

Studies on Hell – Part 8 – The Rich Man and Lazarus – Part 3

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 Eight of my series, “Studies on Hell” and the third part on “The Rich Man and Lazarus” As we learned in the previous videos on this subject, the story of the rich man and Lazarus is a parable, confirmed by the other teachings of the Lord about a “certain rich man” in Luke, Chapter Twelve, and Luke, Chapter Sixteen. All of these parables connect to one another as well as to the “angel” and “church” of Laodicea in Revelation, Chapter Three.

Let’s get started.

Let’s do a recap to show why the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus coincides with the spirit and mindset of the Laodicean church. Keep in mind that the church of Laodicea is the SEVENTH and FINAL church to whom Jesus prophesied. Being the seventh, this speaks of “spiritual completion,” and even more specifically to the END OF THE AGE.

In our previous videos, we learned that the “certain rich man” in our parable aligns with the statement in the Laodicean church where WE say that we are “rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing.” However, the Lord states that we “do not know” that we are “wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked.” This would define our “certain beggar named Lazarus.”

In our parable, both the rich man and Lazarus die, with Lazarus being carried by the angels to “Abraham’s bosom,” symbolic of the Two Covenants, Old and New, as typified by Abraham’s wives, Hagar and Sarah. See Galatians, Chapter Four, verses twenty-one through thirty-one.

The rich man is “buried,” and descends to “Hades,” where we find him in “torments.” Because this is a parable, the idea of “buried,” just like “Abraham’s bosom,” is symbolic, and Jesus defines this spiritual condition in Luke Eleven Forty-four where we read, “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For YOU ARE LIKE GRAVES which are not seen, and the men who walk over them are not aware of them.” Clearly this was an allegory describing the spiritual lack of the religious leaders of Jesus’ day, the same ones who persecuted Him and were responsible for His death on the cross. Hard to imagine, isn’t it, that we can be so extremely religious and yet be so far removed from His kingdom?

In keeping with the rich man’s position in Hades, consider what Jesus also said to the Pharisees in Matthew Twenty-three, verses thirteen and fifteen.

"But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! FOR YOU SHUT THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IN PEOPLE’S FACES. For you neither enter yourselves nor allow those who would enter to go in. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel across sea and land to make a single proselyte,” OR CONVERT, “and when he becomes a proselyte,” OR CONVERT, “you make him TWICE AS MUCH A CHILD OF HELL AS YOURSELVES.”

You make your converts “twice as much a child of hell as yourselves,” Jesus said. Am I mistaken, or does our phrase, “As yourselves,” speak in PRESENT TENSE? Our word “child” is actually the Greek word for “son,” while our word “hell” is the Greek word “Gehenna,” which we have learned refers to our CORRUPTIBLE NATURE within. This position would not be so serious if it were not for the fact that WE SAY, “I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing.” Beloved, when we are steeped in the mind of the flesh, yet, confess that we are “spiritual” in the eyes of others, we are guilty of PRIDE or ARROGANCE, which is the “spirit” behind our statement seen in Laodicea. No wonder then that Jesus called for repentance and counseled us to “buy” of Him “gold refined in the fire” that we may be “rich,” certainly not in a materialistic fashion, but

in a deeply spiritual sense. See Matthew Six, verses nineteen through twenty-one. Friends, understand that PRIDE does not discriminate and can be found just as much within our religious gatherings as in the world. For this reason, Jesus told Laodicea, "Behold, I STAND AT THE DOOR AND KNOCK: if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come to him and dine with him, and he with me." What "door" is Jesus speaking of? Would it be the entrance to our own heart and mind?

In our prophecy to Laodicea, it should be apparent that we are DECEIVED, for we "DO NOT KNOW" that we are "wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked" while we profess to be "rich," "wealthy," and "have need of nothing." In light of this idea of DECEPTION, consider what Jesus said in Matthew Twenty-four, verses twenty-one through twenty-four.

