

# The Beggar Lazarus

—12th Story—



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Long ago lived a very rich man. He lived in a fancy house and wore very expensive clothes. And every day he ate the finest meals and lived in luxury. The rich man gathered people to his home every day for a feast. He was always happy and joyful. But did not believe in God and lived only for himself.



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In front of the rich man's house lived a poor beggar called Lazarus. Lazarus, who lay at the rich man's gate, was covered in sores. He wore dirty clothes and ate scraps that fell off the rich man's table. No one thought Lazarus to be worthy of anything because of his shabby and smelly appearance. But Lazarus believed in God and was a man of faith.



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Then one day, Lazarus the beggar died. The angels came and carried Lazarus to heaven and laid him in the arms of Abraham, who had been praised for his faith in God and was our forefather of faith.



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Soon after, the rich man also died and was buried. He fell into hell where he suffered excruciating pain and torment. Hell was like an never ending sea of fire. The rich man screamed out in agony and frantically searched for some water to soothe his dry throat.



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In his torment, the rich man looked up and saw heaven afar. "What! How can this be? How can Lazarus the beggar be at the side of Abraham, our forefather of faith?" The rich man looked on flabbergasted. The rich man was very envious of Lazarus. He called out to his forefather Abraham. "Father Abraham! Please save me! My whole body is burning in this fire. It is extremely hot! Please send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire!"

Abraham responded.

"Son, Lazarus cannot come to you. Remember that in your lifetime you received your good things and you lived for your own happiness, while Lazarus received bad things and lived in hunger and pain. But now he is comforted here and you are in agony in hell. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, so we cannot go from here to you, and no one can cross over from there to us."

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In sadness, the rich man begged Abraham.

"Then, I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my father's house. Let him warn my family and my brothers so that they will not also come to this place of torment!"

Abraham responded.

"They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them. If they do not listen and repent, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead."

"No father; if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent and believe in Jesus. So please! Help them!" begged the rich man.

Abraham spoke again to the rich man.

"That is not the case. Those who didn't listen to live testimonies will not listen and repent even if someone from the dead goes to them to tell them what a scary place hell is. And so they will not believe in Jesus either. Therefore, it is important that you listen well to God's words and repent when you are alive!"

The rich man did not help Lazarus when he was alive.

He did not know how to love his neighbors.

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Like this rich man, if we don't know how to love our neighbors, then we cannot be called God's people.

Jesus teaches us to love God and to love our neighbors as ourselves.



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