2020

The Afterlife: An Exegetical and Theological Analysis of Christ's Discourse in Luke 16: 19-31

Pop-Coman Ioan
Andrews University

ABSTRACT

THE AFTERLIFE:
AN EXEGETICAL AND THEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF CHRIST'S DISCOURSE IN LUKE 16:19-31

by
Pop-Coman Ioan

Adviser: Moț Laurențiu-Florentin

ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE RESEARCH

Thesis

Andrews University

Seventh – Day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: THE AFTERLIFE: AN EXEGETICAL AND THEOLOGICAL ALALYSIS OF CHRIST'S DISCOURSE IN LUKE 16:19-31

Name of researcher: Pop-Coman Ioan

Name and degree of faculty adviser: Moț Laurențiu-Florentin, Ph.D.

Date completed: December 2020

Problem

The parable of the rich man and poor Lazarus, in terms of its complexity and construction, is one of the most difficult decipherable parables that Jesus uttered during His time among men. With much tact, we will try to answer a question that has profound implications: Does the narrative in Luke 16: 19-31 support the existence of life after death?

Purpose

We carefully examine the Christ's discourse in Luke 16: 19-31 in order to identify those suggestive parallels between this account of Jesus and the culture of the time, which would help us to decode more clearly both the reason and the message of this story.

Method

The preamble of our démarche proposes the stylistic analysis of this biblical passage where we will examine if the narrative is indeed or not a parable. Moreover, in order to decode precisely the Christ's message, we will take into account the issues that precede the prologue of this narrative; in contrast with the descriptions of the rich and the poor before passing out of existence, but especially after death.

The subject of analysis in the middle section of the research will have to analyze the claim of the afterlife. Once arrived at the apparently hot topic of the research (hell) will be analyzed in detail the four biblical terms that are shaping the geography of hell besieged by the Judeo-Pagan cultural converge.

Beyond the timeliness of this fundamentally recurring theme, the epilogue depicts, in what way the sublimity of Christ's discourse, through intrinsic biblical truth itself, unanimously discloses the aspects that decisively influence the individual [and the neighbor] both in this life but especially in the afterlife.

Conclusion

The parable with the rich man and poor Lazarus (Luke 16: 19-31) is not intended to portray the afterlife. This parable instead of building a positive teaching about the conditions of the afterlife is set out precisely to deconstruct popular views on the afterlife, and functions as a parody on popular tales about communication with the dead. Therefore, this parable cannot be used as a definitive statement about the afterlife, since parables were told to illustrate a point, not to give a systematic account of any doctrine.

The more the Greek philosophy grew in influence, the more the unbiblical conception of the immortality of the soul had to be (re)adapted. However, by separating the soul from the body, new pretensions of interpreting hell appeared. Due to that fact,

Jesus, instead of telling the reality about the afterlife directly, uses these complex figurative images precisely to meet people in their field.

Jesus was the Son of God, a brilliant thinker and also the greatest communicator. Therefore He chooses to illustrate with a caricature: what would later be called hell. Observing the errors of interpretation of this recurring theme, Jesus analyzes the claim of the afterlife! In order to save the core of this great theme, given the socioreligious context of that time, Jesus will untie it! To accomplish this difficult task, Jesus masterfully chooses to introduce it into the concepts of Jewish tradition and Greek philosophy that were deeply rooted in the minds of His listeners.

Looking at the last instance to the four terms that refer to the afterlife, we conclude that despite efforts to harmonize this doctrine satisfactorily, if we stick to the OT concept of this term we are not put in the situation to force the primary biblical meanings only to be able to adapt it to the motives and pretensions of the Persian and Greek culture that were fashionable in those times; even if they have familiar echoes today.

As explicitly stated in the last part of the parable, Jesus leads His listeners to embrace exclusively the teachings of the Old Testament. By accepting (only) the Scripture of that time, Jesus is convinced that hell, with all its attached phraseology, will simply be demystified. Moreover, a faithful Scripture approach not only extinguishes your fear of an eternal fiery hell —the hottest point of the narrative — but with the appeasement of this fear, it practically quenches the very flames of hell.

Andrews University

Seventh – Day Adventist Theological Seminary

THE AFTERLIFE:
AN EXEGETICAL AND THEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF CHRIST'S DISCOURSE IN LUKE 16:19-31

A Thesis

Presented In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

Pop-Coman Ioan

2020

THE AFTERLIFE:
AN EXEGETICAL AND THEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF CHRIST'S DISCOURSE IN LUKE 16:19-31

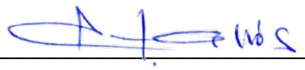
A thesis
presented in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
Master of Arts

by

Pop-Coman Ioan

APPROVAL BY THE COMMITTEE:

Laurentiu Florentin Mot, Ph.D., Advisor



Zoltan Szallos-Farkas, Ph.D.

11/11/2020

Date approved

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS viii

Chapter

1. INTRODUCTION 1
   - *Is this narrative a parable?* 2
   - *The context of Christ's discourse* 6
2. PORTRAITS IN CONTRAST 8
   - *The Rich Man* 8
   - *The Poor* 10
3. EXACT DESCRIPTION OF THE AFTERLIFE 14
   - *Abraham's bosom* 14
   - *Geography of Hell* 18
     - *Hades* 18
     - *Gehenna* 24
     - *The abyss and tartarus* 28
     - *The outer darkness* 29
4. THE CHASM BETWEEN DEATH AND LIFE 33
5. THE UNIQUE LANGUAGE OF SCRIPTURE 37
   - *Why does Jesus tell this story this way?* 44
6. CONCLUSIONS 49

BIBLIOGRAPHY 57

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

1-2 CHR	1-2 Chronicles
1-2 COR	1-2 Corinthians
1-2 SAM	1-2 Samuel
1-2 TIM	1-2 Timothy
1-2 THES	1-2 Thessalonians
DAN	Daniel
DEUT	Deuteronomy
ECCL	Ecclesiastes
EZEK	Ezekiel
GEN	Genesis
HOS	Hosea
ISA	Isaiah
JER	Jeremiah
JN	John
LXX	Septuagint
MAL	Malachi
MATT	Matthew
MK	Mark
NEH	Nehemiah
NM	Numbers
NT	New Testament
OT	Old Testament
PROV	Proverbs
PS/PSS	Psalm/Psalms
REV	Revelation
ZEC	Zechariah

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The parable of the Rich Man and poor Lazarus, in terms of its complexity and construction, is one of the most difficult decipherable parables that Jesus uttered during His time among men. In this paper I propose for analysis, step by step, some aspects that decisively influence the individual [and the neighbor] both in this life but especially in the afterlife.

With much tact, we will try to answer a question that has profound implications: Does the narrative in Luke 16: 19-31 support the existence of life after death?

We carefully examine the Christ's discourse in Luke 16: 19-31 in order to identify those suggestive parallels between this account of Jesus and the culture of the time, which would help us to decode more clearly both the reason and the message of this story.

Relying on correct hermeneutics, this research will also provide answers to pressing questions such as: Is this account of Jesus Christ really a parable; or is it a real story?; What actually happens to those who die?; Is there a connection between the way you live your life on earth and the afterlife?; Is there life after death?; Can the dead communicate between them and/or with the living?; Can the dead do anything for those who are still living on earth?

Is this narrative a parable?

This parable raised a lot of questions. Can this story be technically identified as a parable? How much information can be obtained from this parable about the afterlife? How do critics view this story?

Some scholars[1] say that the story does not have the necessary elements to be considered a parable because a parable is a representation of everyday life in which certain repeatable phenomena are used. This position is supported from several directions. First, it is not called a parable (such as Luke 8:4; 12:16, 41; 13:6; 15:3; 18-9), nor does it benefit from an explicit introduction that would suggest that it was a parable (for example Luke 13:18, 20).

> Sometimes attention is called to the fact that Jesus does not state that the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus is a parable, at least apparently in so far as Luke's account goes (although one ancient manuscript [D] does call it a parable), whereas, elsewhere parables are usually so labeled (Matt. 13:3, 24, 33, 44, 45, 47). But it should be pointed out that although Jesus usually introduced a parable either by stating that it was a parable or by saying that the kingdom of heaven was like a person or a thing in the specific circumstances He then proceeded to relate, He did not always do so (see Luke 15:8, 11; 16:1 for examples). The same is true of various Old Testament parables such as those of Judges 9:8–15 and 2 Kings 14:9, yet no one professes to believe that because these parables are not clearly labeled as such they are to be taken literally. The fallacy of such an argument is rendered obvious by a mere reading of the few references cited.[2]

However, these considerations are not decisive because not all parables have an explicit introduction. We often identify an introduction to the first parable of the chapter, which is also relevant to the following parables presented[3] (such as Luke 15:1,

---

[1] Eta Linneman, *The Parables of Jesus: Introduction and Exposition* (London, UK: SPCK, 1966), 5.
[2] Francis D. Nichol, *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary: The Holy Bible With Exegetical and Expository Comment* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1978), Lk 16:19.
[3] Robert James Utley, *The Gospel According to Luke* (Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International, 2004), Lk 16:19-31.

8, 11; 16: 1, 19). This exposition is a rather unusual parable because it has no introduction or explicit application.

Second, the characters in the parable have names[4], unlike other parables where the characters are unnamed or belong to generic categories that focus on ordinary, everyday things. The passage is also unique in portraying the afterlife, not just the judgment or the banquet as it would seem at first.

So, from a technical point of view, this narrative is not a simple parable. Moreover, the account in Luke 16:19-31 can be called an illustration[5], along with The Story of the Good Samaritan, the story of The man to whom the land bore fruit, or the story of The tax collector and the Pharisee. Moreover, the account of the Rich Man and poor Lazarus could be considered an example story.[6]

The example stories, mentioned above, fall into a special category: sub-parable.[7] The sub-parables offers lessons about real life compared to a purely hypothetical situation. Therefore, to call this section of Luke 16:19-31 a parable is not entirely incorrect.

Example-type stories, those that fall into the category of subclass of parables, paint a type of behavior that should not be followed.[8] Just as in the case of the Good Samaritan, this subclass of the parable does not seek to fix a historical event, but deals mainly with the representation of a certain type of behavior.

Finally, some early church scholars read this passage, as it appears in the introduction of Codex Bezae[9] (a Greek manuscript dating from the early fifth century

[4] Mark C. Black, *Luke* (Joplin, MO: College Press Pub., 1996), Lk 16:19.
[5] Linneman, *Jesus of the Parables: Introduction and Exposition*, 16.
[6] Joseph A. Fitzmayer, *The Gospel according to Luke* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1985), 1126.
[7] Craig L. Blomberg, *Interpreting the Parables* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1990), 73.
[8] Rudolph Bultmann, *The History of the Synoptic Tradition* (New York, NY: Harper & Row/Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1963), 178.
[9] Utley, *The Gospel According to Luke*, Lk 16:19-31.

that had 415 pages and included New Testament passages): “And He said another parable”.

The story is unique to Luke. Its uniqueness has led some to wonder if a special message is coded here[10]; about life and death, or about life after death. Although this vehement critique of Jesus toward the rich existed despite the tradition of the time, Luke emphasizes it far more than others (Matthew 19:16-24; Mark 10:17-25; Luke 6:20-24). It is important to note that the parable is not against wealth itself, but against that kind of wealth that changes the human heart. The story of the Rich Man and poor Lazarus unfolds in two stages: highlighting the resurrection aspect (Luke 16:19-26) and highlighting the behavioral aspect of others.

This two-stages, two-step rhetorical structure was common in Jesus' speeches (Matthew 20:1-16; 22:1-14; Luke 15:11-13). The parable has been unified.[11] Regarding the historical aspect of the parable, we recognize the direct appeal to the significance of the resurrection, a widespread theme in ancient Judaism.

The story at its base has parallels in the culture of the time. In Egypt, for example, one can identify a story about the fine man dressed in royal robes and the poor man on the mat.[12] On the other hand, Judaism itself recognizes the story of a rich tax collector named *Bar Ma'jan* and a simple teacher of the law.[13] In both stories, the roles of the two active characters are reversed in the afterlife.

At a first analysis, taking into consideration the mentioned aspects, we conclude: the narrative in Luke 16:19-31 would not have all the necessary elements to be considered as a parable because, first of all, it is not called a parable, nor does it

[10] Kurt Aland, *Synopsis Quattuor Evangelorum* (Stuttgart, DE: Deutsche Bibelstiftung, 1985), 228.
[11] Dominic J. Crossan, *In Parables: The Challenge of the Historical Jesus* (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1973), 66-67.
[12] John M. Creed, *The Gospel according to St. Luke* (London, UK: Macmillan, 1930), 209-210.
[13] Jacob Neusner, *The Talmud of the Land of Israel: A Preliminary Translation and Explanation* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 57.

benefit from an explicit introduction that would imply that it is an example, nor does it have an explicit application. Then, the characters in the parable have names, unlike other parables where the characters are unnamed or belong to generic categories that focus on ordinary, everyday things, in which certain repeatable phenomena are used.

