

## Studies on Hell – Part 6 – The Rich Man and Lazarus

Hi everyone and welcome to “Grain of Wheat Publishing” and “Studies in Scripture.” My name is Jack Marshall and thank you for joining me today.

This is Part Six of my series, “Studies on Hell.” So far in this series we have discussed “The Strength of Tradition,” “No One is Good,” “The Fire of God,” “Hades,” and, “The Bottomless Pit.” In this study, we will look into the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus. My reason for this is because it brings up “hell” or “Hades” and has been a real source of confusion for many.

Let’s get started.

The Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus is found in Luke, Chapter Sixteen, verses nineteen through thirty-one, which is the only place in scripture where this parable is found.

Notice that I said “parable.” Here’s why. In Luke Twelve sixteen we read, “Then He spoke a parable to them, saying, ‘The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully.’” Following this in Luke Chapter Sixteen, verse one, we read, “He said to His disciples: ‘There was a certain rich man who had a steward.’” In both instances we have a parable, and so it is that when Jesus remarked in Luke, Chapter Sixteen, verse nineteen, that “there was a certain rich man,” I believe it’s a given that He was again speaking a parable, using a “certain rich man” to make His point. Being a parable, this tells us that there is much more to consider in this story than what first meets the eye. We should also know that these three parables in Luke are the only records of Christ teaching about “a certain rich man.” Now, let’s begin with the first verse of this parable.

“There was a **certain rich man** who was clothed in **purple** and **fine linen** and **fared sumptuously** every day.”

Our parable begins with “a certain rich man.” Google defines “certain” as, “Specific but not explicitly named or stated.” This fits perfectly with the idea of a parable, so it’s up to us to find the spiritual implications. This is done by considering the description which follows.

Our “certain rich man” is “clothed in purple and fine linen.” In his series on Revelation, J. Preston Eby wrote, QUOTE, “Color in scripture denotes the presence and operation of God by the Spirit,” END QUOTE. It represents what is done to us and what is produced in us, illustrated by the fact that color is infused in whatever object it is found.

The color “purple” is made from blue and red. “Blue” defines what is heavenly, therefore it speaks to the idea of Christ as the “Son of God.” Red speaks of the blood of Christ which was shed for the sin of this world and so refers to the humanity of Christ as the “Son of Man.” When blue and red are mixed, it becomes “purple” denoting “royalty,” which stresses the lordship of Jesus Christ as both “Son of Man” and “Son of God.” See Judges Eight twenty-six and Esther Eight fifteen.

In agreement with our colors, we have “fine linen,” which Revelation Nineteen eight tells us represents “the righteous acts of the saints.” Last, but not least, the Amplified Bible renders “fared sumptuously” as “reveled and feasted and made merry in splendor.” On a side note, it’s quite interesting to know that the VEIL in the Temple of God in the Tabernacle of Moses was blue, purple, and scarlet, made of “fine woven linen.” See Exodus Twenty-six, verse thirty-one. Is this just a coincidence? Not at all, for First Corinthians Three sixteen and seventeen tells us that you and I are the true “temple of God”!

So what does all of this point to? In my mind, it points to the church of Laodicea found in the book of the Revelation, Chapter Three. As we continue, you’ll see why I say this. Let’s begin with verse fourteen.

"And to the **angel** of the church of the Laodiceans write, 'These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: **I know your works**, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. Because you say, '**I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing...**'

Here we have the seventh prophecy to the seventh and final church in Revelation, the church of Laodicea. First note that John is told to "write" to "the angel of the church," and not to the church itself. Those familiar with scripture know that the church is symbolized as a "female," also referred to as the "body of Christ" in First Corinthians Chapter Twelve, verse twenty-seven and described for us in Ephesians, Chapter Five, verses twenty-three through thirty-three. But again, John is told to write to "the angel of the church." The Bible, both Old and New Testaments, show that an "angel" is ALWAYS MALE as opposed to female. In First Corinthians Eleven three Paul wrote, "But I want you to know that the HEAD of every man is Christ, the HEAD of woman is man, and the HEAD of Christ is God."