For then there will be **great tribulation**, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. **And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved**; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened. Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here *is* the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe *it*. **For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.**

Now, I know that there are those who believe that "great tribulation" is yet to come, and that there will come a "rapture" beforehand, but let me state that I don't believe in this teaching and haven't believed in it for almost forty years. For an alternative view, I invite you to go to my website at www.grainofwheatpublishing.org, click on "GOW Blog," then click on the post labeled, "Where the Rapture Came From." You can also download my free study on this subject called, "The Rapture, Yes or No?" also found at my website under "Books." The download is free.

So what did Jesus say in Matthew Twenty-four? "There will be GREAT TRIBULATION, SUCH AS HAS NOT BEEN SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THIS WORLD UNTIL THIS TIME, NO, NOR EVER SHALL BE." Some teachers propose that Jesus was referring to the Jews in His time and to the eventual destruction of their temple in seventy A.D. by the Romans. However, if we continue with what Jesus said following our statements in Matthew Twenty-four, we will find that He is clearly teaching about the "coming of the Son of Man," and the "end of the age." In fact, in Matthew Twenty-four thirty one, Jesus says, "And he will send his angels with A GREAT SOUND OF A TRUMPET, and they will GATHER TOGETHER HIS ELECT from the FOUR WINDS, from one end of heaven to the other." Three very important things are brought to bear in this statement which are the "great sound of a trumpet," "gather together his elect," and our "four winds." Remember, the prophecy to the Laodicean church is the SEVENTH and FINAL prophecy to the seven churches in Asia, so by all accounts, IT SPEAKS TO THE SPIRITUAL CONDITION OF THE CHURCH AT THE END OF THIS AGE.

I will leave the last two items mentioned for another time, but I do wish to emphasize the first item, the "great sound of a trumpet." Those familiar with the book of the Revelation know that there are seven trumpets described in it and that each one follows the other which precedes it. So, what is meant by a trumpet? Consider what John wrote in Revelation, Chapters One and Four.

I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, **and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet** saying, "Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea."

After this I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven! **And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet**, said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this." At once **I was in the Spirit**, and behold, a throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne.

First of all, do you see that the first voice "like a trumpet" in Revelation One is the same voice "like a trumpet" in Revelation Four? And, do you see what is meant by a "trumpet"? It's not at all literal but speaks of the

“voice” of the Lord Himself. This being true, then **the words of Christ** or prophecies to the seven churches by the Lord Jesus Christ ARE THE TRUMPETS which are later sounded in Revelation. Jesus confirms this in His statement concerning the “elect” in Matthew Twenty-four thirty one as well as in Matthew Twenty-four thirty five, stating, “Heaven and earth will pass away, but MY WORDS WILL BY NO MEANS PASS AWAY.” When we realize that the words of Christ are the words of the prophecies, then the SOUNDING OF EACH TRUMPET in Revelation is the UNFOLDING or COMING TO PASS of the same. Furthermore, note that John said in Revelation One that he was “IN THE SPIRIT on the Lord’s day” and in Revelation Four he said, “At once I was IN THE SPIRIT.” This, beloved, is where WE MUST BE TO HEAR THE TRUMPETS and to recognize the FULFILLMENT OF THEM. Beloved, understand that A RAPTURE IS NOT COMING, BUT A RESURRECTION IS. Jesus makes this very clear in Luke, Chapter Twenty, where He declares, “But those who are COUNTED WORTHY to ATTAIN THAT AGE, AND THE RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD, neither marry nor are given in marriage; nor can they die anymore, for they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being SONS OF THE RESURRECTION.” Who are those who are “counted worthy”? Jesus calls them the “elect” in Matthew Twenty-four, verses twenty-two, twenty-four, and thirty-one. You see, my friend, not everyone will attain the resurrection at the end of the age. Why? Because they still say, “I am rich, have become wealthy, and HAVE NEED OF NOTHING.” Jesus made it quite clear that those who embrace this arrogant spirit and mind at the end of the age shall be vomited out of his mouth, separated if you will, to the “left hand of God” as Jesus taught in the Parable of the Sheep and Goats in Matthew Twenty-five, verses thirty-one through forty-six. If you will take time to read and study this parable, you will also find the “rich man and Lazarus” contained in its teachings. So, let’s return to the verses we have yet to consider in our Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus. We left off at verse twenty-five, where Abraham tells the rich man, “But now he,” that is, Lazarus, “is comforted and you are tormented.” The next passage is one that raises some questions.

