

- (b) What in the truth-value of this discourse for knowledge concerning the intermediate state?

Part of the answer depends on our answer to the first question, that regarding genre. And yet we must ask a rather pointed question: Since very little is revealed elsewhere about the nature of the intermediate state, and since this discourse provides many details about human experience after physical death (something we could not know about except by divine revelation), we must ask whether Jesus would knowingly have misled His hearers about the intermediate state if He knew that what He was saying was not true. Thus the important question is not what is the genre of this discourse, but rather was Jesus communicating correct or erroneous ideas about the nature of the intermediate state (whether by parable, allegory, illustration, or nonfictional account). And it does not answer this question to say that any error of interpretation springs from the mind of the one who wishes to import into the discussion what Jesus never intended to teach, since the only information as to Jesus' intention is found in the discourse itself, and it is a straightforward account of what happened to two men at death.

- (c) What is the character of the two men?

We are told that one man was rich, dressed splendidly, and lived gaily and splendidly every day. Although he was a Jew and had Moses and the Prophets, he apparently did not listen to them, so far as repentance of sin and obedience in righteousness was concerned; and he was not a righteous man, as witnessed by the fact that he went to ᾠδης. The other man, Lazarus, was poor, apparently a cripple, covered with sores, and reduced to beggary. He apparently was also a Jew and a righteous man, as witnessed by the fact that he went to heaven.

- (d) What is the nature of physical death?

We are told that the poor man, Lazarus, died and was carried away by the angels to heaven, to Abraham's side or bosom. His body was probably buried in a pauper's grave, or burned in the Valley of Hinnon with the trash. The rich man died, his body was buried, probably in a richly ornamented tomb hewn out of stone, and his soul/spirit went into ᾠδης. Thus both man became disembodied in the experience of physical death.

In their disembodied state both men were conscious of their condition and their surroundings, could feel, think, and speak.

- (e) What is the nature of the two places or states or realm into which the two men went?

Lazarus went to heaven, where Abraham was. He was carried there by angels and comforted, especially in view of his previous sufferings during his earthly life. The rich man went to ᾠδης. In this passage we are told that in ᾠδης he was in torment (verse 23), in agony in "this flame" (verse 24), in agony (verse 25), and in a place of torment (verse 28).

- (f) Since these two men were in a disembodied state, how are we to interpret the physical term used in the account?

The rich man had no physical body (he was disembodied); yet he lifted up his eyes, was in torment, saw Abraham and Lazarus, cried out, asked that Lazarus be sent, so that "he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool