

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

OLD TESTAMENT – Amos 6:1-7

Woe to you who are complacent in Zion, and to you who feel secure on Mount Samaria, you notable men of the foremost nation, to whom the people of Israel come! ² Go to Calneh and look at it; go from there to great Hamath, and then go down to Gath in Philistia. Are they better off than your two kingdoms? Is their land larger than yours? ³ You put off the evil day and bring near a reign of terror. ⁴ You lie on beds inlaid with ivory and lounge on your couches. You dine on choice lambs and fattened calves. ⁵ You strum away on your harps like David and improvise on musical instruments. ⁶ You drink wine by the bowlful and use the finest lotions, but you do not grieve over the ruin of Joseph. ⁷ Therefore you will be among the first to go into exile; your feasting and lounging will end.

6:1 WOE – This Hebrew expression was used as a wail of grief over the dead. Prophets used it to predict divine judgment. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 4)

YOU – “You” is not in the Hebrew text, but is properly understood throughout from the context. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 4)

in Zion ... on Mount Samaria. Although Amos spoke primarily to Israel, Judah (Zion) also deserved his rebuke (cf. 2:4–5), for Israel properly comprised all 12 tribes. (CSB)

Hill on which the Jerusalem temple stood. Here, it stands for the whole Southern Kingdom. (TLSB)

Those who are apparently without a care as they occupy their mountain dwellings where they consider themselves safe. (Kretzmann)

Samaria. Capital of Israel. Here, it stands for the whole Northern Kingdom. (TLSB)

NOTABLE MEN – Literally, designated, named as if they are household names. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 4)

Those to whom the people came for advice, leadership, and an example to follow. It is doubtful that they were advising as they ought, i.e., the nation needed to heed Amos’s warnings and repent. (TLSB)

foremost nation. In Israel’s self-complacent eyes in this time of her newly recovered power and prosperity. (CSB)

6:2 Perhaps Calneh and Hamath had fallen in Jeroboam II’s campaign (2Ki 14:28), and the wall of Gath had been broken down by Uzziah (2Ch 26:6). These words may have been spoken by the “people of Israel” (v. 1) who, when they came before their notables, flattered their vanity and thus reinforced their arrogant complacency. (CSB)

If these three powerful city-states suffered military incursions and defeat, how can Israel expect to be spared the same fate, since by then they were hardly in a better position? *Calneh*. Syrian city north of the bend in the Orontes River. *Hamath*. Important Syrian city north of Damascus. *Gath*. One of five royal cities of the Philistines on the coastal plain west of Judah. (TLSB)

GO – There are many imperatives in this verse and the next. All of them will lead to the people discovering the trouble they are in. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 4)

BETTER...LARGER – Israel thus ranking at that time with the first of the nations, unexcelled by any of their heathen neighbors. But for this very fact, on account of their reliance upon their prosperity and power, the Lord pronounces a woe upon them. (K)

6:3 BRING NEAR – Literally, “You bring close a seat of violence. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 4)

That violence and oppression come ever nearer to them, that they become guilty of these transgressions with ever-increasing frequency. This ignoring of the Lord and His holy will was apparent particularly in their luxurious feasting. (Kretzmann)

NEAR REIGN OF TERROR – mos repeats his charge about Israel’s pervasive injustice and their oppression of the poor (e.g., 2:6–7; 5:11–12; 8:4–6). As a result of their callous and even brutal behavior, Israel’s leaders will bear a special responsibility for precipitating the very disaster they claim will never occur. (TLSB)

6:4 ivory. See 3:15 and note. (CSB)

Symbols of luxury. Numerous pieces of furniture inlaid with ivory in the Phoenician style have been unearthed in Israel. (TLSB)

These were wooden bed frames which were decorated with ivory inlays. This is the first historical reference to the practice of reclining at a banquet in Israel, adopted by the upper classes from a foreign innovation. Later this became customary, e.g., John 13:23-25. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 4)

