

LAZARUS AND THE RICH MAN

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The fate of the good is to be resurrected to eternal life ... and the fate of the wicked is destruction.

The most common view in traditional churches is that on your death you will go to heaven if you are good ... or ... if you are bad ... you will be off to hell.

The fate of the wicked is eternal destruction, punishment, smoke that ascends for ever, no respite day or night ... like Sodom and Gomorrah ... torment.

Wherever we look in The Bible ... we see that destruction is everlasting.

Error is normally based on an initial wrong assumption. The common assumption is that man has an immortal soul. That is fairly common. So when you die ... you will live on immortally ... somewhere good or somewhere bad. The question is where. This sends people off in the wrong direction.

Let's look at the immortal soul issue.

Genesis 2:7

And the Lord God formed man **of the dust** of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being (Hebrew: Nephesh). (KJV ... SOUL).

No hint here of an immortal soul.

Genesis 2:15-17

Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "Of every

tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it **you shall surely die.**" (In the Hebrew the meaning is along the lines of: Not the very same day ... Dying thou shalt die ... in other words ... a process).

Genesis 3:1-5

Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?'"

And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it (God didn't say that), lest you die.' "

Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die (satan said this ... not God). For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

Genesis 3:22-24

Then the Lord God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. **And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever**" (God was not going to allow them to live forever!!!)— therefore the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.

God was not going to permit them to live forever. So ... they got driven away out of The Garden of Eden. So ... Adam and Eve eventually died. They had no access to The Tree of Life.

1 Timothy 6:15-16

which He will manifest in His own time, He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honour and everlasting power. Amen.

God and Jesus have immortality. They can provide it as a gift to those who choose His way.

Romans 2:4-10

Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who “will render to each one according to his deeds”: **eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honour, and immortality; but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness—indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek; but glory, honour, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.**

Eternal life belongs to those who seek immortality.

John 5:19-21

Then Jesus answered and said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner. For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself does; and He will show Him greater works than these, that you may marvel. **For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, even so the Son gives life to whom He will.**

John 5:28-29

Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which **all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.**

It's not just the bodies that are resurrected ... but ... the people.

Martin Luther (who was formerly a Catholic) ... made some statements about the Catholic Church:-

The bread and wine are transubstantiated ...

The pope is not emperor of the world.

That the soul is immortal.

Martin Luther said that these statements are all endless monstrosities in the Roman dung hill.

Archbishop Francis Blackburne. Luther believed that you sleep in your grave until there is a resurrection.

William Tyndale. The first man to translate the Bible from Hebrew and Greek ... said to Thomas More that, "in putting them (the departed souls) in heaven, hell and purgatory, destroy the arguments wherewith CHRIST and Paul prove the resurrection". If the souls be in heaven, what would be the need of a resurrection.

John Milton ... believed that man remained in an unconscious sleep until the resurrection.

Dr William Temple (Archbishop of Canterbury). Man is not immortal by nature or by right ... but he is capable of immortality and there is offered to him resurrection from the dead and life eternal if he will receive it from God and on God's terms. Annihilation is an everlasting punishment though it is not an unending torment.

Acts 3:19-23

Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began. For Moses truly said to the fathers, 'The Lord your God will raise up for

you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear in all things, whatever He says to you. And it shall be that every soul who will not hear that Prophet shall be utterly destroyed (Utter complete extermination ... Exolothreuo) from among the people.'

Matthew 10:28

And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. **But rather fear Him who is able to destroy (Appolumi) both soul and body in hell.**

Dr Richard Weymouth, translator of the Weymouth NT, states, "My mind fails to conceive a grosser misinterpretation of language than when the five or six strongest words which the Greek possess, signifying destroy or destruction, are explained to mean maintaining an everlasting, but wretched existence. To translate black as white is nothing to this".

Luke 16:19-31 This is a parable not a story.

"There was a certain rich man (Cp Luke 16:1) who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. 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. So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

"Then 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.' But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. 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.'

"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.' Abraham said to him, 'They have

Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.' 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.' "

Who is the audience? The Pharisees. They were proud, arrogant, self righteous ... filled with self esteem. They looked down and despised poor people ... the beggars. Jesus is going to take their beliefs and reverse what they believe.

Luke 16:14-15

Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, also heard all these things, and they derided Him. **And He said TO THEM,** "You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God.

Luke 15:1- 3 These verses set the scene.

Then all the tax collectors and the sinners drew near to Him to hear Him.

And the Pharisees and scribes complained, saying, "This Man receives sinners and eats with them." **So He spoke this parable TO THEM,** saying:

So ... Jesus spoke some parables to them, that God was looking for repentance and humility ... not pride and self importance.

Luke 15:1-7 The Parable of the Lost Sheep

Luke 15:8-10 The Parable of the Lost Coin

Luke 15:11-32 The Prodigal Son

Luke 16:19-22

"There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. 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. So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried.
(Time passed).

Luke 16:24

"Then 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 (odunao ... grieved, distressed ... not tortured) in this flame.' Was this literal? Can a man in everlasting torment in fire be able to speak to a man in paradise? Can Lazarus dip his finger in water and cool his tongue? Would that be enough to comfort a person experiencing their whole body burning in eternal fire?

Luke 16:25-28

But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. 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.'

"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.'

Luke 16:29-31

Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.' 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.' " (If someone rejects Moses and rejects the one that Moses points to ... the resurrected Jesus would make no impact on them). And we see that in practice. **Both Jesus and a "famous Lazarus" (John 11) were raised from the dead and the Pharisees rejected both!!**

John 11:53

Then, from that day on, they plotted to put Him to death.

John 12:10

But the chief priests plotted to put Lazarus to death also,

There are a few things missing from the story. It doesn't say **immediately after** the rich man died. It doesn't say the rich man was in **everlasting** flames. It doesn't say **eternal** torment.

What about the thief on the cross?

Luke 23:38-43

And an inscription also was written over Him in letters of Greek, Latin, and Hebrew:

THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, "If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us."

But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, "Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong." Then he said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom." (Jesus promised the criminal would be in the kingdom ... in the future).

And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise." Depends where you put the comma ... "Assuredly I say to you today ... you will be with Me in Paradise". There is no punctuation in the Greek.

From our scriptures we know that JESUS was dead for 3 days and 3 nights and had still not ascended to The Father. Compare:

John 20:17

Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, 'I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.' "

What about the souls under the altar?

Revelation 6:9-11

When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they

held. And they cried with a loud voice, (can dead people speak?) saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.

Of course ... it's symbolic. The fifth seal is a symbol of future martyrdom. The language is Apocalyptic as we've seen before (white, red, black and pale horses already in this chapter). Can the dead speak? Can blood speak?

Genesis 4:8-10

Now Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him. Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" He said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?" And He said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries out to Me from the ground.

Hebrews 11:4

By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks. (Abel is dead ... but still speaks).

So the dead souls in Revelation 6 are still speaking even though they are dead. Revelation 20 shows that they will live again at the first resurrection.

Revelation 21:3-8

And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things

have passed away.” (That couldn't be true if there were billions crying in agony or pain in an ever-burning hell).

Then He who sat on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.” And He said to me, “Write, for these words are true and faithful.”

And He said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

AND THEY DIE!!