Now, if you will, put aside the idea that an angel is some fanciful winged being flying through the air. After all, why would John be told to write to such a personage? The word "angel" in the New Testament means, "To *bring tidings*; a *messenger*." Hebrews One seven states that He "makes His angels spirits." So when brought together, we have a "spirit" and a "message." That being said, an "angel" illustrates just that, the MANIFESTATION of spirit and word, whether HUMAN or DIVINE. Therefore, the "angel" of each church denotes the collective "spirit" and "message" of each church which equates to the AUTHORITY, POWER and INTENT which is evidenced by its WORKS or DEEDS. Jesus confirms this in Matthew Fifteen, verses eighteen through twenty, where we read, "But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles the person. For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. These are what defile a person." So it is that before the Lord begins His discourse to each church, He always states FIRST, "I know your WORKS."

Paul writes that "the head of woman is man" while Christ is "the head of every man." So Christ, honoring the hierarchy of God, addresses the "head" or MALE of each church, the spirit and message or "works" if you will that define it. Isn't it true that the HEAD dictates the actions of the BODY? But the FEMALE or WOMAN or BODY OF CHRIST is certainly not left out, because we find Jesus ending each message with, "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches" or body of Christ. So, our hierarchy is correct; Christ, the HEAD of every man, followed by MAN, the head of WOMAN, and finally, the WOMAN herself. And why is this hierarchy necessary? Because once the spirit and word is corrected, the body can follow. As an example of what I mean, imagine yourself receiving directions to a certain location, but they're incorrect. So when you follow the directions, what happens? You get lost. You're unable to find your location. So what is it you need? PROPER DIRECTIONS. After all, without them, you'll never reach the location you are headed for. So it is with the messages to the churches in Revelation. Beloved, they are given by the Lord to give us DIRECTION, to point us to His kingdom, to give us a clear understanding of where we are going and also what we are challenged by along the way.

So why is it necessary to understand the concept of MALE and FEMALE? To put it in its simplest form, due to the universal principle of sowing and reaping which reveals the necessity of the MALE which "sows" or gives "seed" to the FEMALE and the importance of the FEMALE reaping or receiving that seed. In this case, we are speaking of the "seed" of the Word of His kingdom. See Matthew Thirteen, verses three through twenty-three. In the natural, once the "seed" is sown in the "female," it will eventually produce a "child," so the conception, formation, and eventual birth of this "child" is an accurate illustration and representation of our "works" or "deeds." Jesus confirms this perspective in Matthew, Chapter Twenty-four eight, where in light of false Christ's, wars, rumors of wars, famines, and earthquakes, He remarks, "All these are the BEGINNING of BIRTH PAINS."

Now, let's return to our passages from Revelation, Chapter Three.

"And to the **angel** of the church of the Laodiceans write, 'These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: **I know your works**, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. Because you say, '**I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing...**'

We now realize that the “angel” of the church defines the underlying “works” or “spirit and word” of the church, which I believe Paul also called the “*inward* man” in Romans Seven twenty-two and Second Corinthians Four sixteen. The Psalmist wrote in Psalms Fifty-one six, “Behold, you desire truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part you will make me to know wisdom.” The promise of the New Covenant in Jeremiah, Chapter Thirty-one, verse thirty-three also states, “But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; after those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their INWARD PARTS, and write it in their hearts.” I believe the “inward parts” refers to both the MALE and FEMALE aspects of our being, while the “hidden part” is described by Peter as the “hidden man of the heart” in First Peter Three four. All of this defines the “angel” to whom the Lord speaks and to whom John wrote.

Our passages concerning Laodicea are an obvious rebuke by the Lord concerning the fact that they were “neither cold nor hot” but “lukewarm.” And why was this? Because they said, “I am RICH, HAVE BECOME WEALTHY, AND HAVE NEED OF NOTHING.” This being true, might this suggest that the “certain rich man” of which Jesus spoke points to the prevailing spirit and word of this church? Would the wisdom of God be such that this is truly what Jesus had in mind when He spoke this parable? Let’s read the whole verse.

Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'--**and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked...**

Though we say we are rich, Jesus counters with the fact that we “do not know” that we “are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked.” Now, wouldn’t this be an apt description of a “beggar”? Look at what Jesus followed with in the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus.