CHOICE LAMBS...FATTENED CALVES – This choice meet was normally eaten only at feasts. Extravagance points to misplaced priorities and hearts far more concerned with opulence than righteousness. Luther says, “The Lord is not condemning the possession of wealth but the misuse thereof” (AE 18:170). (TLSB)

6:5 STRUM AWAY –But only for the gratification of their own vanity and sensuality, instead of for the glory of God, as did David. (Kretzmann)

The idle rich frittered away their days singing and making merry. (TLSB)

like David. See 1Sa 16:15–23; 2Sa 23:1. (CSB)

An ironic comparison, since David was renowned for his contributions to sacred music, i.e., the compositions he dedicated to the Lord and the provisions he made for the temple worship (1Ch 23:5; 2Ch 29:25–26). (TLSB)

6:6 WINE BY THE BOWLFUL – Literally, “with bowls of wine.” (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 4)

Not just cups, but bowls of wine were consumed. Bowls mentioned here were used in the temple for sprinkling sacrificial blood on the altar, which implies abuse by the priests or Levites. (TLSB)

FINEST LOTIONS – Literally, “with the first (best of oils they anoint themselves.” (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 4)

Hebrew *mashach*, associated with ritual anointing. Hedonistic excesses were ironically dressed up in religious garb. (TLSB)

DO NOT GRIEVE – Literally, “are not sickened over the shattering.” (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 4)

Joseph. See note on 5:6. (CSB)

Because of their misplaced priorities, the rich pamper and indulge themselves while ignoring the spiritual depravity and impending destruction of their nation. (TLSB)

Literally, “the breach of Joseph,” that is, the impending calamity, the destruction of the northern kingdom. This same fact stands out time and again in the history of nations, namely, that they indulge in wanton luxury even while their country is hastening to its ruin. (Kretzmann)

6:7 FIRST TO GO INTO EXILE – While they think they are the first/best, Amos turns the phrase to say that their pride has earned them first place among the exiles. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 4)

Additional irony. The rich, whose attitude was famously “me first,” will have the distinction of being punished first. They will be at the head of the column of deportees, leading the march into exile. (TLSB)

FEASTING AND LOUNGING – This appears to be associated with pagan funeral revelry in Jer 16:5, the only other place in the OT it occurs. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 4)

Near Eastern version of a drinking party (compare to Gk *symposium*). Cf Jer 16:5, which describes a funeral. Such gatherings were associated with the cult of the dead in other cultures. (TLSB)

This opulent class, though at ease and seemingly without a care in the world, will soon stop its partying. (TLSB)

EPISTLE – 1 Timothy 3:1-13

Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task. ² Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, ³ not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. ⁴ He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. ⁵ (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) ⁶ He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. ⁷ He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap. ⁸ Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. ⁹ They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. ¹⁰ They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. ¹¹ In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything. ¹² A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well. ¹³ Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus.

3:1–13 Paul continues his teachings concerning those who may teach and properly exercise authority in a church. (TLSB)

3:1 *trustworthy saying*. See note on 1:15. (CSB)

Apparently it was a well-known adage in the Early Church. Many NT passages reflect a lively interest in Church order (i.e., 5:17-22; Acts 6:1-6; 14:21-23; 1 Th 5:12-22; Titus 1:5-16; 1 Peter 5:1-5). (TLSB)

SETS HIS HEART – Not an ambitious quest for personal gain, but for honorable and commendable service. (TLSB)

overseer. In the Greek culture the word was used of a presiding official in a civic or religious organization. Here it refers to a man who oversees a local congregation. The equivalent word from the Jewish background of Christianity is “elder.” The terms “overseer” and “elder” are used interchangeably in Ac 20:17, 28; Tit 1:5–7; 1Pe 5:1–2. The duties of an overseer were to teach and preach (3:2; 5:17), to direct the affairs of the church (3:5; 5:17), to shepherd the flock of God (Ac 20:28) and to guard the church from error (Ac 20:28–31). (CSB)

