

A Glimpse beyond the Grave

Luke 16.19-31

MOST DETAILED RECORD OF LIFE AFTER DEATH IN BIBLE

Perhaps NOT A PARABLE – No Other Parable has People's Names

2 EXTREMES of Humanity – Rich Man and Rag Man / Decadent and Destitute

- The world's 225 richest people now have a combined wealth of \$1 trillion. That's equal to the combined annual income of the world's 2.5 billion poorest people.
- The wealth of the three most well-to-do individuals now exceeds the combined GDP of the 48 least developed countries.

2 Men - 2 DESTINIES and 2 PRAYERS from HELL

1. Before the Grave 2. After the Grave 3. Life beyond the Grave?

1. Before the Grave

a. Obvious Rich THEN AND NOW Everyone notices the Wealthy

– STARING DOWN FROM BILLBOARDS

WATCH their VIDEOS – LISTEN to their MUSIC – Buy Magazines w/ Pics
They become the BRIGHT STARS in our GALAXY

Since Luke ch 14 > Jesus speaking to PHARISEES > Remain in VIEW

Ch 16 - 2 Stories of Money – in Middle Comment on Marriage – Out of Place?

1. Fundamental ISSUE in Marriage is MONEY, ask any Divorce LAWYER

2. Marriage – DIVORCE – Illustration on INTEGRITY / Promise KEEPING

PERSON of Integrity > PROMISE Keeper – Money, Marriage, Man, Maker

v. 14 The Pharisees, who loved money, heard all this and were sneering at Jesus.

It is not necessary to picture these men as godless materialists whose religion is only a façade...The Pharisees love money within a theological framework that justifies their position...theirs is a theology where God and mammon are comfortably joined.
Fred Craddock

1st C > RICH, RELIGIOUS Leaders > Nothing NEW Under Sun, 21st C

Googled – Salaries of Televangelists – So SAD & SHOCKING

Put FACTS & FIGURES on Big SCREEN, Not Hear more of Sermon! Too Sad!

"Christianity began as a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. When it went to Athens, it became a philosophy. When it went to Rome, it became an organization. When it went to Europe, it became a culture. When it came to America, it became a business." http://www.inplainsite.org/tele-evangelist_lifestyles

Writing for a penny a word is ridiculous. If a man really wanted to make a million dollars, the best way would be to start his own religion.

L. Ron Hubbard, Founder of Scientology
VERY FAR from HISTORIC, ORTHODOX Christianity

1) Linen v. 19 a “dressed in purple and fine linen”

ROYAL PURPLE – VERY Hard to get Dye – Tremendous EXPENSIVE
Dye from a Shellfish - GARMENT OF WEALTHY RULERS

FINE LINEN UNDERGARMENT not holey kind in your top drawer
He ONLY wears the FINEST BRANDED Clothes

HARVARD MBA Students “What do I hope to achieve after graduation?”
Top 3 ANSWERS: WEALTH, NOTORIETY, STATUS

2) Luxury v. 19b “lived in luxury every day”

NOT AN OCCASSIONAL SPLURGE – REGULAR ROUTINE
GRAND HOUSE v. 20 “gate” – Large House or even Palace

Roman Emperor – NERO – Exhausted all forms of Pleasures
GAVE PRIZES TO THOSE WHO INVENTED NEW PLEASURES
Porch of Palace -mile long / Ceiling Banquet Hall > Showered Perfume

MULES Silver Horseshoes / Never Wore same garment 2 X's - SUICIDE

3) Lifeplan v. 22b “rich man also died and was buried”

ALL OF LIFE WAS LUXURIOUS – JUST IMAGINE his FUNERAL

TRADITIONAL JEWISH FUNERAL –

Paid Mourners – Costly Spices – Elaborate Tomb

In AMERICA – FUNERALS ARE HUGE BUSINESS

Never think of putting loved one in ground / less than \$1000 Coffin

THOUGHT OF HIM – THOUGHT OF MONEY – Beginning to End

Nothing about him even HINTS of NEED

Testimony of QOHELETH “I denied myself nothing my eyes desired; I refused my heart no pleasure.”
Ecclesiastes 2.10,11

a. Forgotten Poor – all around, but they're invisible

1) Destitute v. 20 “At his gate was a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores”

SICK MAN – “laid” at the Gate // Allowed? Good Deeds = Crumbs

v. 21 “even the dogs came and licked his sores”