Equally, to call this section of Luke 16:19-31 a parable is not entirely incorrect because technically, the exposition is not a simple parable but falls into a special category: sub-parables. The sub-parable offers lessons about real life compared to a purely hypothetical situation. Moreover, this story could be called an illustration, it could be considered an example story. Example-type stories, those that fall into the category of subclass of parables, paint a type of behavior that should not be followed.

The context of Christ's discourse

„This is the fifth in a series of parables in chapters 15 and 16."[14] „The Parable of The Rich Man and Lazarus (or *dives* according to the Latin interpretation of πλούσιος, *plousios*) is the second lesson about the prosperity of chapter 16 of the Gospel of Luke." [15] The first lesson on welfare is illustrated by the parable of the unfaithful steward.

Looking at the context of the exposition, we notice that the aspect of wealth is introduced by Jesus beginning with the Parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32). The development of this element of well-being appears gradually, against the background of a misunderstanding of the theology of wealth. Through this strategic placement, Jesus would convey that it was precisely wealth, which was considered a sign of divine grace that could lead them away from salvation.

„In this chapter, Luke emphasizes the aspect of wealth as: wasting wealth (16:1–12), coveting wealth (16:13–18) and worshiping wealth (16:19–31)." [16] First, the parable of the unfaithful steward presents us with a master and a steward. The steward loses his sense of responsibility and becomes a spendthrift. Analyzing all his management activities, we see how deficient he carries out his activity and how easily he wastes the capital of his good master. He doesn't seem to notice the difference between enjoying property or enjoying possession. Recklessly, he overlooks the fact that he is more than responsible for managing the things entrusted to him.

Before we begin our specific analysis, gradually following the Christ's discourse, we identify a vehement rebuke of the Pharisees (16:13-18). Jesus, who was

[14] Utley, *The Gospel According to Luke*, Lk 16:19-31.
[15] Darrell L. Bock, *Luke* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1996), 1373.
[16] Warren W. Wiersbe, *Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the New Testament* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1997, c1992), 185.

so different from the Pharisees, as one who read them like an open book, touched them at their most sensitive point: the act of coveting. The Pharisees, who were rich and of high spiritual stature in their eyes and those of the people, would meet the humblest of men. The same Pharisees, hypocrites (Matt. 23:14; Titus 1:11) and in any case very detestable, paradoxically enjoyed the admiration of the religious people of that time. So different was the way of Jesus from the way of the Pharisees: one was of humility and the other of pride. This contrasting confluence created the right occasion for Jesus to frame this aspect of worshiping wealth in a completely unusual discourse.

So, let's get closer to the subject of our study: The Parable of the Rich and Poor Lazarus.

CHAPTER II

PORTRAITS IN CONTRAST

The Rich Man

„When Jesus says there was a certain rich man, very probably might have been a Pharisee, and one that justified himself before men*;* a very honest, as well as honorable gentleman."[17] „Jesus chooses to leave the rich man in the parable unnamed, because surely it was not proper to mention his name on this occasion."[18] Even if the rich man dressed expensively and lived on a big footing, he remains anonymous; while the poor man, in contrast to the treacherous implications of wealth, receives a specific name. The rich man, whose portrait we glimpse, is so well defined by the earthly values he holds.

The purple, the detail that targeted the appearance of the garment, was a dark red to purple colored matter, extracted in ancient times from a mollusk (today prepared in a synthetic way). The purple clothes were dyed this color and were extremely expensive.[19] Πορφύρα (*porphyra*, the purple) most likely referred to outerwear.[20]

The thin flax linen βύσσος (*byssos*) referred to the underwear[21]. „Tyrian purple was used only by princes; it was priced at 1000 denarii the pound, each of the little shell-fish from which it was made yielding a few drops of dye".[22] The underwear was an item

[17] John Wesley, *Wesley's Notes: Luke* (Albany, OR: Ages Software, 1999), Lk 16:19.
[18] Simon J. Kistemaker, *The Parables of Jesus* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1980), 236-237.
[19] Thomas W. Manson, *The Sayings of Jesus: As Recorded in the Gospels according to St. Matthew and St. Luke* (London, UK: SCM, 1949), 298.
[20] Henry W. Luce, *The Gospel according to St. Luke* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1933), 268.
[21] John F. Walvoord, Roy B. Zuck and Dallas Theological Seminary, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 2:247.
[22] John Bond, *The Gospel According to St. Luke* (London, UK: Macmillan, 1890), 134.

of clothing that only a certain category of people could afford, the others being deprived of this privilege.

„He was clothed in purple and fine linen. That is the description of the robes of the High Priests, and such robes cost anything from 40$ to 50$, an immense sum in days when a working man's wage was about 4 cents a day."[23] This comfortable life was the ordinary life that the rich man enjoyed all the days of his life, a life in which he had everything he wanted.

„He feasted in luxury every day. The word used for feasting is the word that is used for a gourmet feeding on exotic and costly dishes. If any respectable Jew kept the law, which had The Ten Commandments in its center, among all its precepts, the Sabbath of the fourth commandment was of great importance."[24] We could say that the seventh day was not seen as a unique day, as long as the rich man did not look at this day differently from all the others. Under the same commandment would come another provision that the rich violate: work. The commandment expressly states that there should be six days of work and one day of rest, while, looking at his daily exuberance, it is unlikely that he had worked at least one day, or more, but in no case six days in a row.

„In fact, in the mentality of that time, the more blessed you were, the closer you were to God. For the audience of Jesus, often, blessing was linked to wealth. Jesus chooses to portray these two characters by contrast to point the reverse: if you are rich, does not necessarily mean that you are righteous."[25] All these prefaced aspects are extremely useful in our approach to decipher precisely the message of Christ's discourse.

---

[23] William Barclay, *The Gospel of Luke* (Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 2000, c1975), 213.
[24] Bultman, *The History of the Synoptic Tradition*, 774.
[25] *Ibid.*

The Poor

The contrast between the condition of the rich man and that of the poor man is violent.[26] The Hebrew name לְעָזָר (Lazarus) contradicts אֶלְעָזָר (Eleazar).[27] „Also, the Greek name Lazarus does not come, as some have thought, from Lo-ezer, no help, but from El-ezer, God helps; whence the form Eleazar, abbreviated by the Rabbis into Leazar; and hence Lazarus."[28]

In addition, the specification of the name Lazarus is the only occasion[29] on which Jesus, throughout his accounts, gives a character a specific name. Therefore, this particularity must have a special significance in this story.

„Jesus chooses this specific name because it was so common in the Jewish context. By using this name Jesus intended to identify the beggar as a child of God."[30] Even though the common name and the poverty make Lazarus seem unimportant, both the person and his situation were well known before God.

„Lazarus, by his name it may be conjectured, he was of no mean family, though it was thus reduced. There was no reason for our Lord to conceal his name, which probably was then well known. Theophylact observes according to the tradition of the Hebrews that he lived at Jerusalem."[31] Let's not forget that each name that was chosen by the parents and then given to the Jewish children designed a series of character traits that they later wanted to develop in the child. One of the reasons why Jesus names a character of the exposition is to emphasize the contrast between those who had a solid

[26] Manson, *The Sayings of Jesus: As Recorded in the Gospels according to St. Matthew and St. Luke*, 298.
[27] Roderic Dunkerley, *Lazarus* (Baltimore, MD: Penguin, 1958), 159.
[28] Walvoord el all, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, 2:247.
[29] Joachim Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster/London, UK: SCM, 1963), 185.
[30] W. A. Criswell, ed. *Believer's Study Bible* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1997, c1995), Lk 16:20.
[31] Wesley, *Wesley's Notes: Luke*, Lk 16:20.

financial situation, usually the Pharisees, and the poor, that is, those who were lacking this kind of support and were supported in life only by their relationship with God.

Lazarus was very poor (πτωχός, *ptōchos*) so he was at the gate of the rich man hoping to get something to eat. He was probably a cripple[32] and, therefore, standing in front of the gate. The passive form ἐβέβλητο (*ebeblēto*, lay) illustrates[33] someone too ill to move.

Lazarus lies in front of the rich adorned gate of the rich man's villa. The term used to describe the richly decorated gate is Πυλών (*pylōn*), a term used to describe the entrance gate of cities, temples or palaces. [34] Not only is Lazarus an invalid, he also suffers from the fact that his body is full of scars (ἑλκόω, *helkoō*),[35] surface ulcers or abscesses. This condition contrasts strikingly with the impeccable prestige of the rich.

Moreover, the rabbis considered Lazarus "cursed" in this life. The reason why the rabbis held this view is confused with a saying of the time[36], namely: Life does not make sense in three situations: when you depend on food from the table of others, when it is led by your wife and when your body is full of sores. Fulfilling two of these three conditions, Lazarus' situation appears desperate and tragic, compared to the sumptuousness and accomplishments of the rich man in our passage.

Lazarus had a basic need: to eat - even leftovers[37] (ἐπιθυμέω, *epithymeō*, refers to a strong desire, often involving the desire to eat, which is also identified in Luke 15:16). „In that time, the common people were fortunate if they ate meat once in the

[32] Josephus Flavius and William Whiston, *The works of Josephus: Complete and Unabridgged* (Preabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996), 629.
[33] *Ibid.*
[34] G. Kittel, G. Friedrich, G. W. Bromiley, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964), 921.
[35] W. Bauer, W. F. Arndt, F. W. Gingrich, and F. W. Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 729.
[36] Manson, *The Sayings of Jesus: As Recorded in the Gospels according to St. Matthew and St. Luke*, 299.
[37] Fitzmayer, *The Gospel according to Luke*, 118.

week, and they toiled for six days of the week. By then, there were no knives, forks or napkins. Food was eaten with the hands and, in very wealthy houses, the hands were cleansed by wiping them on hunks of bread, which were then thrown away."[38] Most likely Lazarus longed for those leftover bread that no one claimed.

All Lazarus wants is leftovers. There was not much of a demand, as long as the leftovers were thrown away. However, some claim that Lazarus was fed,[39] but the parallel between this scene and the scene in Hades when the rich man does not receive even a drop of water leads us to the conclusion[40] that Lazarus was not fed or, moreover, that he would not have been fed, he hadn't received not even a piece.

In addition, Lazarus has to endure wild dogs licking his wounds. There can be no more impressive scene than this. Lazarus demanded food from a clean man[41] and he, embarrassedly, receives the attention of unclean animals. From every angle you look at this story, it is clear that the rich man is blessed, while Lazarus is not. Lazarus never speaks in the parable, he just suffers alone in silence.

„This story, sheds light on the misconceptions that they have about wealth and poverty, blessing or course or about God and human. It is not stated why the poor one is accepted and the wealthy rejected, but in the larger context it is related to how they used their wealth (or lack of it cf. Deut. 28 vs. Job and Ps. 73)."[42] Their spiritual lives were not revealed by the physical circumstances. In the story, the rich man's refusal to observe and get involved in the lives of those around him clearly showed that he was in love with himself and that no one else (much less an anonymous) entered this framework.

---

[38] Barclay, *The Gospel of Luke*, 213.
[39] Luce, *The Gospel according to St. Luke*, 269.
[40] William F. Arndt, *The Gospel according to St. Luke* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1956), 364.
[41] Lawrence O. Richards, *The Bible Readers Companion* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1991), 667.
[42] Utley, *The Gospel According to Luke*, Lk 16:22.

All the details are necessary to be able to decode the Christ's discourse. How strong and colorful the contrasts are. The rich man remains unnamed by Jesus, even though he had a reputation (or a great name) in front of other people, while the poor man is the only character named of all the characters presented by Jesus in the parable: the very name meaning God helps. The rich do not feel dependent on God while the poor have only God. In the eyes of those of that time, the rich man enjoyed divine favor, while the poor man was cursed. The rich man was healthy and cheerful, surrounded by noble friends, the poor man is hungry, probably crippled, and surrounded by unclean animals.

CHAPTER III

EXACT DESCRIPTION OF THE AFTERLIFE

Abraham's bosom

Time passes and Lazarus dies. In a way, our story is reversed. His death is part of the specifics of Luke's own style (ἐγένετο δέ [*egeneto de*], "with time ..."). The imperfect[43] of this term appears 32 times in Luke and Acts, only once in Mark and in Matthew it does not appear on any occasion. Following the line of the parable, death is not the end, so the story goes on.

Lazarus was taken to Abraham's bosom by angels. The escort is a fairly common scene in Jewish culture. In Christian Apocrypha, these scenes are presented in detail[44], with angels fighting for the souls of the dead. A similar scene is captured in Jude 9. The rich folklore of the Jews presents us with angels who not only escort but also fight for the souls of the dead.

„Abraham's bosom, a Jewish figurative expression, apparently refers to a place of paradise or heaven for Old Testament believers at the time of death (cf. Luke 23:43; 2 Cor. 12:4)." [45]

Also, „Abraham's bosom, a figure also common among the Rabbis, denotes either intimate communion in general (John 1:18), or more specially the place of honor at a

[43] Fitzmayer, *The Gospel according to Luke*, 118.
[44] Wilhem Schneemelcher, *New Testament Apocrypha* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1992), 2720-2721.
[45] Walvoord el all, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, 2:247.

feast (John 13:23)"[46]; because it was believed that the greater the suffering on earth, the greater the joys of heaven.

„By the phrase, Abraham's bosom, an allusion is made to the custom at Jewish feasts, when three persons reclining on their left elbows on a couch, the person whose head came near the breast of the other, was said to lie in his bosom."[47] So it is said of the beloved disciple, John 13:25!

According to that time's tradition, „true Israelites and especially martyrs were expected to share with Abraham in the world to come. The most honored seat in a banquet would be nearest the host, reclining in such a way that one's head was near his bosom."[48] Even though in the culture of the time the good would be carried by angels after passing away, we can see that Jesus in his speech does not say that the wicked who passed away are also carried by demons.

„The Talmud mentions both paradise (see 23:43) and Abraham's side (traditionally „bosom") as the home of the righteous."[49] Abraham's bosom lured every deceased Jew to a frame of uninterrupted blessings and gave everyone the courage to be like the great patriarch himself.

This scene, by its origin, is seen as a parallel to the bosom of Mother Earth which was the Greek reference for the abode of the dead. Likewise, Abraham's bosom is a place for those who are „expected of the parents" (Genesis 15:15; 47:30; Deuteronomy 31:16; Judges 2:10; 1 Kings 1:21)[50]. Abraham's bosom was a place of the ceremony in which the patriarch offered a solemn reception to the faithful in heaven.

---

[46] Frédéric Louis Godet, Edward William Shalders, M. D. Cusin, *A Commentary on the Gospel of St. Luke* (New York, NY: I. K. Funk, 1881), 2:177.
[47] Adam Clarke, *Clarke's Commentary: Luke* (Albany, OR: Ages Software, 1999), Lk 16:21.
[48] Craig S. Keener and InterVarsity Press, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), Lk 16:22.
[49] Robert G. Hoeber, *Concordia Self-Study Bible* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Pub. House, 1997), Lk 16:22.
[50] J. H. Moulton and G. Milligan, *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament: Illustrated from the Papyri and Other Non-literary Sources* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1980), 353.

Lazarus, from the lonely and suffering man who stood at the gate of the rich man, becomes a saint accepted in the bosom of Abraham. Some speculate[51] that, at this stage of the story, Lazarus would even be at the table of a sumptuous banquet, a situation reversed from the experience lived on earth, but this is not explicitly described; there is no other reference to a banquet elsewhere in the parable.

„In Proverbs 22:2 it says that the rich and the poor meet together before the Lord for He hath created them both. According to the parable after death, these two men from the opposite ends of the social spectrum see each other."[52] What a view, though! Death reduces the status of the rich people. Wealth doesn't matter at all. Extravagance is transformed into poverty. Death changes everything for good. Anticipating a little what follows, we notice here an inverted situation compared to the one in the first part of the story; here the character who looks up longingly is the rich man. „This action is highlighted by the verb „to see" in the present tense ὁρᾷ (*hora).*"[53]

Briefly resuming the thread of the narrative, along with the striking contrasts of the two characters during life, we add, after death, new ones. [54] Both the rich man and the poor man die. The rich man is buried lavishly, the poor man is left outside like garbage. Both are presented to us as conscious after their death. The poor man is escorted by angels in Abraham's bosom, while the rich man reaches the place of the dead.

For a clear understanding of this exposition, we will have to analyze the claim of life after death! It is necessary to take a trip and take a look at the social-religious

[51] Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus*, 184.
[52] Jon Courson, *Jon Courson's Application Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2003), 382.
[53] F. Blass, A. Debrunner, and R. W. Funk, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1961), 141.
[54] Courson, *Jon Courson's Application Commentary*, 382.

context of the time. [55] Next, we will examine how deep the roots of this exposition[56] are in Old Testament teaching, Jewish tradition, and Greek philosophy.

[55] Matthew Poole, *Matthew Poole's Commentary on the New Testament* (Houston, TX: Banner of Truth, 1963), Lk 16:23.
[56] Godet, Shalders, Cusin, *A Commentary on the Gospel of St. Luke*, 2:177-178.

Geography of Hell

There are four terms in the Bible which relate to the afterlife: *Hades, gehenna, abyss* (or *tartarus*) and the outer darkness.[57]

Hades

„The Septuagint used *hadēs* to translate the Hebrew *šᵉ'ôl* (the place of the dead) on 61 occasions."[58] „In the Old Testament the dead are gathered to non-conscious but silent and inactive holding place called *Sheol*. *Hadēs* is also the abode of the unsaved dead prior to the great white throne judgment (Rev. 20:11-15)."[59]

„The LXX used Hades almost exclusively to translate *šᵉ‛ôl*, the most common Old Testament term for the realm of the dead. The Old Testament says little about *Sheol*; it was apparently a gloomy underworld (Isa. 7:11) where all the dead went (Gen. 42:38; Eccl. 9:10)."[60] It is possible that both the Hebrew concept of Sheol and the Greek concept of Hades were not understood unanimously.

„In view of some scholars, hell, as a whole, is a place of fire or of the flame is the language of Scripture throughout (Isa. 33:14; 66:24; Matt. 3:12; 5:22; 13:40, 42, 50; 18:8, 9; 25:41; Mark 9:43–48; Luke 3:17; Jude 7; Rev. 14:10; 19:20; 20:10, 14, 15; 21:8)."[61] Following the whole series of arguments, we will notice, especially from a biblical point of view, that this claim does not stand! At this stage of the presentation,

---

[57] Kim Papaioannou and Edward Fudge, *The geography of hell in the teaching of Jesus: Gehenna, Hades, the Abyss, the outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2013), 236.
[58] Walvoord el all, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, 2:247.
[59] *Ibid.*
[60] Geoffrey W. Bromiley, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988), 2:591-592
[61] William Hendriksen, Simon J. Kistemaker, *New Testament Commentary: Exposition of the Gospel According to Luke* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1953-2001), 785.

Hades, this part of hell, is not a place of fire - much less of fire that is inextinguishable and consuming again and again.

For a more careful research I propose an analysis of the Hades concept starting from the OT period, the intertestamental period and then the NT.

„The OT contains meager information about the dead. At death, according to some OT passages, one descends to *Sheol*"[62] (often translated as grave, hell, pit, or simply the dead), „which at times means merely that one is laid in a grave (Nm 16:30, 33), but more often indicates an underworld."[63]

> Through much of the Old Testament period, it was believed that all went one place, whether human or animal (Ps. 49:12, 14, 20), whether righteous or wicked (Eccles. 9:2–3). No one could avoid *Sheol* (Pss. 49:9; 89:48), which was thought to be down in the lowest parts of the earth (Deut. 32:22; 1 Sam. 28:11–15; Job 26:5; Ps. 86:13; Isa. 7:11; Ezek. 31:14–16, 18). Unlike this world, *Sheol* is devoid of love, hate, envy, work, thought, knowledge, and wisdom (Eccles. 9:6, 10). Descriptions are bleak: There is no light (Job 10:21–22; 17:13; Pss. 88:6, 12; 143:3), no remembrance (Ps. 6:5; 88:12; Eccles. 9:5), no praise of God (Ps. 6:5; 30:9; 88:10–12; 115:17; Isa. 38:18)—in fact, no sound at all (Ps. 94:17; 115:17). Its inhabitants are weak, trembling shades (Job 26:5; Ps. 88:10–12; Isa. 14:9–10) who can never hope to escape from its gates (Job 10:21; 17:13–16; Isa. 38:10). *Sheol* is like a ravenous beast that swallows the living without being sated (Prov. 1:12; 27:20; Isa. 5:14). In other words, the dead were cut off from God (Ps. 88:3–5; Isa. 38:11); without any hope that they will find a breach through which the divine presence to reach there.[64]

However, toward the end of the Old Testament, God revealed that there will be a resurrection of the dead (Isa. 26:19). *Sheol* will devour no longer; instead God will swallow up Death (Isa. 25:8).[65] Believers who have earned eternal life will enjoy it while unbelievers will be punished (Dan. 12:2). This theological direction took on new perspectives with the intertestamental period.

---

[62] *The NASB Topical Index*, (Calif.: Foundation Publications, 1998), s.v. "hell"
[63] Elwell W. A., and Comfort P. W., *Tyndale Bible dictionary* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2001), 361.
[64] Myers, A. C. , *The Eerdmans Bible dictionary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997), 939.
[65] Elwell, W. A, *Evangelical dictionary of biblical theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 2001), s.v. "death."

In the intertestamental period, the meaning of the term *Sheol* took on new nuances. The more widespread the concept of the afterlife, the more dynamic the term under analysis had to be. Given the various theories, we will mention the most popular.

„First, the OT contains no afterlife belief at all until the 3rd–2nd cent B.C., to which many scholars date Dnl. 12:2; Isa. 26:19; etc. Thus *Sheol* means merely "the grave," to which all people, good or bad, go after death (cf. Gen. 37:35 and Nu. 16:30, respectively), and where no conscious existence is lived."[66]

„Second, the OT imagines a shadowy, semi-conscious continuing life of some sort in a place where all people go after death, and *Sheol* is this place (cf. Ezk. 31–32)."[67]

With regard to these and other options, it must be noted that „nowhere in the OT is *Sheol* described as a place of torment or punishment for the wicked. Moreover, its use in poetic passages (58 of 66 times), metaphors, and allegories (e.g., Ezk. 31–32) must be carefully evaluated to differentiate figurative or emotive usages from genuinely descriptive ones."[68]

Sheol is much used in poetry[69] and very often refers to death or grave. Given this aspect, a uniform translation by the term „grave" would eliminate many difficulties of interpretation.

„Not until the Hellenistic era (after 333 B.C.) was Sheol (Hades) conceived of as compartmentalized, with places of torment and comfort (cf. 1 En. 22)."[70] „Writings between the exile and the beginning of the NT period (586 BC–AD 30, overlapping with the end of the OT), contact with the religions of Persia and Greece stimulated the Jews

[66] Bromiley, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, 4:472.
[67] *Ibid.*
[68] *Ibid.*
[69] Pfeiffer, C. F., Vos, H. F., and Rea, J., *The Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1975), s.v. "sheol."
[70] Bromiley, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, 4:472

to clarify their ideas about life after death."[71] When the concept of *Sheol* was translated into Greek, the term Hades was used. Through this conversion, the Old Testament concept was forced to embrace the concept of underworld in the New Testament and frame the place of the dead.

Along with new names came new ideas. Many different notions circulated about the place of the dead. A common one appears in the pseudepigraphal 1 Enoch 22, where the dead are said to be kept in hollow places in a great mountain waiting for the final judgment.[72] Jewish tradition once again shows that the righteous were propelled to a pleasant section while the unrighteous were at odds.

„During the intertestamental period, Hades came to be regarded more as a place where the deceased awaited judgment (1 Enoch 22:3–4, 9–13)"[73] because „at some point it gained the interpretation as even a place of reward for the righteous (see verse 9; but note Ps. Sol. 14:6–7; 15:11–15)."[74] Even if this concept gets new and new interpretations, we can still consider this claim far too bold.

However, appealing to Jewish apocalyptic literature, it is surprising to find that there are ideas for more complex co-partitioning: „the righteous staying in an apparently pleasant place (v. 9) while various classes of sinners undergoing punishments in other compartments (vv. 10–13)"[75]. According to this understanding, the Hades was not divided into two, but even into several parts.

[71] Elwell and Comfort, *Tyndale Bible dictionary*, 364.
[72] *Ibid.*
[73] R. F. Youngblood, Bruce, F. F., Harrison, R. K., & Thomas Nelson Publishers, *Nelson's new illustrated Bible dictionary* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2014) s.v. "Hades."
[74] Myers, *The Eerdmans Bible dictionary*, 452.
[75] D. N. Freedman, *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* (New Haven, CT.: Yale University Press, 2008), 3:14.