NOBLE TASK – Those who are served benefit greatly. The task, or work requires the full measure of a man's energy and devotion; it is not a mere status to be enjoyed. (TLSB)

3:2 *the overseer must be*. See chart on “Qualifications for Elders/Overseers and Deacons”. (CSB)

ABOVE REPROACH – Literally, “not able to be taken hold of.” One against who no charge of unfitness can rightly be leveled. (TLSB)

husband of but one wife.† A general principle that applies to any violation of God's marriage law, whether in the form of polygamy or of marital unfaithfulness (see note on Tit 1:6). But see parallel statement on widows and NIV text note on 5:9. (CSB)

Many new converts would have come from a background of polygamy or sexual immorality. The qualification is phrased in terms of sexual fidelity within a monogamous marital relationship. The phrase does not exclude single men from serving as pastors, but clearly shows that the forced celibacy of pastors is an unscriptural requirement. “It is clear that in the Ancient Church priests were married men.... Four hundred years ago in Germany [c 1130], for the first time, priests were violently forced to lead a single life. They offered such resistance that when the Archbishop of Mainz was about to publish the pope's decree about celibacy, he was almost killed in a riot by enraged priests. This matter was handled so harshly that not only was marriage forbidden in the future, but existing marriages were torn apart, contrary to all laws, both divine and human” (AC XXIII 10–13). Paul's phrase also makes the implicit affirmation that only males (husbands) may serve as pastors. (TLSB)

sober-minded. Clearheaded, showing soundness in judgment; not flighty or unstable. (TLSB)

respectable. Well-ordered demeanor in every aspect of his character. (TLSB)

hospitable. Not one who merely likes to entertain but, in the first century, one who would take in Christian strangers who were traveling or fleeing from persecution. (TLSB)

3:3 *not violent*. Lit, “not a striker.” the Lord would not approve of a church leader who deals forcefully, using verbal or physical violence toward family or congregational members. (TLSB)

3:4–5 *children submissive*. Not a requirement that the pastor must have children, but that when he does, they should be obedient. See SC, Fourth Commandment, p xxxv. A pastor must teach and uphold this commandment within his family. (TLSB)

3:5 *church*. See note on Mt 16:18. (CSB)

3:6 *recent convert*. The Greek word used to describe newly planted trees. The phrase does not preclude relatively young men, such as Timothy, from serving as pastors but rather those who

have not attained a satisfactory level of spiritual maturity since their conversion to Christ. (TLSB)

condemnation. The devil was condemned for prideful rebellion. (TLSB)

3:7 *outsiders.* Unbelievers, non-Christians. (TLSB)

snare of the devil. A trap to which an unqualified overseer would be more susceptible. (TLSB)

3:1–7 Only qualified men may serve as pastors of God’s flock. We should honor and uphold the qualifications that God has set forth for those who would serve in the Office of the Public Ministry, always remembering that the pastoral office is a divine institution—a gift from God for His Church. The Lord Jesus has given this office and its qualifications because He loves us and always desires what is best for us. He Himself is our chief Shepherd (1Pt 5:4). He has laid down His life for us (Jn 10:11) and gives us eternal life (Jn 10:28). • “Almighty God, in Your kindness You cause the light of the Gospel to shine among us. By the working of Your Holy Spirit, help us to share the good news of Your salvation that all who hear it may rejoice in the gift of Your unending love.” Amen. (*LSB Altar Book*, p 987) (TLSB)

3:8–12 The list of qualifications for deacons is similar to the corresponding list for overseers (vv 1–7), with a few exceptions. Notably, it is not required that deacons be able to teach (v 2), or that they care for God’s Church (v 5). These are likely omitted because they were part of the overseer’s role. (TLSB)

3:8 *Deacons.* In its nontechnical usage, the Greek for this word means simply “one who serves.” The men chosen in Ac 6:1–6 were probably not only the first deacons mentioned in the NT but also the first to be appointed in the church (but see notes there). Generally, their service was meant to free the elders to give full attention to prayer and the ministry of the word (Ac 6:2, 4). The only two local church offices mentioned in the NT are those of overseer (also called elder) and deacon (see Php 1:1). (CSB)

Deacons. They assisted the overseers by handling the distribution of alms, providing for the needs of the sick, and caring for the place of worship. (TLSB)

3:9 *clear conscience.* Having a pure, clear confession of the faith. (TLSB)

3:10 *tested.* With regard to the qualifications presented in vv 8–12. The tense of the Greek verb indicates that the testing would be ongoing—a careful and thoughtful evaluation. (TLSB)

3:11 *their wives.* The Greek for this phrase simply means “the women” and therefore could refer to (1) deacons’ wives, (2) deaconesses (see NIV text note) or (3) female deacons. However, the fact that deacons are referred to again in vv. 12–13 seems to rule out a separate office of deaconess, but many judge otherwise. (CSB)

Or, “women” as in the ESV footnote. In the Early Church, women likely served as deaconesses, administering physical help and deeds of kindness. Women often did such work alongside men, though they were not to hold the office of overseer (pastor). (TLSB)

3:13 *gain a good standing.* Through the faithful discharge of their particular duties, their beneficial service will receive the approval of both God and people. (TLSB)

confidence. Boldness. (TLSB)

3:8–13 Deacons and deaconesses were faithful people, entrusted with special responsibilities for service to their fellow Christians. Christians today are also privileged to serve others through special congregational offices and service organizations. When given chances to express Jesus’ love in deeds of service, it is easy to pass on these opportunities. But, in truth, God calls every Christian to follow His example of self-giving service. Jesus came to serve sinners like us with His forgiveness and salvation (Mt 20:28). He still serves us today through His means of grace. • Lord Jesus, as You so wonderfully serve us with the rich treasures of Your redeeming grace, inspire us by that grace joyfully to serve others in Your precious name. Amen. (TLSB)

GOSPEL – LUKE 16:19-31

19 “There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. **20** At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores **21** and longing to eat what fell from the rich man’s table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores. **22** “The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried. **23** In hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. **24** So he called to him, ‘Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.’ **25** “But Abraham replied, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. **26** And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.’ **27** “He answered, ‘Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my father’s house, **28** for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.’ **29** “Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.’ **30** ”‘No, father Abraham,’ he said, ‘but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.’ **31** “He said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.’”

The story of the rich man and Lazarus provides a fitting conclusion to this chapter on the attitude toward possessions in view of the life of the age to come and the Gospel preaching to prepare people for it. The account has two parts, but there is no doubt as to its unity and its intent. The first part (16:19–26) describes love of worldly wealth and failure to heed the witnesses (cf. 16:14–15), and the second part (16:27–31) presents the importance of the testimony of the Law and the Prophets (cf. 16:16–18). (CC p. 632)

The following outline details the chiasmic structure within the first part:

I. The Life and Death of the Rich Man and Lazarus

16:19 **A** A certain rich man (πλούσιος) dressed in fine clothes and feasted lavishly every day.

16:20 **B** A poor man (πτωχός) called Lazarus was cast down at his gate, full of sores.

16:21 **C** Lazarus longed to be satisfied with crumbs that fell from the rich man's table.

C' But instead, the dogs came and licked his sores.

16:22 **B'** The poor man (τὸν πτωχόν) died and was carried to heaven by angels to the bosom of Abraham.

A' The rich man (πλούσιος) died and was buried.