And besides all this, **between us and you there is a great gulf fixed**, so that **those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.**

Pretty sobering words, but in light of our current perspective, consider what Jesus again told the Pharisees in his time. Pay close attention to these words from Matthew Twenty-three.

Therefore you are witnesses against yourselves that **you are sons of those who murdered the prophets**. Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers' guilt. Serpents, brood of vipers! **How can you escape the condemnation of hell?** Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, that on you may come **all the righteous blood shed on the earth**, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation. **"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her!** How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, **but you were not willing!** See! **Your house is left to you desolate**; for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, *'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!'* "

What did Jesus tell the Pharisees? “How can you escape the condemnation of hell?” Escape? As in they were already in it? Yes! Because they “were not willing” and as a result, their spiritual “house” was left to them DESOLATE.” With this in mind, consider what Jesus taught in the Parable of the Sheep and Goats.

"When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. **All the nations** will be gathered before Him, and **He will separate them one from another**, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And **He will set the sheep on His right hand**, but the goats on the left. **Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world...**

“Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world,” Jesus said. And to whom was Jesus speaking? To the “sheep” on “His right hand.” As for the “goats” on His “left hand”? Here’s what Jesus went on to say.

Then He will also say to **those on the left hand**, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the **everlasting fire** prepared for the devil and his angels... And **these will go away into everlasting punishment**, but the righteous into eternal life.'

Would the “great gulf fixed” between Abraham and the rich man reflect the division between the “left” and “right” hands of God once Jesus separates the sheep from the goats? I believe it does. The same thing is illustrated in the Parable of the Tares in Matthew Thirteen where we read, “The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”

Would the “everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels,” along with the “furnace of fire,” correlate with the rich man’s descent into Hades? I believe it would, and I ask you again, would this be the “great gulf” that Jesus spoke about in the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus? Consider what He said in Matthew Seven, verses twenty-one through twenty-three.

"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. **Many will say to Me in that day**, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, '**I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!**'"

Would our “great gulf” be emphasized by what the Lord said in these passages? I am inclined to think so.

In the Parable of the Sheep and Goats, Jesus describes the “everlasting fire” as “everlasting punishment.” But don’t let this phrase confuse you. It’s not punishment which NEVER ENDS, but punishment which is evident in every age due to the fact that it is the SAME IN EVERY AGE. Inasmuch as our heavenly Father and Christ are “everlasting,” so too has His judgment been present in every age since the creation of man. Understand that Galatians, Chapter Six, verses seven through ten, where we find the universal principle of sowing and reaping, sets the precedent for all ages. Yes, there is punishment for our disobedience, but ONLY UNTIL WE HAVE BEEN CORRECTED BY IT. Anything that follows this WOULD BE CONSIDERED TORTURE! And despite what millions still believe, GOD IS NOT A BEING WHO TAKES PLEASURE IN SUCH CRUEL METHODS. To think so is to bring His divine nature down to the level of our own corruptible nature! If our heavenly Father is torturing anyone, then the death of His Son was clearly in vain and DID NOT take away the sin of the world. Why would our heavenly Father send His son to die, only to follow it with unimaginable and vicious torture in some netherworld somewhere? Furthermore, who, if any of us, are qualified TO MISS ETERNAL TORMENT when the Bible clearly states, “There is NONE righteous, NO, NOT ONE: there is NONE that understandeth, there is NONE that seeketh after God.” Beloved, understand that the spirit of our “rich man” as seen in Laodicea describes a SELF-RIGHTEOUS, SELF-ABSORBED, and SELF-ENTITLED MINDSET that sees itself as BETTER THAN OTHERS! And out of this spirit comes such self-absorbed teachings like the rapture and eternal torture.