By the time of Jesus, it was common that both the righteous and the wicked went to *Sheol,* although there is some indication of a distinction in their condition there (cf. Deut. 32:22; Is. 57:1–2; Lk. 16:23). [76]

The rabbis also divided the state after death into a place for the righteous and a place for the wicked.[77] Gathered together (Ps. 16:10; 86:13), both the righteous, and the wicked are together there, but they are separated [78] of each other. The ambiguity of this the ambiguity of this area continues and this detailed element is noticed by Jesus.

„Even some of the Pharisees believed that (Josephus Ant. xviii. 1.3, Ps. 14:6; 15:11)"[79] with the specification that „the righteous looked for ultimate deliverance from *Sheol* (e.g., Ps 49:15; 73:24)."[80] „Only God is capable of delivering the righteous from *Sheol*'s icy grip (Ps. 49:15). Still, the OT does not describe the alternative to *Sheol* for those delivered from it." [81] Jesus, noticing well this cultural confluence (Judeo-Persan-Greek) approaches the afterlife, speaking in parables (in Luke 16), precisely about the crooked representations in the context of that time.

Looking at the construction of the sub-fable, Jesus, with a well-defined (non-doctrinal) purpose, appeals to the fluid concepts of his hearers by designing the place of the dead as divided in two regions: „Abraham's Bosom as the abode of the righteous, and a place of torment as the abode of the wicked. At the resurrection of Jesus, Abraham's Bosom was emptied and all the righteous were led into heaven. The unrighteous dead await final judgment, when *Hades* will be cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:14), or hell." [82]

---

[76] Elwell, *Evangelical dictionary of biblical theology*, s.v. "death."
[77] Criswell, ed. *Believer's Study Bible*, Lk 16:20.
[78] Kittel, Friedrich, Bromiley, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 658.
[79] Bromiley, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, 2:591-592.
[80] *The NASB Topical Index* (Calif.: Foundation Publications, 1998) s.v. "hell"
[81] D. N. Freedman, Myers, A. C., & Beck, A. B., *Eerdmans dictionary of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), 1206.
[82] Criswell, *Believer's Study Bible*, Lk 16:20.

Even this singular aspect could have shown how inappropriate it is and should have been such an approach to this passage. „Abraham's Bosom is simply a synonym for Paradise; hence, Paradise cannot be conceived as one compartment in *Hades* where the righteous await final expedition to heaven at Christ's resurrection because *Hades* is as a place of separation from God and from happiness." [83]

> *Hadēs*, the Greek equivalent of *she'ôl*, occurs 10 times in the New Testament and is generally transliterated in the RSV as "*Hades*." The following are instances of its use: Capernaum shall be "brought down to hell" (Mt 11:23; Lk 10:15). "The gates of hell" shall not prevail against the church (Mt 16:18). The Messiah's "soul was not left in hell" (Acts 2:27, 31). Jesus holds "the keys of hell and of death" (Rev 1:18). "Hell" followed with the pale horse (chapter 6:8) "Death and hell" delivered up their dead (chapter 20:13), and "death and hell were cast into the lake of fire" (v 14). In only one Bible reference is punishment in Hades indicated (Lk 16:23), but this is in a parable which by itself must by no means be regarded as doctrinally definitive. [84]

„The New Testament description of Hades resembles that of the OT and intertestamental portrayals. The other NT passages that mention Hades are the focus of a debate about the NT view of the occupants of Hades."[85]

„Some said that Acts 2:27,31 imply that all the dead are in *Hades*, whereas Lk. 16:19–31 and Rev. 20:13 point to only the ungodly being in *Hades*, while others claims that both Lk. 16 and Acts 2 regard *Hades* as the repository of all the dead, but Rev. 20 places only the ungodly in *Hades*." [86]

It could be concluded that the reason for so many inconsistent interpretations is due to the fact that the New Testament does not articulate a complete picture of the afterlife. Beyond that, this occasion is just a pretext for various scholars to present their own understandings. However, if we stick to the OT concept of this term, we are not

[83] Bromiley, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, 2:591-592.
[84] Siegfried H Horn, *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Dictionary* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1979), s.v. "sheol."
[85] Elwell and Comfort, *Tyndale Bible dictionary*, 364.
[86] Bromiley, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, 2:591-592.

put in the situation of forcing the primary glittering meanings just to be able to adapt it to the motives of the Persian and Greek culture of that time.

Gehenna

„The third NT term which relate to the afterlife is *Gehenna*. The Hebrew term is a contraction of the Hebrew phrase "valley of the sons of Hinnom." *Gehenna* is a geographical location near Jerusalem"[87], of which we know that in ancient times the Phoenicians brought children as sacrifices to Moloch (cf. 2 Chr. 28:3). Unfortunately, even the famous King Manasseh participated in this idolatrous ritual.

„The Jews of the first century had turned this area into the garbage dump for Jerusalem."[88] „Jesus used the metaphors because in the popular mind *Gehenna* was associated with a garbage dump (fire, smell or smoke, worms) to describe eternal punishment."[89]

The "tradition" of this term began to develop in the Old Testament period and will be gradually introduced into the New Testament by extra-Jewish writers. As mentioned above, Hinom's Valley was the simple name of a valley, having only geographical (but not theological) significance and being mentioned in a few passages.

„Valley of Ben Hinnom; the place had been used for idolatrous practices (Jer. 7:31, 32); later it became a city dump with fires smoldering continuously."[90] From here it came to the saying that this image could illustrate the punishment of fire (Matt. 5:22). Once new elements such as judgment and destruction were attributed to this language, the term *Gehenna* would become in the intertestamental period the way of representing hell.

---

[87] Utley, *The Gospel According to Luke*, Lk 16:23.
[88] *Ibid.*
[89] Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, *Baker encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 1948.
[90] *Standard Bible Dictionary* (Cincinnati, OH: Standard Publishing, 2006), s.v. "fire."

„By New Testament times the idea of *Gehenna* had made a full transformation to an otherworldly place of future punishment for the wicked."[91] „The word is used only in this way and never as a geographic place name."[92] Therefore, it is worth noting here a remarkable aspect: if *Gehenna* in OT is a geographical place of battles, in NT this term makes no reference to a geographic framework but rather to the framework of eschatological battles.

The Old Testament writers foreshadowed the judgment day as a battle (Ezekiel 30:3-4; Joel 2:4-11; Isaiah 6:3-9; 66:15,16,24; Zephaniah 1:14-16; 2; Zechariah 14:1-13). The battles often took place in the valleys, as their armies and arsenal moved more easily there. The name *Gehenna* at first did not mean an eschatological battle. It is true that Jewish literature took this motif from the OT, but the eschatological association would have begun in the intertestamental period, being popularly accepted only after the Gospels.

„The Greek term denoting a place of punishment is *Gehenna*, used 12 times in the NT."[93] „Also, this term *Gehenna* only occurs once outside of the words of Jesus (i.e. James 3:6)."[94] Jesus was a brilliant thinker. It was the Son of God! He was also the greatest communicator. The frequent use of this phraseology tells us something. There were already some who had a certain conception of hell. So Jesus, in contextualizing, uses this method to create interest in researching this topic; to achieve the ultimate goal of leading them to Old Testament research.

[91] Elwell and Beitzel, *Baker encyclopedia of the Bible*, 844.
[92] Paul J Achtemeier, Roger S Boraas, HarperCollins, and Society of Biblical Literature, *Harper's Bible dictionary* (Norwalk, CT: Easton Press, 2005), 335.
[93] Horn, *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Dictionary*, s.v. "gehenna."
[94] Utley, *The Gospel According to Luke*, Lk 16:23.

Jesus sometimes has the term *Gehenna* on his lips precisely because the meaning of the term *Gehenna* was not very clearly outlined in the Jewish folk tradition.[95]

In the time of Christ, the first-century Judaism was a fluid social-religious entity. Judaism at the time did not have a crystallized representation of hell. With the influences of Greek philosophy we can observe an adaptation of this concept.[96] The more the Greek philosophy grew in influence[97], the more the conception of the immortality of the soul developed. Once the worldview about life is changed, and automatically the one about death, by separating the soul from the body, new claims for interpreting hell appear.

„Some later literary accoutrements advanced the idea that Hades receives the soul only (Acts 2:27, 31), *Gehenna* receives both body and soul (Matt 10:28; cf. Luke 12:5)."[98]

Also, „by the time of the New Testament writers, another idea of *Gehenna* had developed into a physical place where God's enemies would suffer punishment and destruction in both body and soul (e.g., Matt. 10:28; 23:33)."[99] In any case, such discussion can take us very far!

„The word *Hades* is attributed to Jesus only once, in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Lk 16:23)."[100] „In that parable *Hades* is a place of torment where the wicked go at death. Although the wicked go to *Hades* as soon as they die, their ultimate destination is *Gehenna*, a place of fire and worms, both indicating corruption (Mk

[95] Bromiley, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, 4:472.
[96] *Ibid.*
[97] Horn, *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Dictionary*, s.v. "gehenna."
[98] Freedman, *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 2:927.
[99] Freedman, Myers, and Beck, *Eerdmans dictionary of the Bible*, 489.
[100] Elwell and Comfort, *Tyndale Bible dictionary*, 364.

9:44,48, quoting from Is 66:24)."[101] Yet in Isaiah 66:24 the fire is not there to torment. Considering the context of the bodies killed by the battle described in the chapter, we could specify that the image of maggots (living in the decomposed flesh of the dead), is not one of torment for the living. There is no image here of an immortal soul floating somewhere. This is not an image of eternal torment.

Regarding the application in Mark 9:44 we find something remarkable. The verbs are used there in the present tense, not in the future tense. This present of the verbs shows the nature of an immediate action, no matter what it will be tomorrow or in I don't know how many years. Therefore the interpretation of an everlasting duration is not justified. Therefore the terminology refers to quality not quantity. In other words, it refers to the nature of the fire (respectively of the maggots), not to the duration!

Also, in Mt 25:41 the wicked are represented as being „consigned to everlasting (*aiōnios*) fire, which is defined as everlasting (*aiōnios*) punishment (v 46). A study of the usage and meaning of the Greek term *aiōnios*as used in connection with the fire of the last days, shows that the emphasis is on its destructiveness rather than on its duration."[102]

For example, Sodom and Gomorrah met with the punishment of eternal (*aiōnios*) fire (Jude 7). The fire completely destroyed these cities, but became extinct long centuries ago. Jude set forth the destruction of these cities as an example of the fate that awaited the licentious apostates of his day. The term unquenchable may be similarly understood.[103]

„Jeremiah predicted that God would kindle a fire in the gates of Jerusalem that would not be quenched (Jer 17:27). This prediction was fulfilled when the city was

[101] *Ibid.*
[102] Horn, *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Dictionary*, s.v. "gehenna."
[103] *Ibid.*

destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar (ch 52:12, 13; cf. Neh 1:3)."[104] Without any hesitation we can say that the fire does not burn today. Looking at the significance of this image, it is certainly not that of an eternal fire, but rather of complete destruction.

So *Hades* is not to be confused with the term *Gehenna*. These two terms clearly say something about the status of the dead. Namely, Hades represents the place where the dead are unconscious, while Gehenna represents the place where the final judgment will be executed for the dead[105]. So, one thing is certain: the righteous will not end up in *Gehenna.* [106] No one is in *Gehenna* today[107]. It will only be occupied after Judgment Day.[108]

The abyss and tartarus

The abyss sometimes is a metaphor for hell. Though the *tartarus* is not found in Jesus' teaching (it is in 2 Peter 2:4), it is helpful for understanding the *abyss*. The same biblical verse, 2 Peter 2:4 gives us some directions that will guide us to appreciate the condition of those who live in *tartarus* (respectively *abyss*).

In the Greek mentality, *tartarus* was the place where the creatures were imprisoned. The Jewish adopted the Greek terms and yet gave them a different meaning. Once adopting *tartarus,* they did not adopt the background of the term.[109] Instead, they considered it a term that would be appropriate for fallen angels who are isolated or in other words with no way out.

If in understanding this term we shift the focus from the Greek meaning to the Bible, we find various occasions when Christ himself met demon-possessed people.

---

[104] *Ibid.*
[105] Creed, *The Gospel according to St. Luke*, 212.
[106] Bromiley, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, 2:423.
[107] Pfeiffer, Vos, and Rea, *The Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia*, s.v. "gehenna."
[108] Charles Robert Hendrz ed., *Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, 2004), 917.
[109] Papaioannou and Fudge, *The geography of hell in the teaching of Jesus: Gehenna, Hades, the Abyss, the outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth*, 237.