II. The Conversation between the Rich Man and Abraham

A. The heavenly life of Lazarus and the eternal torment of the rich man (16:23–26).

B. On hearing Moses and the Prophets, or even one raised from the dead (16:27–31).

The story sets up a contrast between two men: a rich man and a poor man. This is accomplished by four verses in a simple chiasm that briefly and succinctly describes the life and death of these two men. The hearer should not have difficulty seeing that the rich man represents the Pharisees who were earlier described as “lovers of money” (16:14), and the poor man stands for all the outcasts of Jewish society whom Jesus has made the special focus of his ministry and addressees/hearers of his preaching. (e.g., Lk 4:18; 6:20; 7:22; 14:13, 21) The portrayal of these two men fits these two groups perfectly. (CC p. 633)

Though some interpreters have regarded this story of Lazarus as a parable (perhaps because of dislike for v 23), the fact that Jesus used a personal name for a main character indicates a realistic situation. (TLSB)

What Happens When We Die?

A human is made up of body and soul (Mt 10:28; cf 2Pt 1:13–15). When a human dies, his soul is separated from his body. His body decays, but his soul—and thus he himself, his *ego*, or personality—lives on. If a person trusts in Jesus for salvation, his soul will live in joy with God, awaiting the resurrection, the last judgment, and eternal life. If a person is wicked and unbelieving, his soul will live in torment, awaiting the resurrection, the last judgment, and eternal condemnation. (TLSB)

In 2Co 5:4–8, St Paul describes the body as a “tent” in which he—that is, his mind, personality, soul, spirit, or however one might describe the center of one's person—dwells. He says that when he and believing Christians die, they will be “away from the body” (literally, “out of the house of the body”) and yet still “at home with [present with] the Lord.” These passages show clearly that the center of one's personhood, which other passages call “the soul,” can exist separately from the body, and that at death the soul is separated from the body. Cf Lk 8:55; 23:46; 1Pt 3:18–19; Php 1:23–24; Rv 6:9. (TLSB)

What about “Soul Sleep”?

In Jn 11:11–14, our Lord Jesus describes the death of His friend Lazarus as “sleep.” But note: the wicked who die have “no rest” (Is 57:20–21; Rv 14:11). Death is a “rest” or “sleep” for the godly (Rv 14:13, drawing from Ps 95). Thus, the Church calls the places where the godly are buried “cemeteries,” that is, “dormitories” or places of sleep, and the Church believes that the godly do indeed “rest in peace.” (TLSB)

But while the body sleeps, the soul is awake. For example, in Lk 16:19–31, the soul of the rich man in Hades prays (to no avail) that the beggar Lazarus would relieve his suffering or return to earth to warn his family. The soul of Lazarus, on the other hand, is “comforted” (v 25). Both the rich man and faithful Abraham are awake, conscious, and speaking. Scripture sometimes indicates that the departed souls are unaware of what takes place on earth (e.g., 2Ki 22:20; Jb 14:21; Is 57:1–2; 63:16). Yet it should not be concluded from this that they are unconscious. The soul of the rich man was not unconscious, nor was the soul of Abraham (Mt 22:32). (TLSB)

In considering “soul sleep,” however, we must distinguish between those people who affirm that the souls of the righteous are comforted and experience God’s presence and those who think that the souls of the righteous experience nothing, or worse, are obliterated. As long as the comfort of the righteous souls is affirmed, expressions about the dead being asleep are not dangerous. But the view that the souls of the righteous experience nothing, or that they are dissipated or annihilated, however, are false, unscriptural views. (TLSB)

Glory and Condemnation on Judgment Day

What is the last judgment all about? Scripture teaches that in heaven there are varying degrees of glory and in hell there are varying degrees of condemnation, or judgment (Mt 10:15; 20:23; Lk 14; Jn 19:11; 1Co 15:40–42). We should not think about Judgment Day as though it is the first time that the godly will be distinguished from the wicked (2Pt 2:3–4, 9; Jude 6), or as though it is the first time that the godly will experience the blessed presence of God. But it will be the first time the godly fully experience God’s presence in their glorified bodies (Lk 16:19–31; Jn 5:24). (TLSB)