But **there was a certain beggar named Lazarus**, full of sores, **who was laid at his gate**, desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

Do you see it? Not only do we have a “certain” rich man, but there is also a “certain beggar” and his name is “Lazarus.” It’s quite interesting that the rich man is not named, but the beggar is. Furthermore, the name Lazarus just happens to be the name of one whom Jesus loved, and, RAISED FROM THE DEAD. As we will see later, this is quite significant. The story of Lazarus is found in John, Chapter Eleven, where the first verse reads, “Now a CERTAIN MAN was sick,” not just any man, but a “certain” man, a man whom Jesus clearly loved, agreeing with the Lord’s emphasis in our parable. And, as a matter of emphasis, let me add that Jesus taught, “For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.” See Luke Fourteen, verse eleven. Clearly, the prevailing spirit and attitude of the “rich man” and the Laodicean believers is not one of HUMILITY.

First, a “certain rich man” followed by a “certain beggar,” and both clearly seen in our message to Laodicea. As you might guess at this point, neither refers to an actual person, but to a SPIRIT and MINDSET within the church about which WE are deceived.

Where was this “certain beggar” found? He laid at the gate of the “rich man.” What did Jesus say? “Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able.” Beloved, think INWARD, not OUTWARD, and understand that the most powerful “gates” in the world are those found in our own heart and mind. Do we not have the ability to shut out anything when it comes to knowledge and understanding? I am reminded of a statement from a very good friend of mine who once told me that in this day and age, many fight to KEEP THEIR IGNORANCE.

The name “Lazarus” is of Hebrew origin and means, “*God is helper.*” So in contrast with the fact that Laodicea is obviously laced with arrogance and spiritual blindness, the Lord is still present to help turn us from the deceptiveness of our own hearts that we might see the reality of where we stand in relation to the kingdom of God.

As for our word “sores”? This is not just “sores,” but specific “sores.” Strong’s defines them as, “An *ulcer*,” and it’s only used three times in the New Testament, once in our passages from Luke Sixteen and the other two times in Revelation, Chapter Sixteen. Let’s look at this.

And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell **a noisome and grievous sore** upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image.

And just a few verses later we read:

And blasphemed the God of heaven **because of their pains and their sores**, and repented not of their deeds.

An ulcer is a painful sore in the belly, specifically in the stomach lining. With this in mind, consider the following from Romans Sixteen.

Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, **but their own belly**; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.

Also, from Philippians Three:

For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: Whose end is destruction, **whose God is their belly**, and whose glory is in their shame, **who mind earthly things**.

As shown, the “belly” is used as a metaphor in regard to our “fleshly appetites,” of minding “earthly things,” of our carnal desires for the things of this world. And, all of us know beyond any doubt that many of these desires, once fulfilled, often come with painful and reoccurring consequences, just like an ulcer. When we are completely honest with ourselves, we know this is true.

We then read that Lazarus desired “to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table.” Crumbs, my friends, morsels, small pieces; that was it! Lazarus was not asking for much, was he, and no doubt, the rich man actually had far more than he himself needed. I can only imagine what his dinner table looked like each night, food stacked everywhere with as much wine as he could possibly desire. Ah, but this not about literal food but spiritual food; see First Corinthians Ten three. Beloved, we have settled for crumbs for a very long time, small pieces of truth that are indeed good for us, but who of us wishes to have more, much more, to the point that we might bless others with our own spiritual abundance?

Finally, we read, “Moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores.” In Matthew Seven, Jesus said, “Give not that which is holy unto the dogs.” In Matthew Fifteen, He also said, “It is not right to take the children’s bread and throw it to the dogs.” Finally, Paul wrote in Philippians Three, verses two and three, “Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh. For we are the true circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and **PUT NO CONFIDENCE IN THE FLESH.**” I would encourage you to also read Revelation Twenty-two, verses fourteen and fifteen.

In a word, “dogs” speaks of unbelievers and disbelievers, of those who do not embrace the gospel of Christ. Yet, we find that these “dogs” if you will, come and lick the sores of Lazarus. This, then, is a perfect picture of those in the world who, despite their lack of faith, are still compassionate enough, and willing enough, to give

help and healing to all of us. You see, my friend, even in the darkness of this world there is evidence of God's holy nature in the deepest recesses of our being.

At this point, I will end this study and pick it up again in the next video, for there is definitely much more to consider. I sincerely hope you've been enlightened by this presentation and encourage you to leave your comments and questions below. Please keep in mind that I will be continuing this series on "hell," so be sure to subscribe to my channel. Also, feel free to visit my Facebook page at Grain of Wheat Publishing or my website at [www.grainofwheatpublishing.org](http://www.grainofwheatpublishing.org). Thank you so much for joining me today and may God bless you in your walk with Christ.