This aspect, unfortunately, shows us that the fallen angels are active and free on earth causing problems non-stop, in no case being stuck somewhere and leaving humanity alone. We could, if you will, in a sense say that they are blocked or tied to the ground; thus not having the freedom to leave our world - the earth (Rev 12:12, Luke 10:18).

The *abyss* primarily refers to large bodies of water and sometimes is a metaphor for hell. The *abyss* is similar to the *tartar* is something that goes deep - in the idea of irreversible.[110] The Jewish used the term to denote the dark depths of lakes or the sea, even a fountain.

In other ancient texts, it refers to the location of fallen angels. However, even though the abyss is used only once in the Gospels (Luke 8:31), this term appears more often in the book of Revelation! It should be noted that its use emphasizes a place of imprisonment, not a place of punishment.

Moreover, no matter how ardently hell is portrayed, even if this projection comes more from Greek philosophy than from Old Testament writings, this part of hell is not a place of fire, not even remotely!

The outer darkness

Though this does not immediately appear to refer to a place (Matt. 8:12; 22:13; 25:30), every mention includes "there" (*ekei*), implying that it is indeed a location. However, rather than being a place of suffering or ongoing torment, it is "a set phrase to describe exclusion from the kingdom of God". [111]

The darkness adds another element of detail to this picture. The darkness is the characteristic of the lost: sadness, depression knowing that they are separated from God.

[110] *Ibid*.
[111] *Ibid.*

Even if it does not mean that they will be in darkness forever, they are still without light.

Once again, in the process of clarifying and especially harmonizing some terms at the confluence of biblical culture and Greek culture, we are facing another difficulty. Hell is also the abode where darkness dwells.[112]

„For some it is the place of outer darkness (Matt. 8:12; 22:13; 25:30) and also it is the region where the evil spirits are kept in everlasting chains under darkness (Jude 6; cf. Jude 13). But if hell is generic talking a place of fire, how can it also be a place of darkness?" [113] Is it possible that once together the two concepts exclude each other? Before interpreting them too literally, let us not lose sight of the fact that they illustrate the terror of the lost - with no way back. Before we grasp the full significance of this outer darkness, we can enter a space of divine absence (1 John 1: 5).

In other words, we can conclude by accepting the fact that the outer darkness it is a metaphor for being kept from resurrection life on the final day.[114]

Thus Jesus intended not to describe in folk language[115] neither paradise, nor hell.[116] Also, „the Bible does not discuss or describe the afterlife, either heaven or hell, in specific terms, probably because they are beyond our ability to comprehend."[117] „The best thing about heaven is not its splendor but the presence of the Triune God and the possibility of fellowship with Him." [118] The worst thing, is not the false perception of the eternal torment or fire, but the separation from God.

---

[112] Hendriksen and Kistemaker, *Exposition of the Gospel According to Luke*, 785.
[113] *Ibid*.
[114] Elwell and Comfort, *Tyndale Bible dictionary*, 364.
[115] Hendriksen and Kistemaker, *Exposition of the Gospel According to Luke*, 784.
[116] William Hendriksen, *The Bible on the Life Hereafter* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1990), 84.
[117] Utley, *The Gospel According to Luke*, Lk 16:23.
[118] *Geneva Bible Notes* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, 2003), Lk 16:23.

Moreover, the Bible shows us a God full of mercy, love, and kindness. How disturbing even for our sense of justice is the existence after death: of an immortal soul (having consciousness or semi-consciousness) sitting in the middle of a fiery hell. In the very first pages of the Bible, in Genesis 3:4, the cunning of the Devil is presented to us by the way in which approaching Eve creates the great error: "Certainly you will not die."

> „And as the error was received by the people, and they were led to believe that man was immortal, Satan led them on to believe that the sinner would live in eternal misery. Then the way was prepared for Satan to work through his representatives and hold up God before the people as a revengeful tyrant—one who plunges all those into hell who do not please Him, and causes them ever to feel His wrath; and while they suffer unutterable anguish, and writhe in the eternal flames, He is represented as looking down upon them with satisfaction. Satan knew that if this error should be received, God would be hated by many, instead of being loved and adored; and that many would be led to believe that the threatening of God's Word would not be literally fulfilled, for it would be against His character of benevolence and love to plunge into eternal torments the beings whom He had created."[119]

Truth be told, „the very next experience after death for the believer will be that of meeting Christ. Both Old and New Testaments speak of death as sleep. Commonly in the OT, when a person dies, he is said to go to sleep with his fathers (e.g., Dt 31:16; 2 Sm 7:12). Jesus himself spoke of death as sleep (Mt 9:24; Jn 11:11)." [120] „So did the apostle Paul (1 Cor 11:30; 15:20, 51; 1 Thes 4:14). At least in some of these references it would seem that it is the temporary nature of death that is the reason why it is spoken of as sleep."[121] Even in the OT passage Daniel 12:2, it is said that death is a sleep, until Christ returns and the dead rise up—some to everlasting life and some to shame and contempt.

---

[119] Ellen Gould Harmon White, *Early writings of Ellen G. White* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Pub. Association, 2000), 218.
[120] Elwell and Comfort, *Tyndale Bible dictionary*, 364.
[121] *Ibid.*

At this second glorious coming, the Lord Himself will raise the righteous for life. According to Revelation 20:6, this first resurrection is continued by a time when those now resurrected will reign with Him a thousand years. At the end of the thousand years, those who did not rise in the first resurrection, that is, the unrighteous will be resurrected for judgment — respectively for punishment. Once Satan has someone to deceive again (Rev. 20:7-8), observing the group of believers with their Lord descending gloriously from heaven (Rev. 21:2, 3), he fatally attacks the camp of the saints and a fire burns them down forever (Rev. 20:9).

Ultimately, the image in Rev. 21:1 shows us a framework in which „every trace of the race is swept away. No eternally burning hell will keep before the ransomed the fearful consequences of sin. [122]" If it were an eternal hell, God would not destroy sin but leave it there. This image is incompatible with eternal hell.

[122] Ellen Gould Harmon White, *The story of redemption*, (Rangoon, MM: Kin Saung Press, 1965), 430.

CHAPTER IV

THE CHASM BETWEEN DEATH AND LIFE

The rich man tries to change the circumstances that are unfavorable to him by appealing to Abraham. The situation itself has a dose of irony. The rich man did not seem to notice poor Lazarus when he was on earth, but now the rich man appeals to Abraham using the poor man. [123] The use of Lazarus' name in his appeal to Abraham suggests that the rich man knew about Lazarus' case all the time, making it all the more reprehensible.

Probably even at this stage the rich man sees Lazarus inferior to him.[124] Another probability would also be the full trust of the rich man that, in case someone like Lazarus can be on Abraham's side, he would all the more deserve the intercession of the patriarch.

Despite his current location, the rich man acts as if nothing has changed in the meantime. He is sad because his fate was determined by his lack of reaction during his earthly life. Now is the time when he is measured exactly as he measured himself (Luke 6:38). His lack of reaction to those in need turned against him. The former privileges of the rich man did him no good in the afterlife.

Discussions among Jews about the afterlife normally included elements such as torment or the ability to communicate with others. Fire, too, in such a context, is a common image in Judaism (1 Enoch 10: 13-14) [125]. This terminology was common.

---

[123] William MacDonald; Arthur Farstad, *Believer's Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1997, c1995), Lk 16:27.
[124] Bock, *Luke*, 1375.
[125] Hendrz, *Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*, 953.

In addition, the Old Testament uses the idea of deep thirst as an image that represents the desire for God's presence (Ps. 42:1-2; 143:6; Rev. 21:6), while thirst is an image of divine judgment (Isa. 5:13; 50:2; 65:13; Hos. 2:3).[126] The rich man asks Lazarus to put just a drop of water on his dry tongue so that his terrible heat can be calmed. The request is seemingly insignificant, but it reminds us of a similar one; that of Lazarus for some fallen scraps from the rich man's table. As there were no crumbs for Lazarus, no drop of water was found for the rich man. There is a notable difference here: the rich man has no hope that the roles will ever be reversed again.

Jesus highlights the inverted eschatology that the story presents at this time vis-à-vis the two main characters of the story. In Abraham's approach to the rich man, one can see the gentle words like *τέκνον* (*teknon*, son) that Abraham uses (Luke 16:25) [127]. This brings a great deal of tragedy because some "sons" remain outside the kingdom (Matt. 8:12).

The rich man goes from ecstasy to agony, from the beautiful reward he thought he deserved, to a state of torment. The term used here by Luke to describe the suffering of the rich is different from that used in Luke 16:23, ὀδυνάομαι (*odynaomai*), referring to a state of pain, but a pain felt on a mental level. Παρακαλέω (*parakaleō*),[128] the word used next to Lazarus, is a word difficult to translate accurately, the closest meanings being: comfort or encouragement. In the afterlife, Lazarus went from suffering to comfort, while the rich went from wealth to poverty.

All roads seem to close in the case of the rich man. Moreover, Abraham himself recognizes that he is incapable of acting, in final decision-making matters, because the

[126] Creed, *The Gospel according to St. Luke*, 212.
[127] Kittel, Friedrich, Bromiley, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 228.
[128] Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 617.

boundaries between "rich" and "poor" are already clearly established. [129] These limits are set by the existence of a chasm.

The peculiarity of this aspect is well punctuated by the term (*chasma*, chasm), a term that is *hapax legomenon* and which describes "an insurmountable space between the place where Abraham is and the place of torture." [130] No one can cross this chasm from one area to another.

Διαβαίνω (*diabainō*) is the term often used to describe the crossing of a river or the passage from one region to another (Acts 16: 9; Hebrews 11:29). [131] From a theological point of view, the role of the passive voice used here "has been fixed ..." suggests that God has found a way, that beyond the afterlife, the righteous may not interfere with the unrighteous. By extension, the very initial understanding of the Old Testament, in which the dead had no self-awareness, allows the plausibility of the idea that after death the righteous do not mix with the unrighteous.

There is no bridge over this chasm.[132] This image is very powerful and suggests that the way we relate to some aspects of this life is decisive in terms of our position in the afterlife. Everyone's behavior in everyday life[133] is a key factor in the eternal future of each of us. This is not at all easy to accept. That said, in the afterlife, the fate of the righteous and the unrighteous will not be the same at all. The possibility of being saved after you passed away being excluded.

As soon as the rich man realizes how desperate his situation is, he wants his family members, who were still alive, to take note of the danger that threatens them to end up in the same place as he was. The rich man has pity now, something that did not

[129] Hendrz, *Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*, 879.
[130] Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 428.
[131] Fitzmayer, *The Gospel according to Luke*, 1133-1134.
[132] Frederick W. Danker, *Jesus and the New Age: A Commentary on St. Luke's Gospel* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1988), 285.
[133]Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus*, 186.

happen in the past. Now that he realizes the reality of his situation, he wants to warn his family members not to make the same mistake. He knows his brothers should repent.

The rich man, literally speaking, becomes the advocate of this story. In addition, he speaks as a person who has made a fatal mistake in his life and ultimately tries to teach others that they should do things differently from how he did them.

Indeed, the rich man says between the lines: “Don't let others do exactly like me. The way I have lived my life proves a disastrous end.[134]” Through this, the parable acquires another note of tragedy because it highlights the fact that some achievements can be very good, but if they are made too late they do no good to anyone. In other words, for some even the resurrection (Luke 16:31), which is a good thing, will not bring anything good.

The rich man believes that only an authentic testimony from the world of the dead could lead them to genuine repentance. Διαμαρτύρομαι (*diamartyromai*) means "to warn" or "to give a solemn testimony about something."[135] The rich man asks Lazarus, who was dead, to communicate with his brothers in the world of the living. This is nothing but an irony. As proof, this request is denied from the start. The rich man's desire to send messages from death to his brothers, who were among the living, is not possible. This misunderstanding of the rich man, with much tact, is cleverly brought to light by Jesus in his speech.

[134] Bock, *Luke*, 1375.
[135] Kittel, Friedrich, Bromiley, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 512.

CHAPTER V

THE UNIQUE LANGUAGE OF SCRIPTURE

Abraham's answer in this verse suggests that repentance beyond death does not exist. Moreover, through this representation, Jesus wants to suggest that even the change of others is not possible after death.[136] God speaks clearly through the Old Testament. Abraham's reference to the writings of Moses or to the prophets is a sufficiently solid foundation for his brothers to be exempted, in the afterlife, from a fate similar to his own. Moreover, no one who has passed into the afterlife could offer better guidance than the Old Testament texts do.