HIS ONLY FRIENDS WERE FOUR-LEGGED

LICKING of Dogs made him OFFICIALLY UNCLEAN

His situation was as SICKENING as Rich Man's was SUMPTUOUS

- At present, 3 billion people live on less than \$2 per day while 1.3 billion get by on less than \$1 per day. 70% of those living on less than \$1 per day are women

OT Prophets denounced RICH who DENIED Widows and the Poor

“What do you mean by crushing my people and grinding the faces of the poor?”
declares the Lord, the Lord Almighty
Isaiah 3.15

Time of Jesus – Palestine under ROMAN RULE – many very poor
60% of people in Roman world - SLAVES

2) Disposed v. 22a “the time came when the beggar died”

1st C – Jerusalem – NO PUBLIC MORGUE – Body taken by Street Cleaner
Dumped on Burning Garbage Heap outside City – Gehenna

NO FAREWELL – MOST NEVER NOTICED THEM GONE

THOSE THAT DO NOTICE ARE USUALLY RELIEVED

VERY DIFFERENT CONTRAST....

2. Beyond the Grave

“Death is the great leveler” John Donne

“The rich and poor meet together; the Lord is the maker of them all” Proverbs 22.2

DEATH – occurs when SPIRIT Leaves BODY – NOT THE END

BEGINNING OF ETERNITY – NEW EXISTENCE another world

This Story of Jesus > GRAVE Speaks to Teach us who LIVE a LESSON

a. Burning in Hell

PROMINENCE in this Life is NO GUARANTEE of Standing in Next

Word “Hades” – Gk. Realm of the Dead – NT NEVER BELIEVERS

Hades is a colourless term in Greek literature, signifying the abode of all the departed whether good or bad. In the New Testament, however, it is never used of the saved. Leon Morris

v. 23 “In hell, where he was IN TORMENT” / word used 4 x’s here

1)Abrupt v. 22 “rich man died and was buried. In hell...”

No Appeals Court – No Second Chance – No Purgatory

“man is destined to die once, and after that face judgment” Hebrews 9.27

No Reincarnation – No Soul Sleep – No Annihilation - No More Chances

“What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes”
James 4.14

Moses: “All our days pass away under your wrath; we finish our years with a moan. The length of our days is seventy years – or eighty, if we have the strength; yet their span is but trouble and sorrow, for they quickly pass, and we fly away.”
Psalm 90.9,10

THAT’S IT – BUZZER SOUNDS – GAME IS OVER bye Boston CELTICS

Let no one say: it is *merely* symbolic and *therefore* not so terrible. By mere inversion one should rather say: if the symbol, the mere picture, is already awe-inspiring, how terrible the original must be.
Klaus Schilder

2) Agonizing – Dead are Very Conscious – NO SOUL SLEEP

v. 23 “in hell, where he was in torment”

v. 24 “I am in agony in this fire”

v. 25 “you are here in agony”

v.28 “warn them so that they will not come to this place of torment”

People who live only for the things of this world will get nothing from heaven.
Philip Ryken

John the Baptist “he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire” Luke 3.17

Jesus: “I have come to bring fire on the earth...” Luke 12.49

ONE Group of TRIBAL People selected New Chief every 7 years

Chief – Absolute Power over Everyone and Everything in Tribe

SEVEN YEARS OF HAVING ALL DESIRES MET

End of 7 years – Killed by Tribe – New Chief Selected

EVERY MAN IN TRIBE EAGER TO BECOME CHIEF

Folly of Wealth & Pleasure – 7 years for ALL ETERNITY

3) Anonymous – NEVER TOLD RICH MAN’S NAME

Before Death – He was Mr. Big Shot – Mr. So and So
 EVERYONE IN TOWN PROBABLY KNEW HIS NAME – GREAT
 ORDERED PEOPLE AROUND – can No Longer order Lazarus

v. 15 What is highly valued among men is detestable in God's sight.

FROM GOD’S PERSPECTIVE – HE HAS NO NAME

NOW ONLY THE BEGGAR HAS A NAME

God who lives in heaven kept quiet about the rich man’s name, because he did not find it written in heaven. He spoke the poor man’s name, because he found it written there, indeed he gave instructions for it to be written there. Augustine

“He who gives to the poor will lack nothing, but he who closes his eyes to them receives many curses”
 Proverbs 28.27

“If anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire”
 Revel 20.15

C.S. Lewis told of GRAVESTONE INSCRIPTION

“Here lies an atheist – all dressed up with no place to go”

Lewis added “I am sure he wishes that were so!”

