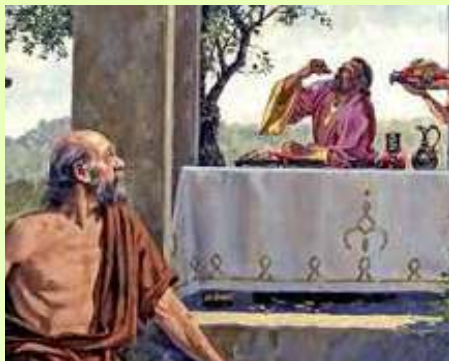




THE RICH MAN & LAZARUS THE BEGGAR

*Life has become unpredictable and without Jesus life ends in hopelessness. It is time we wake up and not take life casually. Value the life we have on this earth and not neglect God's mercy and grace in our life, receive His gift of salvation and be saved, says **Kumar Nadesan**.*



The Lord Jesus spoke a parable about a rich man and a certain beggar named Lazarus. The rich man lived a lifestyle without the fear of God and spent his wealth in mirth in the company of the elites of the society and life was a regular celebration to him. But the beggar lived in utter poverty and had to camp at the gate of the rich man in the company of street dogs for a few pieces of crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. The beggar had no complaints in his poverty, but set his heart upon the things of God and the things after death. The beggar was unknown and unpopular on the earth but nonetheless, he was the favourite of heaven.

One day death visited Lazarus and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. Death visited the rich man also uninvited and

unannounced. Death proved that it was common for all. However, there was a significant difference in the death of the beggar. "He was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom". It is the office of angels to minister to the heirs of salvation (Matthew 24:31; Mark 13:27; Hebrews 1:14). But when the rich man died, there was no heavenly visitor to carry him. This is the saddest ending of our lives, if angels do not carry us to heaven. In death and in life the two men, the rich man and the beggar stand in contrast. The rich man passes from view with the pomp and pageantry of a burial (2 Chronicles 16:13, 2 Chronicles 16:14) befitting to the rich, but Lazarus passes with the angels, a spiritual triumph suited to the one accepted of God.

After death, the former conditions of each of them is sharply reversed. Lazarus feasts at a divine banquet, and the rich man had to beg for a drop of water to sooth his burning throat. We see the rich man plunging from the grandeur of earth in ceaseless torments in hell fire. You and I rightfully deserve to be thrown in the same place of never ending torments for the transgression of God's law! But God's mercy has kept you alive giving another opportunity to

repent your sins and trust in the Saviour and experience the joy of salvation. The greatest mercy of God is God's faithful warning to man of the coming judgment (Hebrews 9:27). For this very purpose Jesus came down upon the earth from heaven above calling upon you "to repent for the kingdom of God is at hand". He offered His life as a ransom for your sins, for you are a sinner just as this writer and everyone else are. Jesus, the Good Shepherd laid down His life on the cross for your salvation through the blood of the everlasting covenant (Hebrews 13:20-21). He will come again in power and glory to judge the world and to punish those who reject Him. God has assured us in His Word, that whosoever believes in the Lord Jesus shall not perish in the unquenchable fire in Hell but shall have everlasting life.

Dear reader, remember as the clock ticks, you are certainly moving fast for meeting death. If you call upon the name of Jesus today, confess your sins to Him and receive Him as your Lord and Saviour, you will not have the occasion to regret as the rich man had to, as you pass into eternity.