There are many passages in the OT that show how people around us, especially the poor, should be treated: Deut. 14: 28–29; 15: 1–3, 7–12; 22: 1-2; 11:19; Is. 3: 14–15; 5: 7-8; 10: 1-3; 32: 6-7; 58: 3, 6–7, 10; Jer. 5: 26–28; 7: 5-6; Ezk. 18: 12–18; 33:15; Amos 2: 6–8; 5: 11-12; 8: 4-6; Micah 2: 1–2; 3: 1-3; 6: 10-11; Zec. 7: 9–10; Mal. 3: 5.[137]

To the detriment of miracles, Scripture has a more complex role here. For a moment, miracles may impress a worldly mind, but to change a heart requires certain decisions that must be made constantly, over time, without any external constraint.[138] It is true that the emotional factor plays a decisive role in making a decision, especially if we take into account that man is mainly emotional, but not only the appeal to the senses should make a difference when making decisions between life and death. Precisely about life and death. That is why a concern for those around you, manifested

[136] Bock, *Luke*, 1376.
[137] *Ibid.*
[138] Arndt, *The Gospel according to St. Luke*, 366.

only by the desire to get next to Abraham, is not enough to project yourself already there. We admit that the heart with its entire affective apparatus has a role, but the man who wears the *imago Dei* (the image of God), is not only a bunch of emotions but also has reason. As the feelings are sporadic and deceptive, an authoritative and permanent support was needed: Moses and the prophets.

The rich man, dissatisfied with the answer, does not give up. He considers that Moses and the prophets do not have a sufficiently stable source[139] to help others avoid the situation in which he found himself. The main reason he considers this evidence to be too weak is that he himself has not been able to accept it.

The rich man still believed that the divine message of the prophecies was too small to provide a solution to such a great problem. The need for authentic conversion was not an urgent one in a comfortable life like the rich man's earthly life. Repentance, represented here specifically by care for our neighbor, was then a useless, difficult and undesirable effort.

Beyond the rich man's attempt to change people once he had already stepped into the afterlife, which is nothing but fine irony[140], the parable ends abruptly; leaving the listeners of Jesus face to face with a choice.

The challenge brought about by this parable of Jesus and narrated by Luke is not a foretaste of the Scriptures. The turning point was the difficult choice of crediting the divine messages to actively love those around them, on the one hand, or, on the other hand, the choice to satisfy selfish desires, which did not leave much room for the others.

[139] Bock, *Luke*, 1377.
[140] *Ibid.*

However, paying attention to the needs of those around you does not seem to be a matter just of the afterlife. Moses, the prophets, and even Jesus emphasized this need. This detail was not hidden for a second. Its importance is decisive precisely because it requires the renunciation of the selfishness specific to any earthling. The rich man perseveres in his argument by advancing the idea that the message sent by a miracle is stronger than the message sent by the prophets. However, we should not forget that following their calling, both the prophets and Jesus did not rule out miracles.

People interpreted miracles in their own way, adapting them to the specifics of each individual - ridiculing them. Despite this, miracles remained. What could have worked a miracle then is equal in effect to what a miracle can do now. [141] Therefore: Why would we need another one? What else could another miraculous apparition change? The next and last verse (Luke 16:31) provides an unequivocal answer.

In an attempt to represent God's perspective on the world, Abraham rejects again the rich man's proposal. The optimism of the rich man is not shared at all by Abraham. [142] God intervened with a strong arm in many situations just to unmask people's unbelief. Moreover, God's power is well represented by the many messages of encouragement in the Old Testament.

Abraham further argues that a resurrection from the dead would not generate faith in the souls of men, as long as the very refusal to accept the authority of Moses and the other prophets shows the true stage of faith that dwells in the hearts of men. It is not the lack of evidence that seems to suggest the lack of faith in people's hearts. This lack is explained by their selfish desires. It takes now more than ever, not a heart to be

[141] *Ibid.*
[142] Eduard Schweizer, *The Good News according to Luke* (Atlanta, GA: John Knox, 1984), 261.

led by certain extraterrestrial signs, but one that is willing to constantly respond to repeated calls from God (through the Scriptures).

„Moses and the prophets is the customary way of referring to the O.T. Scriptures. Clearly Jesus recognized the Scriptures as a wholly sufficient guide for anyone legitimately seeking the truth." [143] The resurrection from the dead in order to convert others would be useless. Reading between the lines we can see that Abraham's answer emphasizes that the attitude is actually the problem, and not the demonstrations. As long as the Scripture is not believed, much less will a resurrection of the dead be believed.

„Jesus was obviously suggesting that the rich man symbolized the Pharisees. They wanted signs—signs so clear that they would compel people to believe. But since they refused to believe the Scriptures, they would not believe any sign no matter how great."[144] Analyzing this claim now, outside the parable, we see it more clearly because we know that Jesus himself raised another Lazarus from the grave (John 11:38-44) shortly after that, and after this resurrection instead of being a spiritual revival was only an even more passionate opportunity to kill both the resurrected and Jesus. (John 11:45-53; 12:10-11).

„The story may suggest that Lazarus was intended, but Luke's account seems to imply that Jesus was speaking also of his own resurrection (cf. v. 31; 9:22)." [145] Here comes a lightning message: He who rejects the transforming power of Scripture will not be able to be resurrected by any resurrection from the grave.

„Certainly. Jesus' resurrection was in Luke's mind when he wrote this. The point of the last part of the parable is clear. No miracle can convince anyone of the

[143]Criswell, *Believer's Study Bible*, Lk 16:20.
[144]Walvoord el all, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, 2:247.
[145]Hoeber, *Concordia Self-Study Bible*, Lk 16:30.

credibility of the kingdom message. The Scriptures are sufficient for salvation, and those who reject their message will rationalize miraculous phenomena as well." [146]

Truly to repent implies an entire change of heart: but a thousand apparitions cannot, effect this. God only can, applying his word. [147]

„Perhaps a hint of the coming resurrection of Jesus and the renewed proclamation of the Gospel to Israel, "beginning from Jerusalem" (24:47). Even then no sign will be given to those who demand one; Jesus will appear to His disciples—all others will be dependent on the Word."[148]

„The parable was specially intended by our Lord for the benefit of the Pharisees, to whom he was speaking when he delivered it."[149] „Our Lord's main aim was to rebuke the selfishness, worldliness, lack of charity, and general forgetfulness of responsibilities of which the Pharisees were guilty and to expose the fearful end to which their unbelief and neglect of their own Scriptures were rapidly bringing them."[150]

> Others among Jesus's hearers 'scoffed at him', and the way Luke describes them in 16:14 tells us why. These were men who lived a double life. For them the sacred and the secular were watertight compartments. In the religious compartment, they were Pharisees, with certain beliefs and practices by which they were assured of a good standing before God. The secular compartment was quite separate; in that, they could afford to be lovers of money, for their attitudes in such matters had no bearing on their religious status. That was why they ridiculed the idea that getting to heaven might be in some way connected with ordinary life. In the same way, the Pharisees both misused the opportunities of secular life, and avoided the real demands of religious law. If you must compartmentalize your life in this way, says Jesus, I have to warn you that in neither area are you going the right way to escape hell and to reach heaven. True, the story is garbed in simple and vivid colors by being centered on a rich man and his money; and more than that, the foil to set off this central figure

[146] Walter A. Elwell, *Evangelical Commentary on the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1996), Lk 16:19.
[147] Wesley, *Wesley's Notes: Luke*, Lk 16:31.
[148] Walter H. Roehrs and Martin H Franzmann, *Concordia Self-Study Comentary* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1998), 2:75.
[149] Keener et all, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*, Lk 16:20.
[150] J. C. Ryle, *Luke* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1997), Lk 16:19.

> will then naturally be someone poor, and poverty, as we have seen, is in Scripture a kind of code-word for piety. [151]

„Thus 'The Dishonest Steward' and 'Dives and Lazarus' both concern the life of the world to come; but they both teach, one as an exhortation to men who are willing to hear, and the other as a warning to men who are not, that our destiny in that world depends on what we do with the 'here and now'." [152] Jesus would emphasize through these statements that whatever the material status of man, it is lost after death. This message would show once again that man is only a steward over the things given to him in administration.

„They have Moses and the prophets. If they would refuse to hear the word of God, they would refuse to repent at the bidding of a ghost. Neither will they be persuaded, etc. This was demonstrated in the case of Jesus himself." [153] Even though the prophets testified about Jesus, the Jews, well acquainted with the prophecies, rejected him. Waiting for the sign of the prophet Jonah, they were given the opportunity to accept His return. However, they did not repent. Unbelief appears in a rebellious heart and through this all the evidence is silenced. From here to skepticism there is not a long way to go.

Once again, in the debate between Scripture and miracles, we point out that in addition to the rich man, the rich man's brothers have a key role to play in this exposition. The resurrection of Lazarus from Bethany, only forced the Pharisees to plan Jesus' death (cf. John 11:46; 12:9–11). A miracle is not automatically the answer to

---

[151] Michael Wilcock, *The Savior of the World: The Message of Luke's Gospel* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1979), 160.
[152] *Ibid. 162.*
[153] Barton Warren Johnson, *The People's New Testament: With Explanatory Notes* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1999), 290.

mankind's spiritual need (cf. Matt. 7:21–23; 24:24; Mark 13:22; II Thess. 2:9–12; Rev. 13:13–14). [154]

Notice that these brothers were not damned because of their wealth, „but because of their rejection of biblical revelation and its claims on their daily lives (i.e. "Let them hear them", aorist active imperative). Humans are spiritually responsible for the light they have from revelation (cf. Ps.19, Rom. 1–2, Ps. 119; Matt. 5:17–18; Luke 12:48; II Tim. 3:15–17). "[155]

Jesus tells a story which shows the importance of choosing God now. „This parable has many important messages — about heaven and hell, death and judgment, selfishness or altruism. But Jesus' main point is urgency. The rich man's five brothers have the scriptures and have heard their message. Like the shrewd manager they must act quickly to save themselves.[156]

[154] Utley, *The Gospel According to Luke*, Lk 16:31.
[155] *Ibid*.
[156] Andrew Knowles, *The Bible Guide* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 2001), 488.

Why does Jesus tell this story this way?

Why does Jesus tell the parable like this? Why is it necessary to introduce figurative illustrations to represent a truth that could be told literally, directly and unequivocally?

The answer is that He was meeting people on their own ground. Many in the audience had come to believe in the doctrine of a conscious state of existence between death and the resurrection. As we can see in Mark 7: 7–13, a number of Persian and Greek influences, in any case foreign to the Old Testament, entered the Jewish literature of that time.[157]

„Jewish teachers regularly illustrated their teachings with brief stories, similar to the use of sermon illustrations today (though often with less verisimilitude). The Greek word for parable normally means a comparison; the Jewish practice behind Jesus' usage included a wide range of meanings (riddles, proverbs, fables, etc.)."[158] Like other teachers of the day, Jesus used parables. Often to represent the main idea, Jesus used in very powerful details. Those who wish to interpret this parable both in that context and in the present context, instead of getting lost in the secondary details, should not overlook the central points of the parable.

„The fact that Lazarus has a name and the reality of Abraham have led many to misconstrue this parable as an historical account. This is not a picture of what the afterlife will be like.[159] Moreover, this parable, also, showing the consequences of a worldly spirit and the worldly use of wealth."[160] „In this parable Jesus simply made use

[157] Nichol, *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary: The Holy Bible With Exegetical and Expository Comment.*, Lk 16:19.
[158] Walvoord el all, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, 2:247.
[159] Black, *Luke*, Lk 16:19.
[160] Johnson, *The People's New Testament*, 289.

of a popular belief in order thereby to make forcibly clear an important lesson He sought to plant in the minds of His hearers."[161] On the same note, Abraham's reference can refer to what Jesus said to the Sadducees: God is not a God of the dead, but of the living (Matthew 22:32). Therefore, this should not be overlooked, that Abraham was dead in the days of Jesus, and so was Lazarus in the parable.