4) Alone – No body in Hell to order around – ALL ALONE

RICH MAN DID NOT SAY “Oh, I am glad my brothers will be here to join me soon – what a good time we will all have”

Big Ed “I won’t mind going to Hell, I’ll have fun with all these guys”

Big Ed had FUN with some guys wife – THE GUY KILLED HIM

Hell is NOT FUN – NO PARTY – NO BODY TO SHARE IT WITH

Complete ABSENCE of Anything GOOD: Everything GOOD is from God

b. Blessing in Heaven – ANOTHER STRONG CONTRAST

LAZARUS = God has helped – SURELY HE DID

Sometimes QUESTIONED such a Name > God Helped!? Yeah, Right!

Why am I HUNGRY – HOMELESS & HURTING All thru My Life???

All our Questions from LIMITED Perspective > God sees BIG Picture

Nano-Seconds on Earth > Cannot be Compared with Eternal Joy in Christ

1) Carried – BODY MAY have been carried by Street Cleaners & Burned

v. 22 “the angels carried him to Abraham’s side”

IMMEDIATE – NO BURNING OFF SOME SINS IN PURGATORY

Jesus to thief on Cross

“I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise” Luke 23.43

Paul “to be away from the body is to be present with the Lord” 2 Corinthians 5.8

Peter – “You will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ”
2 Peter 1.11

The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory; and their bodies, being still united to Christ, do rest in their graves till the resurrection. Westminster Shorter Catechism, Answer 37

2) Comforted v. 25b “now he is comforted here”

IN LIFE HE RECEIVED HIS BAD THINGS – Now Comfort

David “The poor will eat and be satisfied; they who seek the Lord will praise him – may your hearts live forever” Psalm 22.26

v. 22 “the angels carried him to Abraham’s side / bosom”

IN LIFE HE COULD NOT EAT CRUMBS UNDER THE TABLE

IN DEATH HE IS AT HONORED POSITION AT TABLE

Reclining at the table next to the Father of our Faith

Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints. Psalm 116.15

GODLY SILENCE OF Saint LAZARUS

Never COMPLAINS about his SUFFERINGS on EARTH

Never GLOATS over the SUFFERINGS of the Rich Man in HELL

“God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away”

Revelation 21.4

3) Continuous

v. 26 “a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us”

Greek word Emp – This is the PURPOSE of the Chasm – NOT just Result

NO ONE WILL CROSS OVER

THIS LIFE is our ONLY CHANCE of GETTING RIGHT WITH GOD

Jesus “The Son of Man will send his angels and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all those who do evil. They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. And the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father.”

Matthew 13.41-43

4) Company – Rich Man was all alone in Hell – not Lazarus

when you see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God...People will come from east and west and north and south, and will take their places at the feast in the kingdom of God

Luke 13.28,29

COME FROM EAST & WEST – and ASIA and AFRICA & AMERICAS too!

Many times in LUKE – Preaching and Practice – Kingdom of GOD is FEAST

FIVE-STAR Grazing in Heaven – No Heart Disease, Diabetes, or Indigestion!

THERE WILL BE GREAT REUNION OF THE REDEEMED

“For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever”

1 Thessalonians 4.16,17

3. Life beyond the Grave?

a. Not Financial Status

POOR – Not All are RIGHTEOUS - Some Curse God for their Poverty

RICH – Not all are EVIL – Father Abraham was Rich

Spiritual Question – Not how Much DO you Have?

BUT – What do you DO with What you Have?

CANNOT TAKE MONEY WITH YOU– BUT CAN SEND IT AHEAD

v. 9 Jesus: “I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings”

USE MONEY TO SUPPORT THE GOSPEL - GET OTHERS TO HEAVEN

WHEN YOU get THERE you’ll be WELCOMED BY THOSE YOU HELPED

b. Who You Know – Lazarus was true child of Abraham

RICH MAN – called Abraham “Father” – but not Father of Faith

Abraham is “the father of all who believe” Romans 4.11

If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise
Galatians 3.29

MANY THINGS IN THIS LIFE ARE BASED ON RELATIONSHIPS

“it is all in who you know” SAME IS TRUE OF NEXT LIFE

The true children of Abraham – and the true children of God – are saved by grace through faith.
Philip Ryken

ETERNAL LIFE is to KNOW the ONLY TRUE GOD & His Son Jesus Christ

c. Affirmed by Scripture – Rich Man asked Miracle or Messenger

vs. 27,28 "He answered, `Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my father's house, for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.'

