

“The Study of Heaven – Part 1”

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Scripture

Luke 16:19-31

“Now there was a rich man, and he habitually dressed in purple and fine linen, **joyously living in splendor every day**. “And a poor man named Lazarus was laid at his gate, covered with sores, and longing to be fed with the crumbs which were falling from the rich man's table; besides, even the dogs were coming and licking his sores.”

“Now the poor man died and was **carried away by the angels to Abraham's bosom**; and the rich man also died and was buried. **In Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torment**, and saw Abraham far away and Lazarus in his bosom.”

“And he cried out and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus so that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue, for I am in agony in this flame.”

“But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that during your life you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus bad things; but now **he is being comforted here, and you are in agony**.”

And besides all this, **between us and you there is a great chasm fixed**, so that those who wish to come over from here to you will not be able, and that none may cross over from there to us.”

“And he said, 'Then I beg you, father, that you send him to my father's house-- for I have five brothers-- **in order that he may warn them**, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.”

“But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.’”

“But he said, 'No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent!'. But he said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.’”

Introduction to the Study of Heaven

Questions about Heaven?

More passages in the Bible about Heaven or Hell?

Heaven 101

God the Father's abode

Psalm 115:1-3

“Not to us, O LORD, not to us, But to Your name give glory Because of Your lovingkindness, because of Your truth. Why should the nations say, "Where, now, is their God?" But our God is in heaven; He does whatever He pleases.”

God the Son's Abode

Luke 23:42-43

"And he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, **today you will be with me in paradise.**"

A physical location not a "State of Mind"

John 14:2-3

"**In My Father's house are many dwelling places**; if it were not so, I would have told you; for **I go to prepare a place for you**. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also."

Fixed in place – directionally it is "Up"

Revelation 4:1-2

"After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven, and the first voice which I had heard, like the sound of a trumpet speaking with me, said, "**Come up here**, and I will show you what must take place after these things." **Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne was standing in heaven, and One sitting on the throne.**"

Psalms 14:2

"**The Lord looks down from heaven** on the children of man, to see if there are any who understand, who seek after God."

John 6:51

"I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever."

1 Thessalonians 4:16

"For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God."

A place both of worship and service

Revelation 7:13-15

"Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and where have they come from?" I said to him, "My lord, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. **For this reason, they are before the throne of God; and they serve Him day and night in His temple; and He who sits on the throne will spread His tabernacle over them.**"

Revelation 22:3

"No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and **his servants will worship him.**"

A place of joy

Revelation 19:6-7

“Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the roar of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, crying out, **“Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory,** for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready.”

Luke 15:7

“There **will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents** than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.”

A place of reward

1 Peter 1:4

“An inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you”

A place with new and different relationships

Matthew 22:30-32

“For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage but are like angels in heaven. "But regarding the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God: I AM THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, AND THE GOD OF ISAAC, AND THE GOD OF JACOB? He is not the God of the dead but of the living.”

A place with new bodies

2 Corinthians 5:1-8

“For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, **we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.** For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling, if indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked. For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened—not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. **He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.**”

1 Corinthians 15:42-44

“So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; **what is raised is imperishable.** It is sown in dishonor; **it is raised in glory.** It is sown in weakness; **it is raised in power.** It is sown a natural body; **it is raised a spiritual body.**”

A place of perfection for perfect people

Hebrews 12:22-23

“But you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and **to innumerable angels in festal gathering,** and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and **to the spirits of the righteous made perfect.**”

A place we should focus on

Colossians 3:1-4

“Therefore, if you have been raised up with Christ, **keep seeking the things above**, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. **Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth**. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.”

Lessons from the Rich Man and Lazarus

Heaven is often shown in contrast to Hell or Hades

It is a place of comfort and rest

Jesus tells this story to

Luke 16:19-21

“Now there was a rich man, and he habitually dressed in purple and fine linen, **joyously living in splendor every day**. "And a poor man named Lazarus was laid at his gate, covered with sores, and **longing to be fed with the crumbs which were falling from the rich man's table**; besides, even the dogs were coming and licking his sores.”

Note the contrast between wealth of these two men

Jews thought that personal wealth was indicative of God's eternal favor

All good things come from the Father of heavenly light

Whether rich or poor, we all need to understand God's ability to choose

God sends the rain on the righteous and the unrighteous alike

Both men eventually die:

Luke 16:22-23

“Now the poor man died and was **carried away by the angels to Abraham's bosom**; and the rich man also died and was buried. **In Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torment**, and saw Abraham far away and Lazarus in his bosom.”

Angels carrying believers away to Heaven

Abraham's bosom -> Abraham and other Old Testament saints are there

Hebrews 11:13-16

“All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own. And indeed if they had been thinking of that country from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return. **But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them.**”

The rich man was buried

We see Hades – another physical location – a place for the souls owned by the devil

A place of torment and anguish – torment means “a testing by torture”

Part of the torment could be seeing into Heaven

Matthew 8:11-12

“I say to you that many will come from east and west, and **recline at the table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven**; but the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

The rich man calls out to Abraham:

Luke 16:24

“And he cried out and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus so that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue, for I am in agony in this flame.”

Hades is a fiery torment – “agony in this flame”

Mercy can only be granted while you live on the earth

After death, mercy is not an option -> purgatory is not an option

Abraham responds:

Luke 16:25

“But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that during your life you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus bad things; but now **he is being comforted here, and you are in agony.**”

The rich man received blessings while on earth and chose those over eternal blessing in Heaven

Lay up your treasures in Heaven:

Matthew 6:19-21

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But **store up for yourselves treasures in heaven**, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

Comfort is parakaleo -> the Greek word used for the Holy Spirit

Lazarus has God's presence with him in Heaven

The rich man is alone in Hell

Luke 16:26

“And besides all this, **between us and you there is a great chasm fixed**, so that those who wish to come over from here to you will not be able, and that none may cross over from there to us.”

A fixed chasm between Heaven and Hell

Both Heaven and Hell seem to be visible from each location

No ability to cross over between the two locations

Desire to repent is evident in Hades:

Luke 16:27-28

“And he said, 'Then I beg you, father, that you send him to my father's house-- for I have five brothers-- **in order that he may warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.**”

The rich man wants his brothers to avoid his punishment

But Abraham says:

Luke 16:29

“But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; **let them hear them.**”

Entrance to Heaven involves listening to God and what is recorded in the Bible

Some people say the Bible does not matter

Moses and the Prophets -> the Old Testament had enough to get you to Heaven

Abraham was before Moses and the Prophets yet he is aware of them – gained knowledge in Heaven

Luke 16:30-31

“But he said, 'No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent!'. But he said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, **they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.**”

The rich man exhibits hope for his family

Selfish and self-focused lifestyles are baked in rebellion

Without proof of the consequences of sin, many will not believe

Just a glimpse of Heaven and Hell tonight

Prayer

Benediction