Last but not least, the very formulation of Jesus in Luke 16:31 can also be analyzed through the viewpoint of conditional sentences. Conditional sentences are "If ..., then ..." statements. They make a statement that if something happens, then something else will unfold.[162]

> There are four types of condition:
>
> a) First class [Reality]*:* Determined as Fulfilled (*εἰ*, sometimes *ἐάν*, with any tense of the indicative in condition. Any tense of the indicative in the conclusion).
>
> b) Second Class [Unreality]*:* Determined as Unfulfilled (*εἰ* and only past tenses of the indicative in condition. Only past tenses in the conclusion, usually with *ἄν* to make clear the kind of condition used).
>
> c) Third Class [Probability]*:* Undetermined with Prospect of Determination (*ἐάν* or *εἰ* with the subjunctive in the condition, usually future or present indicative or imperative in the conclusion, much variety in the form of the conclusion).
>
> d) Fourth Class [Possibility]*:* Undetermined with Remote Prospect Determination (*εἰ* with the optative in the condition, *ἄν* and the optative in the conclusion)." [163]

„The terminology involved in the analysis of the third-class condition has not been standardized which reflects different understandings on the part of grammarians of its basic significance."[164] For instance, H. E. Dana and Julius R. Mantey named it

---

[161] Nichol, *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary: The Holy Bible With Exegetical and Expository Comment*., Lk 16:19.
[162] Herbert Weir Smyth, *A Greek Grammar for Colleges* (Medford, MA.: American Book Company, 1920), 2280.
[163] A. T. Robertson, and W. Hersey Davids, *A New Short Grammar of the Greek Testament for Students Familiar with the Elements of Greek* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1977), 349.
[164] A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (New York, NY: Hodder & Stoughton, 1914), 1016.

"the more probable future condition,"[165] A.T. Robertson speaks of it as "undetermined with prospect of determination," [166] Georg B. Winer refers to is as "objective possibility;"[167] William W, Goodwin as "future supposition,"[168] etc. Therefore, when we refer to the third-class conditions, we will definitely take it into account the condition of futurity.

This type of condition is the second most frequent conditional construction in the New Testament.[169] The basic significance of the condition it could be synthetized as the mood of doubt[170] or uncertainty.[171] In other words, its common denominator is futurity,[172] but not in the sense of certain future, since in the end, future will always be grammatically uncertain. It could potentially happen, but its realization is uncertain or doubtful because it has not been determined yet.

Framing in the third class conditional in Greek, is justifiable, and if we take in consideration Daniel B. Wallace position which affirms that „this third class condition should actually be split into two different categories, the 'Future More Probable Condition' (indicating either a probable future action or a hypothetical situation) and the 'Present General Condition' (indicating a generic situation or universal truth at the present time)." [173]

---

[165] H. E. Dana and Julius R. Mantey, *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament* (New York, NY: MacMillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1927), 289– 90.
[166] Robertson, Davids, *A New Short Grammar of the Greek Testament for Students Familiar with the Elements of Greek,* 350.
[167] Georg Benedikt Winer, *A Treatise on the Grammar of New Testament Greek: Regarded as a Sure Basis for New Testament Exegesis* (Edinburgh, UK: T & T Clark, 1882), 364.
[168] William Watson Goodwin, *Syntax of the Moods and Tenses of the Greek Verb* (Medford, NY: Perseus Digital Library, 1889), 296.
[169] Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research*, 1017.
[170] *Ibid*, 926–27.
[171] *Ibid*, 1004–1005.
[172] Goodwin, *Syntax of the Moods and Tenses of the Greek Verb*, 371.
[173] Daniel B Wallace, *Greek grammar beyond the basics: an exegetical syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1996), 689.

Interweaving the narrative thread and the Christ's discourse analysis (taking into account the construct of Luke 16:31) we identify the incidence of a future hypothetical situation rather than a generic situation or universal truth at the present time. In this case, the rich initiative to send post-mortem warning messages to the family (we take into account the implication of a possible resurrection itself) is not justified as long as in the O.T there is teaching which contradicts this very possibility.

Once more, through this construct, Jesus brings to light that such a presumption (from the rich man's part) besides the fact that is absurd and unreal, (or imaginary or fantastically) not only that would be unachievable but also useless.

> „Grammatical meaning must be respected, and ought to determine contextual subtleties. Then, the semantic meaning of the condition must not be limited only to what grammar portrays. Language is more complex than syntax. Context also is relevant and needs to be taken into account. However, precision would demand to understand which aspects of the supposition are indicated by context, and which ones by grammar. Therefore, third-class conditions, grammatically speaking, give the impression to only portray a future logical condition. Any particular, or general categorization should be in light of contextual evidences. Likewise, the futurity of the condition does not reject the idea of probability, possibility, or even absurdity; nevertheless, these nuances are dependent on the context."[174]

Finally, Jesus formulation (Luke 16:31) framed by the 3rd class conditional in Greek, suggests that the perspective that someone will come back from the dead through a final decision is only hypothetical - possible only on a theoretical level.

[174] See Dana and Mantey, 170; Winer, 291–93; Richard A. Young, *Intermediate New Testament Greek: A Linguisitic And Exegetical Approach* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994), 137–38; Bertram Melbourne, *Alpha through Omega. A User Friendly Guide to New Testament Greek* (New York, NY: University Press of America, 1997), 114; Basil L. Gildersleeve, *Syntax of Classical Greek from Homer to Demosthenes* (Medford, NY: American Book Company, 1900), 34-35; David Allan Black, *It's Still Greek to Me. An Easy-to-Understand Guide to Intermediate Greek* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1998), 98–99; James Allen Hewett, *New Testament Greek. A Beginning and Intermediate Grammar* (Peabody, NY: Hendrickson Publishers, 1989),163; etc.

Overall, the desire of Jesus through artistic images is to manage the development of moral attributes which were perverted step by step by the influences of an unbiblical culture.

Jesus, the greatest teacher of all time, uses a fictional story without clarifying that is unreal and this very aspect underlines his role as a (good) teacher.

Specifically, the teacher educates. The very root of this word *(ēducātiō),* borrowed from Latin, means to draw out. The teacher's role is that of trying to lead the student ¨out˝ (to wisdom); in other words, before putting in what is good, you have to draw out what is bad.

The greatest pedagogue ever to walk on this earth, Jesus, does not refrain initially, in sowing in the mind of his listeners, by exception, his teaching seeds through the existing conceptions, which later to lead this listeners in the path (see Mat. 5:17) through which to draw out the truth by themselves.

„The parable of Lazarus and the Rich Man (Luke 16:19-31) receives the attention it deserves. This exposition does not contain positive teaching about the conditions of life in *Hades*, but rather is used to deconstruct popular views on the afterlife, and functions as a parody on popular tales about communication with the dead."[175]

„The parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19–31) should not be used as a definitive statement about the afterlife, since parables were told to illustrate a point, not to give a systematic account of any doctrine." [176]

[175] Papaioannou and Fudge, *The geography of hell in the teaching of Jesus*, 135.
[176] Bromiley, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, 2:591-592.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

To call this section of Luke 16:19-31 a parable is not entirely incorrect. Although it is not referred to as a parable, having neither an introduction nor an explicit application, the story nevertheless falls technically into a special category: sub-parables. Moreover, this story could be called an illustration, it could be considered an "example" type story because it offers lessons about real life compared to a purely hypothetical situation creating a type of behavior that should not be followed.

The Parable of the Rich Man and Poor Lazarus succeeds the Parable of the Shrewd Manager and is the second lesson about prosperity of chapter 16. Looking at the context of the discourse, we see that this is the fifth in a series of parables in chapters 15 and 16. Beginning with the Parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32), Jesus introduces the aspect of wealth (inheritance), and chapter 16, which we currently analyze, continues the subject. In this chapter, Luke emphasizes the aspect of wealth as: the waste of wealth (16:1–12), the covetousness of wealth (16:13–18) and, finally, the subject of our study, the worship of wealth (16:19–31).

The characterizations of the two characters, the rich man and the poor man, are remarkable. The rich man lives in a continuous festival of blessings. Everything he wears is qualitative (linen) and colorful (purple). At the opposite corner, we find a poor man, Lazarus, full of soars and starving. How outrageous the contrasts are. The rich man had everything a man could want: independence, luxury, noble companions, and vitality. Lazarus has only remnants: dependence on the mercy of others, the company of unclean animals and a life of torment.

Following the thread of the presentation, we take note that both protagonists of the story die! From this point Jesus, the best teacher mankind has ever known, chooses to illustrate with a caricature: what would later be called hell. Observing the errors of interpretation of this recurring theme, Jesus analyzes the claim of the afterlife! In order to save the core of this great theme, given the socioreligious context of that time, Jesus will untie it! To accomplish this difficult task, Jesus masterfully chooses to introduce it into the concepts of Jewish tradition and Greek philosophy that were deeply rooted in the minds of His listeners.

There are four terms in the Bible which relate to the afterlife: *Hades, Gehenna, abyss, tartarus*. In Greek these are distinct terms and they refer to different things.

In the Septuagint, *Hades* is translated as *sheol*. We must keep in mind that OT's literary style contains many poetic images. As already argued, the references to eternal punishment (eternal fire): 58 out of 66 are metaphors and allegories; making here also the differentiation between the figurative and the descriptive ones. A strong point in grasping the meaning of the term is that it was initially believed in the OT that absolutely all people end up in *Sheol* without self-awareness.

Starting with the 2nd and 3rd century BC, with the Persian and Greek influence, a semi-conscious state about the afterlife was introduced into the Jewish tradition of the time. Therefore, the place of the dead had to be compartmentalized. These fluid concepts existing in the minds of the listeners are used pedagogically by Jesus who will illustrate (non-doctrinally) life after death. This concept, caught at the Jewish-Persian-Greek cultural confluence, inadvertently created a topic of great interest.

Through this sub-parable, Jesus chooses to illustrate life after death as being divided into two: Abraham's bosom and *Hades*. Even this first singular aspect could have shown how inappropriate this representation should have been for them. If

paradise is presented through Abraham's bosom, it cannot be placed in the very place of the dead.

Hades, it's a metaphor for death, grave. *Hades* is not a place of suffering or eschatological punishment because the inhabitants cease to exist and therefore have no self-awareness. *Hades* covers the period between death and resurrection.

The second term that refers to the afterlife is *Gehenna*. The tradition of this term began to develop in the Old Testament period and will be gradually introduced into the New Testament by extra-Jewish writers. *Gehenna* was a geographical place close to Jerusalem and was a landfill often associated with smoke, worms, fire. Also, this term Hinom's Valley, appears in the OT and is the simple name of a valley, without theological meaning, being mentioned in several passages.

The Old Testament writers foreshadowed the Judgment Day as a battle. Battles often took place in the valleys, as their armies and arsenal moved more easily there. The name *Gehenna* at first did not mean an eschatological battle. Even though Jewish literature has taken this motif from the OT, eschatological association is accomplished only after the gospels.

Jesus was a brilinat thinker. It was the son of god! He was also the greatest communicator. The frequent use of this phraseology is justified by the fact that His listeners already had a certain conception of hell. So Jesus, contextualizing, uses this method to create the curiosity to research this term. The ultimate goal was to lead the listeners to search the Old Testament.

The more the Greek philosophy grew in influence, the more the conception of the immortality of the soul had to be (re)adapted. However, once the worldview about life was changed, and automatically the one about death, by separating the soul from the body, new pretensions of interpreting hell appeared.

Jesus has the term *Gehenna* on his lips because in the tradition of the time there was no crystallized representation of hell. Jesus uses the term Hades only once, in the parable with the poor man Lazarus. Analyzing Christ's discourse, we cannot also ignore the connections with Mk 9: 44, 48 that are nothing more than quotations from Is 66:24. Following the above analysis, the interpretation of an eternal torment is not justified. The terminology used refers to quality, not quantity, the nature of fire (and the nature of worms), not duration. The emphasis is on the body, physically, with the meaning of total destruction - but not as a long punishment.

Gehenna refers to the final location of the judgment - upon return. Therefore, no one is in *Gehenna* today. Moreover, the righteous will not end up in *Gehenna.* Through these terms we are presented with various motives, language, images to describe that God will put an end to sin.

The third term that refers to hell is the term abyss. The understanding of the *abyss* is related to the understanding of the tartar. *Tartarus* was the place where the fallen angels were imprisoned. The *abyss* here often refers to the deep and rarely to hell. The later use emphasizes a place for imprisonment, not a place of punishment. It should be noted that this part of hell is not a place of fire, not even remotely!

Finally, looking at the fourth term that refers to the afterlife (the outer darkness), instead of finding through this dialectic a place of torment, we identify something completely different, unexpected and very dark: exclusion from the kingdom of the Lord. While there is a concern to find for this surface of hell at least one interpretation that supports both fire and darkness (to validate the claims of the same Greek philosophy), we will remain loyal to the Bible noting that this corner of hell does not contain fire. These words, "outer darkness" show, in metaphorical language, the stage

framed at one end by the resurrection of the unbelievers and the second death at the other end.

By antagonizing the biblical and the profane worldview, we renew the thread of the story. In the same grotesque (and specifically illustrative) tone, the dialogue in the anti-chamber of the other world shows us the rich man who appeals to Abraham to send Lazarus to serve him. Probably in the understanding of the rich man, even here Lazarus is still inferior to him. The rich man thought that the former privileges would pass through the gates of the tomb with him. But, to his surprise, the roles would reverse irreversibly. There was an impassable chasm between the two of them.