HORRORS of HELL so TERRIBLE > Man interested in MISSIONARY Work

Abraham pointed to SUFFICIENCY of MOSES – WORD OF GOD

Luke's Readers MUST be THINKING about RESURRECTION of JESUS
One of MOST FIRMLY Established FACTS in ALL of HISTORY
Yet how many MILLIONS remain UNCONVINCED and UNBELIEVING

REASON RICH MAN IN HELL – Ignored the Scriptures

Jesus "These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life" John 5.39,40

"These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name" John 20.31

"Faith comes through hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ" Rom 10.17

WHAT IS YOUR AUTHORITY AND HOPE?

Mohamed Atta - alleged ringleader of Sept. 11 attacks –

HAD A HOPE – REVEALED IN Note Found in his Luggage

"Everybody hates death. But only those believers who know life after death and the reward after death would be the ones who would be seeking death ... You will be entering paradise."
Mohamed Atta

Friedrich Engels, Karl Marx' faithful Partner and Financier:

"Heaven is to be sought in this life, not beyond" Friedrich Engels

WHO IS YOUR AUTHORITY? WHAT IS TRUTH? Live and Die for

Those HEARD Jesus tell these STORIES about MONEY > Unique Opportunity

KING Himself was PREACHER > brought VERY Kingdom of God

COMING of Jesus was WATERSHED – TURNING Point

ALL the Promises of GOD are NOW YES and AMEN in HIM

v. 14 The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John. Since that time, the good news of the kingdom of God is being preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it.

Are you FORCING Your WAY into HIS Kingdom

Like 4 Men who LOWERED their SICK Friend thru Roof to Get to Jesus

Like WOMAN who Pressed thru Crowd to Touch HIS Garment for Healing

Like the Blind Man who SCREAMED Out His Name in Desperate Faith

Christian Faith is NOT SPECTATOR Sport / NOT Way to GET RICH

As Jesus preached 2000 yrs ago – Palestinians tried bring Kingdom by Violence

NOTHING New under the SUN!

OUR Weapons are More Powerful – Divine Power – Change Human HEARTS

Men and Women who want to FIND and FOLLOW God must have Same ZEAL
EARNESTNESS – SELF-DENIAL – DETERMINATION – PRESSING IN!

know God / Know Jesus know Jesus / Know Scripture

CHRISTIANS – PEOPLE of the Book – ULTIMATE AUTHORITY Scripture
SURE AND CERTAIN HOPE IN GOD AND HIS HOLY WORD

“In the year 1899 two famous men died in America. One was an unbeliever who had made a career of attacking the Bible and arguing against Christian doctrines. The other was a Christian. The unbeliever was Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll, after whom the famous Ingersoll lectures on immortality at Harvard University are named. He died suddenly, his death coming as a terrible shock to this family. The body was kept in the home for several days because Ingersoll’s wife could not bear to part with it; it was finally removed because the corpse was decaying and the health of the family required it. After some time the corpse was cremated, and the display at the crematorium was so dismal that some of the scene was even picked up by the newspapers and communicated to the nation at large. Ingersoll had used his great intellect to deny the resurrection, but when death came there

was no hope. His relatives and friends received his departure as an uncompensated tragedy.

In the same year the great evangelist Dwight L. Moody died, but his death was a triumph for himself and his family. Moody had been declining for some time, and the family had taken turns being with him. On the morning of his death, his son, who was standing by the bedside, heard him exclaim, "Earth is receding; heaven is opening; God is calling." "You are dreaming, Father," the son said. Moody answered, "No, Will, this is no dream. I have been within the gates. I have seen the children's faces." For a while it seemed as if Moody were reviving, but he began to slip away again. He said, "Is this death? This is not bad; there is no valley. This is bliss. This is glorious." By this time his daughter was present and she began to pray for his recovery. He said, "No, no, Emma, don't pray for that. God is calling. This is my coronation day. I have been looking forward to it." Shortly after that Moody was received into heaven. At the funeral the family and friends joined in a joyful service. They spoke. They sang hymns. They heard the words proclaimed:

"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?...Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" 1 Corinthians 15.55-57

Luke 16

19. "There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day.

20. At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores

21. and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores.

22. "The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried.

23. In hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side.

24. So he called to him, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.'

25. "But Abraham replied, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony.

26. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.'

27. "He answered, 'Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my father's house,

28. for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.'

29. "Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.'

30. "'No, father Abraham,' he said, 'but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.'

31. "He said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.'"