Instead of thinking about Judgment Day as the first time a distinction is made between the righteous and the wicked, we should see it as the *final and full* awarding of rewards and penalties (2Co 5:10). Judgment Day is about the fact that we, in our bodies, will receive the things done in the body. Those who have done evil in the body will receive condemnation. Those who, in the body, have believed in Christ, have been forgiven of their sins, and have new life by God’s Spirit, will receive rewards. Judgment Day is the full and final awarding of rewards and penalties, not the beginning of that awarding. (TLSB)

Everlasting Life with Christ

As we have begun to live with Christ here on earth in the Church through His Word and Sacraments, so we will continue to live with Him after we die. Death is not an interruption of this fellowship with our Lord. Our life with Christ continues, even after death, even before the resurrection. Our departed friends and family members who lived with Christ here below by faith in His cross for their forgiveness even now live with Him and are comforted. Because our life with Christ is not interrupted by death, death for the Christian may be sweet and joyful, even in the midst of tears. (TLSB)

16:19 *a rich man*. Sometimes given the name Dives (from the Latin for “rich man”). (CSB)

ἄνθρωπος δὲ τις ἦν πλούσιος—This account begins like that of the prudent steward (16:1) and shows how these two stories frame Luke 16. The indefiniteness of τις suggests that this may be interpreted as an illustrative story rather than a historical narrative (cf. 10:30; 14:16; 15:11). Neither Jesus nor Luke calls it a parable, but it may be treated as such. See textual note at 8:4. Regarding the extent to which the details should be understood as literal and didactic, see the commentary below. (CC p. 630)

The rich man occupies the frame of the chiasm (A—16:19; A'—16:22b). The first part of the frame introduces his life: he is rich, dresses in fine clothes, and feasts sumptuously every day. This seems innocent enough, but the hearer would recognize that this rich man has taken merry-making to excess (λαμπρῶς, “sumptuously” [16:19]). Feasting is reserved for special occasions such as weddings or the visit of an honored person. This was the case when the fatted calf was brought out for the extraordinary occasion of the prodigal son’s return to life. To feast every day is a hyperbolic illustration of the improper use of possessions. This rich man is out of control, and his use of his possessions stands in contrast even to that of the rich fool (12:16–21). The other side of the frame introduces his death. The stark simplicity of Jesus’ words stands in contrast to the lavish opulence of the man’s life: “the rich man also died and was buried” (16:22). One assumes, however, that he received a grand funeral in keeping with the extravagance of his life. But the finality of this statement rings in the ears of the hearers. That he “was buried” suggests that his destination is eternal death. (CC p. 633)

This is the second parable or story in Luke 16 that deals with rich people who misused their wealth. Luke 1:53 states “He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty.” This suggests that the rich often depend on their wealth to take care of all things including their salvation. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 8, Part 4)

purple and fine linen. Characteristic of costly garments. (CSB)

A rich, royal woolen cloak worn over a delicate undergarment. (TLSB)

ἐνεδιδύσκετο—The imperfect suggests that it was his custom to dress this way. People clad in soft, costly, luxurious clothing are in the palaces of kings, unlike John the Baptist (Lk 7:25). (CC)

The imperfect suggests that it was his custom to dress this way. This is the way he lived. People who lived like this were generally found in palaces. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 8, Part 4)

LIVED IN LUXURY – ESV has “feasted sumptuously every day.”

εὐφραϊνόμενος καθ’ ἡμέραν—This is one of the many verbal links with the parable of the prodigal son, in which εὐφραίνω is used four times. The contrast is that in Luke 15 feasting was for the great event of the younger son’s repentance; here feasting is an

everyday occurrence. In the passive, the verb (“be gladdened”) is also associated especially with the joys of eating. (CC p. 631))

lampros – This word suggests gluttony and feeding on exotic and expensive dishes. He is an example of excess and self-indulgence. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 8, Part 4)

16:20 AT HIS GATE – pulona – This suggests a high, ornamented gate indicating luxury. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 8, Part 4)

The feasting of the rich man and his friends made the gate a promising site for a beggar. (TLSB)