Brothers and sisters, think about it. Right now, you’re enjoying all the comforts and pleasures of home, BUT, while we enjoy these comforts at ANY GIVEN TIME, throughout the world there are millions who are going through some of the most terrible things we can even imagine. At ANY GIVEN TIME, there are drug cartels and dealers who commit MURDER on a regular basis, extreme drug addiction, human trafficking involving men, women, and children, wars in various countries, abortion and sexual perversion on an unprecedented scale. Divorce is rampant, and as a result, our children are left with broken homes and single parent families, many having to fend for themselves without proper supervision or upbringing. Did you know that America has the third highest divorce rate in the world?

The World Health Organization states that there is a “murder a minute” throughout the world. One person commits suicide every forty seconds, one person is murdered every sixty seconds and one person dies in armed conflict every one hundred seconds. I immediately think of the Lord’s reference to the “days of Noah” in Matthew Twenty-four. It was during Noah’s time that the Bible states, “And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually,” and, “The earth was corrupt before God, *and the earth was filled with violence.*”

I could go on but I believe you get my point. Is there a hell? Yes there is, and it exists right now on earth within the confines of our own heart and mind. The late English poet, John Milton wrote, “The mind is its own place, and in itself can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven.” Beloved, very difficult times are upon us, and as believers in Christ, it is past time to watch and pray and stand up in the love of Christ for others.

Now, let’s return to our parable in Luke Sixteen. Here’s the next two verses where the rich man pleads with “Father Abraham.”

Then he said, 'I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house, for I have **five brothers**, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.'

Five brothers. In light of our prophecies to the seven churches, we find that out of the seven, Jesus did not rebuke two of them. That leaves five, doesn’t it? So would our reference to “five brothers” speak to the spiritual plight seen in the other five? Know too that “five” is the number of GRACE. So how does Abraham reply? “They have MOSES and the PROPHETS; LET THEM HEAR THEM.”

Beloved, “Moses and the prophets” speaks of the “law and the prophets,” so consider what Jesus said in Matthew Five, verses seventeen and eighteen.

"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; **I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.** I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law **until everything is accomplished.**

As we see, the Lord is tending to every prophetic detail of the law and the prophets “until everything is accomplished,” and He is doing so NOW as a “life-giving Spirit” at the “right hand” of the throne of our heavenly Father. See First Corinthians Fifteen, verse forty-five and Revelation Three, verse twenty-one. Our word “accomplished” is “fulfill” in the King James. That’s a SEVEN, my friends, and connects to the SEVENTH church of Laodicea, and again, to THE END OF THE AGE. Here’s our last two verses of the parable.

And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' But he said to him, **'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.'** "

What a powerful statement! “If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.” Do you find this hard to believe? If so, take a moment to think about how the scribes and Pharisees rejected and crucified Christ, and this despite the fact that THE VERY SCRIPTURES THEY EMBRACED affirmed His Sonship time and again! If there is anything at all that shows the blinding strength of TRADITION, it would be this! So, could history be repeating itself? Could the very same thing be happening with us today? Yes it could, because even now there are many who would rather hold to their traditions and doctrines of men than surrender them in the light of His divine love and power. See Second Timothy Four, verses three and four.

That's it for today's study which finishes our look at the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus. Let me encourage you to be sure and view my next study on Hell which I will release next week. I plan to speak on the "bottomless pit" once again and give a retraction to an understanding that I presented in Part Five of this series. I also plan to give an in-depth look into the Seven Spirits of God found in the book of the Revelation.

I sincerely hope you've been enlightened by this presentation and encourage you to leave your comments and questions below. If you like what you hear, be sure to subscribe to my channel and feel free to visit my Facebook page at Grain of Wheat Publishing or my website at www.grainofwheatpublishing.org. Thank you so much for joining me today and may God bless you in your walk with Christ.