

Luke 16:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

Abraham responds: '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.' Abraham addresses him as 'Son' (τέκνον, teknon, child), acknowledging physical descent but unable to help. The command 'remember' (μνήσθητι, mnēsthēti) indicates conscious memory in eternity—the rich man recalls his earthly life, which intensifies his torment. The contrast: 'thou receivedst thy good things' (ἀπέλαβες τὰ ἀγαθὰ σου, apelabes ta agatha sou)—he consumed his blessing in this life. Lazarus received 'evil things' (κακά, kaka)—suffering was his earthly portion. 'But now' (νῦν δέ, nyn de) marks the great reversal: Lazarus is 'comforted' (παρακαλεῖται, parakaleitai), the rich man 'tormented' (ὀδυνᾶσαι, odynasai). Earthly conditions are temporary; eternal destinies are permanent.

Historical Context

This verse has been misinterpreted to teach that poverty saves and wealth damns. That's not Jesus' point. The rich man wasn't condemned for being wealthy but for living selfishly, ignoring Lazarus, trusting his riches, and refusing to use them for God's kingdom. Lazarus wasn't saved by poverty but by faith (implied by his destination with Abraham). The parable warns against consuming God's blessings selfishly while neglecting eternal investments. The reversal fulfills Jesus' teaching: 'Blessed are ye poor... woe unto you that are rich' (Luke 6:20, 24). The eternally

crucial question isn't wealth or poverty but whether you lived for this world or the next.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does this verse relate to Jesus' beatitudes about the poor being blessed and the rich receiving woe?
2. What does the rich man's memory of his earthly life add to his torment?
3. How should this reversal principle shape Christian attitudes toward present suffering and prosperity?

Interlinear Text

εἶπεν	δὲ	Ἀβραάμ·	Τέκνον	μνήσθητι	ὅτι	ἀπέλαβες	σὺ	
said	But	Abraham	Son	remember	that	receivedst	thou	
G2036	G1161	G11	G5043	G3415	G3754	G618	G4771	
τὰ	ἀγαθὰ	σου	ἐν	τῇ	ζωῇ	σου	καὶ	Λάζαρος
G3588	good things	thy	in	G3588	lifetime	thy	and	Lazarus
	G18	G4675	G1722		G2222	G4675	G2532	G2976
ὁμοίως	τὰ	κακά·	νῦν	δὲ	ὅδε	παρακαλεῖται	σὺ	δὲ
likewise	G3588	evil things	now	But	G3592	he is comforted	thou	But
G3668		G2556	G3568	G1161		G3870	G4771	G1161
ὀδυνᾶσαι								
art tormented								
G3600								

Additional Cross-References

Luke 6:24 (Parallel theme): But woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation.

1 John 2:15 (Parallel theme): Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

Psalms 17:14 (Parallel theme): From men which are thy hand, O LORD, from men of the world, which have their portion in this life, and whose belly thou fillest with thy hid treasure: they are full of children, and leave the rest of their substance to their babes.

Mark 9:45 (Parallel theme): And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:

Romans 8:7 (Parallel theme): Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

Acts 14:22 (Parallel theme): Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

John 16:33 (Good): These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.