, and the living worshippers of the Beast and his Image. It is therefore styled *aionian*, or the punishment pertaining **to the *aion* of judgment**. Neither is *aionian* life so called because of its *duration*, but because it is the life pertaining to a *course*, or *aion*, which *circles* around the kingdom of the Deity. Of this there is to be no end (Luke 1:33); so, therefore, the *course* will be always circling. The life is, consequently, *eternal*; not because the word *aionian* signifies essentially unlimited duration; but because the thing to be possessed, and to which the *course* belongs, is declared to be endless. Hence, *aionian* life is life pertaining to the *aion*, or course of the kingdom into which the Saints, approved

and immortalized at the tribunal, *go away* and enter upon, in its dispensational developments, when they have established the kingdom.

When the wood, hay, and stubble, as unprofitable servants, are cast into outer darkness, they disperse themselves over the countries of the Dragon, the Beast, and the False Prophet; which, by the judgments coming upon them through the second and third angels, are to be kindled into a lake of fire. Thus the fuel of the fiery lake is increased. "Now will I rise, saith YAHWEH; now will I be exalted; now will I lift up myself. And the people shall be as the burnings of lime; as thorns cut up shall they be burned in the fire" — in the European lake of fire (Isa. 33:10-17). Because of poverty, famine, pestilence, war, and the consciousness of what they have lost by their unfaithfulness, they will find there only "weeping and gnashing of teeth;" and though they may call upon Abraham to send a Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool their tongues, tormented in the flame; were Abraham to reply to them he would not grant their request; but addressing them as sons, would say, Remember that in your lifetimes ye received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and ye are 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" (Luke 16:24). Abraham being in the kingdom when this answer is returned, shows that the place of torment is not accessible at will, nor territorially continuous with Palestine; in other words, the Mediterranean Gulf separates the Lake of Fire countries from the kingdom of Israel. They are the countries invaded by the King of kings upon the white horse with his hosts of the heaven, styled, in ch. 14:10, "the holy angels and the Lamb;" in whose presence the countries are kindled into flame; and the resurrected exiles, and the worshippers of the Beast, are all tormented with fire and brimstone; and made to drink of the unmixed wine of the wrath of the Deity, poured out into the cup of his indignation. Thus "Death and Hades," or the condemned resurrected exiles, are cast into the lake of fire, which is to them "the Second Death;" for by the fiery judgments of the lake, death and corruption overtake them a second time, and their "sorer punishment" is consummated according to their works (ch. 20:13-15; 21:8; Heb. 10:26-29).

Such is the locality and the fuel of the lake of fire; the fire itself that consumes the wood, hay, and stubble, or "the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolators, and all liars" (ch. 21:8), is the burning anger of YAHWEH'S *Name*, as it appears in Isaiah 30:27, saying, "Behold, the Name of Yahweh cometh from far, his anger burning, and the burden heavy; his lips are full of indignation, and his tongue as a devouring fire. And he shall cause his glorious voice to be heard, and shall show the lighting down of his arm, with the indignation of anger, and the flame of a devouring fire, with scattering, and tempest, and hailstones". As Paul, therefore, truly saith, "our God is a consuming fire".

Such is the fire — the anger and indignation of the Deity, descending with consuming effect upon the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction, in the form of pestilence, famine, and war. The furnace from which this stream of devouring fire is poured forth, is the capital of the Great King, "whose fire" saith the prophet, "is in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem". From thence, when he hath established himself there,

"he will send a fire into Magog, and among them that dwell confidently in the isles; and they shall know that I am YAHWEH" (Ezek. 39:6). He that rides the white horse, and the hosts of the heaven riding the same troops, are "the Angel having power over fire" (ch. 14:18), whose face is as it were the sun, and his feet, planted upon the sea and upon the earth, are as pillars of fire (ch. 10:1,2) which he mingles with the sea (ch. 15:2). Thus, "the beast is slain, his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame" (Dan. 7:11).

t *Aionian* life, like *aionian* judgment and *aionian* fire does not of itself denote the duration of the life, judgment or fire, even though the word has been rendered eternal and "everlasting". Rather it indicates that the things denoted (judgment, fire or life) are those relating or pertaining to the *aion* or age defined. For example, it is said of Sodom and Gomorrah that they are "set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire" (Jude 7). But that fire is not still burning. It burned, and continued to burn until its work, was accomplished in the age of judgment incidental to it, and the cities were entirely consumed. So with the "everlasting judgment" and "everlasting fire" and "everlasting punishment" of the future (Matt. 25:41,46): the word in each case is *aionion*, and denotes the fire, punishment or life, "pertaining to the age". The judgment will continue until all are brought into subjection to Christ; the fire will burn until all that is to be consumed is destroyed, but the life of the age will never end because it is immortal. Paul wrote: "To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and *immortality* (shall be given) eternal life", or the life of the age which will be immortal, or everlasting life. Where the present tense is used as indicating the present possession of life, the same principles should be observed. Those who perform the will of Yahweh and His Son "have it" in the sense that it is promised by God who will perform, and whose promise is so sure (and eternal life is a matter of promise — 1 John 2:25),

that He "calleteth those things which be not as though they were" (Rom. 4:17). Therefore, such expressions as John 17:3: "This *is* life eternal that they might know Thee . . ." can signify, this is the basis upon which life eternal will be granted. Similar forms of expression are found in the Word. Example: "This *is* condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness . . ." This is the basis of condemnation etc. Again: "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him. . ." Rather, this is the basis upon which the work of God will proceed, that ye believe on him. Again John 12:50: "His commandment is life everlasting" — His commandment is the basis upon which life aionian will be given. Some have advocated that *aionian zoe*, eternal life, is today possessed in some way, and in pressing this theory beyond the limits of Scripture, have made havoc of faith. See further comments in Vol. 1, p. 365 — *Publishers*.