

Lazarus and The Rich Man

"No servant can serve two masters," Jesus said. "You cannot serve both God and money."

The Pharisees, who loved money, sneered at him. "He wouldn't say that if he had money," the Pharisees thought. "Besides, our teachers taught us that God rewards those who serve him. Our money shows that God is blessing us. Jesus thinks God wants His chosen people to be poor? Everyone knows that being poor is a punishment from God."

"What people value highly is detestable in God's sight," Jesus said.

A disciple said, "You know how proud the Pharisees are of their wealth. They believe that large amounts of money show that God is pleased with them."

"There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day," said Jesus. "At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table."

"What did the rich do to receive those blessings of God?" The Pharisees asked.

"I would like to know what Lazarus did to deserve such misery. I would not want to be him," thought another.

Jesus continued his story. *"The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side.*

The rich man also died and was buried."

"It probably was a glorious funeral!" thought the Pharisees. "But we are surprised that Lazarus was with Abraham. What is going on?" they asked.

Jesus continued. *"In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side."*

The Pharisees were amazed. "How could a beggar be with Abraham and a rich and blessed man be sent to hell?" This bothered the Pharisees.

Jesus continued telling his story. The rich man shouted, *"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."*

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

The rich man thought of his five brothers (who also had many possessions). *"Then I beg you father, send Lazarus to my family, for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they won't also come to this place of torment."*

