

A person in a white robe is walking away from the viewer on a vast, golden sand dune. The sky is a deep, dark blue, filled with stars and nebulae. A large, glowing, translucent blue cube is positioned in the background, with the word 'LUKE' written in large, white, block letters on its front face. The overall atmosphere is one of mystery and spiritual journey.

LUKE

THE SAVIOR'S SAGA

FOR THE SON OF MAN
CAME TO SEEK AND TO SAVE
THAT WHICH WAS LOST

LIVING IN THE LAP OF MISERY

LUKE 16:15-31

IS CHRIST BOTH SAVIOR AND LORD?

The wrong choice with that one decision can leave you
living in the lap of misery.

I. TWO VERY DIFFERENT DEATHS *Luke 16:19-22*

- One rich man who had everything this world has to offer.
- One beggar who had nothing this world had to offer.

A STORY OF HAVES AND HAVE NOTS

- One of the cardinal truths of the human condition is that life has not ever been, nor will it ever be, fair. There are wonderful, godly rich people and terrible, godless poor people and vice versa.
- The *rich man* in our story died thinking he was “all that.” In this life, he had it all—*yet his heart was cold and calloused.*
 - The *poor man* died knowing he was nothing. In this life, he had nothing, but his heart was soft and tender.
- The *rich man* received what he had earned—**JUDGMENT.**
 - The *poor man* received what he had not earned—**GRACE.**

Grace and mercy is the answer for both men!

II. TWO VERY DIFFERENT DESTINIES v. 23-31

- The **rich man** was now LIVING IN THE LAP OF MISERY. The **poor man** was now in Paradise.
- A legion of angels came to take him to “**Abraham’s Bosom**,” a poetic description of the place the righteous dwelt in **Sheol**—the abode of the dead.
- Today at death, we are not left to find our own way home as a wandering apparition. No boatman needs a coin to be paid to guide us over the *River Stix*. There are only two places one can go—Heaven or *Sheol*.
- Our final and eternal destiny is settled prior to the taking of our last breath—saved or unsaved, Heaven or Hades.

Grace and forgiveness. Judgement and damnation.

WHAT IS ABRAHAM'S BOSOM? **GEN. 25:8**

When Abraham died, he was “gathered to his people.”

In our passage, there were clearly two parts of this abode.

- These were the two compartments of Sheol that, prior to the Lord’s sacrificial death on the cross, used to both contain souls of the dead. Both compartments were in Sheol, *the abode of the dead*.
- One for the righteous dead, **Abraham’s Bosom (v. 22)** or *Paradise*, and the other for the unrighteous dead, **Hades (v. 23)**, or what we will also come to ultimately know as **hell**.

*One side is a place of blessing and the other, well,
not so much—it’s a place of torment.*

WHAT ABOUT TODAY?

So what happened to these two places? Do they still exist?

- You might be thinking, Doesn't the Bible say all Christians at death are "absent from the body and present with the Lord" now?
- Yes. It very much does say exactly that in **2 Cor. 5:6-7**.
- We are given a clue about the whole picture in **Eph. 4:7-10**.

So the only inhabitants still there are the unrighteous dead—like the rich man in our story.

- Jesus went into Sheol to Abraham's Bosom, the "Paradise" Jesus referred to as He spoke to the thief on the cross (**Luke 23:43**). And there He set free all who died in faith before the Messiah, those awaiting Christ's death and resurrection, so that they and all who died after them could go home to heaven, just as He did when He first ascended.

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE OTHER HALF— THOSE IN HADES?

So now, only the unrighteous dead are located in Hades or, literally, hell. A place of torment, but it will get infinitely worse one day.

- They are there still awaiting the final judgment of the Lord at the Great White Throne where they will be cast into the Lake of Fire for all eternity.
- This is what the Bible calls the Great White Throne Judgement, also known as the Second Death. **Rev 20:11-15**
- In the tormented side of the *Abuso—Sheol*, known as *Hades*, the dwelling place of the unrighteous dead—the rich man could see, hear, and speak. He could feel. He could reason, and, above all, he could remember.

Before the Lord's resurrection and ascension, *Hades* was located in “*the lower parts of the earth.*” **Eph. 4:9**

THE STORY CONTINUES

Now we pick back up the **Story of Two Destinies**. For those without Christ, this life is all there is!

- The rich man was dead. He was buried, but he was still very much alive. Literally, he was the *living dead*.
- The truth of the Bible is that all the *physically dead* are not actually dead at all. They are very much alive.

The only question is: **where will you be alive after you physically die? Where is your eternal living going to take place?**

- Heaven with its eternal glories in the presence of the Lord where there is no suffering or pain, but instead, fullness of Joy? Or...
- Hades, the place that all those who die without Christ go, which is a real place filled with real people?

A place of eternal torment, pain and anguish.

YOU MUST PERSONALLY CHOOSE WHERE YOU WANT TO LIVE ETERNALLY

Our eternal destiny is based on our love for God and our faith in His Son, as the Holy Spirit reveals the truth of the Gospel.

- This is a volitional choice made of your own free will.
- It is fixed at physical death and cannot be changed. **Rev. 22:11**

There is a chasm that can only be *crossed* over through faith in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior—the Cross of our salvation.

- It is believing in the only begotten Son of God—that He paid the price of our freedom. He has made us righteous, justifying us freely by His blood

What keeps a lost person in hell?

- An open wound! The chasm—a debt that none of us can pay ourselves!

A POWERFUL PIECE OF PREACHING

What keeps a saved person in heaven?

Lazarus sure knew the answer to this dilemma.

- An open wound that pleads the blood of Christ to cancel God's wrath.
- The preaching of the cross is only effective for the living while they walk this earth—there are no do-overs once your ticket is punched to leave.
- Today is the day of salvation—tomorrow is promised to no one. You may never get another chance. **2 Cor. 6:2; James 4:13-14**

When the rich man awoke in hell, he suddenly was a believer in the power of preaching the truth.

Don't be caught living in the lap of misery.
Believe and be saved—**pick your destiny today!**