

Part 3: Biblical Proof the Souls of both the Saved and Unsaved are Awake Though Their Bodies are Dead.

23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

Lesson # 4: Neither the souls of the rich man or Abraham are asleep. If they were, according to official SDA doctrine, Jesus is the liar. The hubris of the SDA church is quite an [amazing fact](#).

This parable is no fairy tale to be dismissed as childish folly. Upon death, all souls will go to either hades/Hell or Paradise/Heaven. They will immediately recognize where they are. Souls are not a blank slate. God has imbued them with the ability to remember, to think, to feel, to have a conscience....and to freely continue hating the living God. The torments in Hell are instant and intense. Notice Scripture uses the plural of 'torment, agreeing with the Greek noun which is plural.

Several Torments Experienced

(1) The realization there is no escaping the prison of Hell. This is the reason the rich man asked for Lazarus to come to him, and not vice-versa.

(2) The realization that what he sincerely believed on Earth as being absolute truth was no such thing. He was absolutely deceived in believing he was safe from perdition, living the life of a well-respected, decent, Jewish family man. He did not worship idols as did the heathen. Nor did he pray to false gods, as did the heathen. Nor did he eat unclean foods, as did the heathen. He kept the commandments to the best of his ability. He was certain God would eternally reward him for his efforts.

(3) The realization that judging by appearance was not righteous judgment. By all appearance he believed Lazarus was not favored of God. He couldn't be more mistaken.

(4) The 'flame' he was experiencing is nothing compared to the Lake of Fiery Flames he would be experiencing at the Last Day. Although it is unlikely literal 'fire,' the metaphor of intense 'burning heat' is one which all can appreciate. The discomfort it creates is one of unrelenting misery and pain.

(5) The realization of the futility in asking the torment be

completely abated. Instead he asks it be mitigated, even if for one second.

(6) He asks the tongue be cooled, inferring the judgment of God was due, in part, to his prideful, conceited talk which, like Nebuchadnezzar, refused to give the glory to God, instead taking all the credit for his many worldly successes.

(7) Though no longer in his body, the rich man remembers his past life. He now realizes Lazarus was sent to him, lying daily at his gate. Had he stopped to converse with him, Lazarus would have preached the Gospel, in a valiant effort to save his soul. No doubt Lazarus would wave to him, as he drove by in his carriage, attempting to get his attention. But the rich man had no time to waste on such a pitiful person. He had more important chores to take care of. The well-being of his soul was at the bottom of his 'to-do list.'

(8) The memory of his loved ones gives him cause for alarm. The thought of their joining him in Hell is terrifying.

Lesson # 5: No mercy is shown those in Hell. Though Abraham has no mercy to give since he is not God, he understands God had decreed, according to the ineffable counsel of His own will, not to show those in Hell mercy of whatever kind:

15 For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have

mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

16 *So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.*

This fact of no mercy – ever – has resulted in many cults and professing pseudo-Christians to conjure the doctrine of ‘soul sleep’ and ‘annihilation.’ These groups prefer a God whose divine sovereignty and standards are similar to sinful humans. No human would willfully torture someone for thousands of years, let alone for eternity. Therefore, God will not, they suppose.

But that is not Christ’s teaching here. Nor is it the teaching of Christ in the Gospels. Nor is it the teaching of John in Revelation.

Endless Punishment Necessary

Our infinitely holy, truthful God has been despised and rejected by men, resulting in their just endless punishment. Jesus teaches as much. All the unsaved are debtors to God. They will not be released from debtors prison until the last penny is paid. Unbelievers have nothing with which to pay God. They have rejected the only Savior Christ, who paid the entire sin debt of *believing* sinners. John 3:16 makes that very point:

”whosoever shall *believe* in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.”

Lesson # 6: The soul is immortal, though the SDA church and others deny this truth. Had the soul *not* been immortal, it would have behooved Abraham to admit as much to the rich man, who was his ‘son,’ i.e. carnal descendent. For when the rich man petitioned Abraham to send Lazarus with a drop of water, Abraham should have revealed that the torments he was then experiencing were temporal, and would cease completely upon his annihilation. That information would have been extremely helpful to the man experiencing torments. One day his punishment would end. That would give him hope. But alas, no such assurance was given because it is a false hope grounded in a lie.

However, the most incontrovertible proof of the immortality of the soul lies in the fact that the man, Jesus Christ, has an immortal soul:

For this reason he had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people (Hebrews 2:17).

The soul of Jesus Christ is immortal as was human man created with an immortal living soul.

And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul (Genesis 2:7).

The difference between the souls of those in Hell and those in Heaven is the difference between the holy and the profane, not in their longevity of existence, which are equal in infinite duration.

Conclusion: No one is good enough to earn entrance to Heaven. Jesus Christ is the only one who fulfilled the Law. To claim to keep the commandments, as do the Adventists, is no holier testimony than that of the rich man in Hell. Many religious sincerely believe they are rich in faith and good works. Yet when examined by the reed of Scripture they are weighed in the balance and found wanting. A typical outgrowth of their fundamentally errant views of salvation are the false doctrines of 'soul sleep,' 'annihilation,' and 'conditional mortality of the soul.'

NEXT: Refusal to hear Moses and the prophets.