In the context of eternal destiny, the choices in this one life are decisive. After death, there is no other kind of choices. Perplex, the rich man realizing too late how disastrous an egocentric life is, would ultimately like to send warning messages to his family. In order to give a note of gravity to this last desperate approach, for the benefit of those in his house, the rich man considers that an authentic testimony from the world of the dead could impress them decisively.

The last part of the Christ's discourse shows us that it is impossible for anyone to cross the chasm from the dead to the living, even with the best of intentions. Even so, no matter how revolutionary a message is sent from the realm of the dead to the living, it is useless! As long as the Bible is at hand, and it is more than ever, nothing could provide better guidance than its texts.

It is worth remembering that Jesus does not say that the rich brothers will have the same fate as he did because they are rich, even this is not the main point, but is a well taken point; Jesus says that they are responsible in the light of the revelation received. The rich man still believed that the divine message of the prophecies was too

small to provide a solution to such a great problem — precisely because he was unable to apply it!

The rich man, stubborn in his approach, considering that OT is not enough for the living to avoid the situation he is in and postulates the idea that something supernatural is needed, maybe even a resurrection. Looking back, the resurrection of Lazarus (of Bethany) took place shortly afterwards, and yet that event had no extraordinary effects, quite the contrary. Looking at the complexity of the exposition, Jesus himself, who would die and rise without transmitting anything from death, would masterfully conclude this discourse: If a person's mind rejects Scripture, not even a resurrection will change it.

Jesus, instead of telling the reality about the afterlife directly, uses these complex figurative images precisely to meet people in their field. The popular belief was so imbued with the influences of Greek culture that a state of (semi)consciousness was postulated in front of those who passed by the grave and a bizarre settlement somewhere between death and resurrection.

This way of exposing used by Jesus, also used by the Jewish leaders of the time (along riddles, proverbs, fables, etc.), claims to be properly hermeneutically analyzed even by contemporary man. Pragmatically, let us look at this exposition as a sermon illustration (if you will), which instead of obstructing it by its secondary details, should rather highlight its central points.

This parable is not intended to portray the afterlife. Referring honestly to the type of exposition, we find that in this parable, Jesus simply used popular belief to powerfully convey a much-needed lesson to all of His listeners. Therefore, this parable cannot be used as a definitive statement about the afterlife, since parables were told to illustrate a point, not to give a systematic account of any doctrine.

The parable with the rich man and poor Lazarus (Luke 16: 19-31) instead of building a positive teaching about the conditions of the afterlife is set out precisely to deconstruct popular views on the afterlife, and functions as a parody on popular tales about communication with the dead.

As explicitly stated in the last part of the parable, Jesus leads His listeners to embrace exclusively the teachings of the Old Testament. By accepting (only) the Scripture of that time, Jesus is convinced that hell, with all its attached phraseology, will simply be demystified. Moreover, a faithful Scripture approach not only extinguishes your fear of an eternal fiery hell —the hottest point of the narrative — but with the appeasement of this fear, it practically quenches the very flames of hell.

Looking at the last instance to the 4 terms that refer to the afterlife, we conclude that despite efforts to harmonize this doctrine satisfactorily, if we stick to the OT concept of this term we are not put in the situation to force the primary biblical meanings only to be able to adapt it to the motives and pretensions of the Persian and Greek culture that were fashionable in those times; even if they have familiar echoes today.

Biblically, eternal hell cannot be argued. This theory became popular with the unbiblical idea of an immortal soul. Then it is a contradiction with the God of mercy and love to postulate the idea that He throws into hell all those whom He is not satisfied with and makes them feel His wrath forever; and, as they suffer unspeakable torment and twist in pain in the eternal flames, He looks upon them with satisfaction.

Even if there is a punishment, it will not be eternal, but rather temporary and proportionate to the sins committed in a short life. He will destroy them completely, and make them as if they never existed. God made man from the dust of the earth, and the disobedient and the unholy will be consumed by fire and will return to the dust!”

On the other hand, instead of eternal cries of torment, John, in Revelation, looking forward to the eternal state of the saved, hears the universal chorus of praise, undisturbed by any discordant note. All the breath of heaven and earth was heard giving glory to God (Revelation 5:13). There will be no lost souls to blaspheme God, when they wriggle in endless torment, nor will wretched beings in hell mix their wails with the songs of the saved.

The very next experience after death for the believer will be that of meeting Christ. Both Old and New Testaments speak of death as sleep. Commonly in the OT, when a person dies, he is said to go to sleep with his fathers (e.g., Dt 31:16; 2 Sm 7:12). Jesus himself spoke of death as sleep (Mt 9:24; Jn 11:11). So did the apostle Paul (1 Cor 11:30; 15:20, 51; 1 Thes 4:14). At least in some of these references it would seem that it is the temporary nature of death that is the reason why it is spoken of as sleep. Even in the OT passage Daniel 12:2, it is said that death is a sleep, until Christ's return.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Achtemeier, Paul J., Roger S. Boraas, HarperCollins, and Society of Biblical Literature. *Harper's Bible dictionary*. Norwalk, CT: Easton Press, 2005.

Aland, Kurt. *Synopsis Quattuor Evangelorum*. Stuttgart, DE: Deutsche Bibelstiftung, 1985.

Arndt, William F. *The Gospel according to St. Luke*. St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1956.

Barclay, William. *The Gospel of Luke*. Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 2000.

Bauer W., W. F. Arndt, F. W. Gingrich, and F. W. Danker. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1979.

Black, David Allan. *It's Still Greek to Me. An Easy-to-Understand Guide to Intermediate Greek.* Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1998.

Black, Mark C. *Luke*. Joplin, MO.: College Press Pub., 1996.

Blass, F., A. Debrunner, and R. W. Funk. *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1961.

Blomberg, Craig L. *Interpreting the Parables*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1990.

Bock, Darrell L. *Luke Volume 2: 9:51-24:53*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1996.

Bond, John. *The Gospel According to St. Luke.* London, UK: Macmillan, 1890.

Bromiley, Geoffrey W. *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia.* Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988.

Bultmann, Rudolph. *The History of the Synoptic Tradition*. New York, NY: Harper & Row/Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1963.

Clarke, Adam. *Clarke's Commentary: Luke*. Albany, OR: Ages Software, 1999.

Courson, Jon. *Jon Courson's Application Commentary*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2003.

Creed, John M. *The Gospel according to St. Luke*. London, UK: Macmillan, 1930.

Criswell, W. A., ed. *Believer's Study Bible*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1997.

Crossan, Dominic J. *In Parables: The Challenge of the Historical Jesus*. New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1973.

Dana, H. E. and Julius R. Mantey. *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament.* New York, NY: MacMillan Publishing, 1927.

Danker, Frederick W. *Jesus and the New Age: A Commentary on St. Luke's Gospel.* Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1988.

Dunkerley, Roderic. *Lazarus*. New Testament Studies, Baltimore, MD: Penguin, 1958.

Elwell, Walter A. *Evangelical Commentary on the Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1996.

_____. *Evangelical dictionary of biblical theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 2001.

_____. and Barry J. Beitzel. *Baker encyclopedia of the Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988.

_____. and Comfort P. W. *Tyndale Bible dictionary.* Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2001.

Fitzmayer, Joseph A. *The Gospel according to Luke (i–ix)*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1981.

_____. *The Gospel according to Luke (x–xxiv)*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1985.

Flavius, Josephus; William Whiston. *The works of Josephus: Complete and Unabridgged*. Preabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996.

Freedman, D. N. *The Anchor Bible Dictionary.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008.

_____. Myers, A. C., & Beck, A. B. *Eerdmans dictionary of the Bible.* Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000.

Geneva Bible Notes. Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, 2003.

Gildersleeve, Basil L. *Syntax of Classical Greek from Homer to Demosthenes*. Medford, NY: American Book Company, 1900.

Godet, Frédéric Louis; Edward William Shalders; M. D. Cusin, *A Commentary on the Gospel of St. Luke*. New York, NY: I. K. Funk, 1881.

Goodwin, William Watson. *Syntax of the Moods and Tenses of the Greek Verb*. Medford, NY: Perseus Digital Library, 1889.

Hendriksen, William. *The Bible on the Life Hereafter*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1990.

_____. and Simon J. Kistemaker. *New Testament Commentary: Exposition of the Gospel According to Luke*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1953-2001.

Hendrz, Charles Robert, ed. *Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament.* Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, 2004.

Hewett, James Allen. *New Testament Greek. A Beginning and Intermediate Grammar*. Peabody, NY: Hendrickson Publishers, 1989.

Hoeber, Robert G. *Concordia Self-Study Bible*. St. Louis, MO: Concordia Pub. House, 1997.

Horn, Siegfried H. *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Dictionary.* Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1979.

Jeremias, Joachim. *The Parables of Jesus*. Philadelphia, PA: Westminster/London, UK: SCM, 1963.

Johnson, Barton Warren. *The People's New Testament: With Explanatory Notes*. Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, 1999.

Keener, Craig S. and InterVarsity Press, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993.

Kistemaker, Simon J. *The Parables of Jesus*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1980.

Kittel G., G. Friedrich, G. W. Bromiley. eds. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964.

Knowles, Andrew. *The Bible Guide*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 2001.

Linneman, Eta. *The Parables of Jesus: Introduction and Exposition*. London, UK: SPCK, 1966.

Luce, Henry W. *The Gospel according to S. Luke*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1933.

MacDonald, William; Arthur Farstad, *Believer's Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1997.

Manson, Thomas W. *The Sayings of Jesus: As Recorded in the Gospels according to St. Matthew and St. Luke*. London, UK: SCM, 1949.

Melbourne, Bertram. *Alpha through Omega. A User Friendly Guide to New Testament Greek.* New York, NY: University Press of America, 1997.

Moulton, J. H. and G. Milligan. *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament: Illustrated from the Papyri and Other Non-literary Sources*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1980.

Myers, A. C. *The Eerdmans Bible dictionary.* Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997.

Neusner, Jacob. *The Talmud of the Land of Israel: A Preliminary Translation and Explanation*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1982.

Nichol, Francis D. *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary: The Holy Bible With Exegetical and Expository Comment*. Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1978.

Papaioannou, Kim and Edward Fudge. *The geography of hell in the teaching of Jesus: Gehenna, Hades, the Abyss, the outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.* Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2013.

Pfeiffer, C. F., Vos, H. F., and Rea, J. *The Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia*. Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1975.

Poole, Matthew. *Matthew Poole's Commentary on the New Testament*. Houston, TX: Banner of Truth, 1963.

Richards, Lawrence O. *The Bible Readers Companion*. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1991.

Robertson, A.T. *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research*. New York, NY: Hodder & Stoughton, 1914.

_____. and W. Hersey Davids. *A New Short Grammar of the Greek Testament for Students Familiar with the Elements of Greek*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1977.

Roehrs, Walter H.; Martin H Franzmann. *Concordia Self-Study Comentary*. St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1998.

Ryle, J. C., *Luke*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1997.

Schneemelcher, Wilhem. *New Testament Apocrypha*. Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1992.

Schweizer, Eduard. *The Good News according to Luke.* Atlanta, GA: John Knox, 1984.

Smyth, Herbert Weir. *A Greek Grammar for Colleges*. Medford, MA: American Book Company, 1920.

Standard Bible Dictionary. Cincinnati, OH: Standard Publishing, 2006.

The NASB Topical Index. La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation Publications, 1998.

Utley, Robert James Dr. *The Gospel According to Luke*. Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International, 2004.

Wallace, Daniel B. *Greek grammar beyond the basics: an exegetical syntax of the New Testament.* Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996.

Walvoord, John F.; Roy B. Zuck; Dallas Theological Seminary. *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1983.

Wesley, John. *Wesley's Notes: Luke*. Albany, OR: Ages Software, 1999.

White, Ellen Gould Harmon. *Early writings of Ellen G. White*. Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2000.

_____. *The story of redemption*. Rangoon, MM: Kin Saung Press, 1965.

Wiersbe, Warren W. *Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the New Testament.* Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1997.

Wilcock, Michael. *The Savior of the World: The Message of Luke's Gospel*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1979.

Winer, Georg Benedikt. *A Treatise on the Grammar of New Testament Greek: Regarded as a Sure Basis for New Testament Exegesis*. Edinburgh, UK: T & T Clark, 1882.

Young, Richard A. *Intermediate New Testament Greek: A Linguisitic And Exegetical Approach.* Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994.

Youngblood R. F., Bruce, F. F., Harrison, R. K., & Thomas Nelson Publishers. *Nelson's new illustrated Bible dictionary*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2014.