Lazarus. Not the Lazarus Jesus raised from the dead (Jn 11:43–44). If this is a parable, it is the only one in which Jesus gave a name to one of the characters. (CSB)

Means “one whom God helps.” (TLSB)

Λάζαρος— This is the only time a personal name appears in any parable or parable-like story in the gospels. Lazarus is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew Eleazar/Eliezer, which means “the one whom God helps.” The rich man has sometimes been called “Dives,” which is simply a transliteration of the word translated “rich” in the Latin Vulgate. The fact that Lazarus has a *name* but the rich man is nameless is an important feature; he whom God helps lives forever! (CC p. 631)

Lazarus, the poor man, occupies the center of the chiasm. In contrast to that of the rich man, his life is pathetic and pitiable. Yet Jesus names this poor man, suggesting his importance in God’s sight and that his name is written in heaven (cf. 10:20), while the rich man’s name is not recorded in Scripture or in heaven. Jesus spends more time describing Lazarus’ life and death than he did with the rich man. Although Lazarus is not a leper (otherwise he would not have been able to get near the rich man’s house), he is full of sores (B—16:20). The picture is of a beggar who must rely on others’ help for survival. Perhaps he is crippled. He is cast at the gate of the rich man’s house, where people come and go, in the hope that the rich man and his feasting friends will have pity on him and give him something from their table. Like the prodigal, he longs to be satisfied with the humblest of food, crumbs from the rich man’s table. But the rich man totally ignores him, even though later on we learn that the rich man knew Lazarus’ name (16:24). The situation is so pathetic that the household dogs, who would have received the crumbs from the table for which Lazarus longed (cf. Mt 15:27), add (ἀλλὰ καί, “but even”) to Lazarus’ humiliation by licking his sores. He is so helpless that he is not able to keep these dogs away from him. (CC pp. 633-634)

covered with sores. The Greek for this phrase is a common medical term found only here in the NT (see Introduction: Author). (CSB)

16:21 In the center of the chiasm (16:21), there is the great contrast between Lazarus’ need and the response it evokes. Lazarus is a perfect recipient for almsgiving, through

which the rich man may demonstrate how mercy may be expressed through the proper use of possessions. In keeping with his excessive lifestyle, the rich man's obsession with the pleasures of possessions causes him to ignore Lazarus. Instead, the dogs lick his wounds! (CC p. 634)

At this moment, Jesus introduces the Great Reversal. Lazarus dies and is carried by angels to the bosom of Abraham. This is an extraordinary event, especially for someone as apparently insignificant as Lazarus. Lazarus may not have feasted at the rich man's table (feasting that came to an end when the rich man died), but now he feasts forever in the bosom of Abraham. (CC p. 634)

LONGING TO EAT – ἐπιθυμῶν χορτασθῆναι—This same expression is used of the prodigal son when he hit the bottom and was longing to be satisfied with pig food (15:16). χορτάζω occurs also in the beatitudes, "Blessed [you] hungering now, for you will be satisfied" (χορτασθήσεσθε; 6:21), and in the feeding of the five thousand (9:17). (CC p. 631)

EAT WHAT FELL FROM THE RICH MAN'S TABLE – Ancient people generally ate with their hands. When they wanted to clean their hands they wiped them on bread and threw the bread away (under the table for dogs or other scavengers). (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 8, Part 4)

DOGS...LICKED SORES – ἐπέλειχον—In contrast to the rich man, who was accustomed to dressing in fine clothes, Lazarus was covered with sores, and it was customary (imperfect) for the dogs to lick his sores. (CC p. 631)

He is helpless to keep the dogs from his undressed wounds. (TLSB)

This made the sores even worse. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 8, Part 4)

16:22 THE TIME CAME – ἐγένετο δέ—Luke often uses this construction to signal an abrupt shift in the narrative as he does here to describe the deaths of Lazarus and the rich man. (CC p. 631)

ANGELS CARRIED HIM – Instantly, divine help appears where human aid had been lacking. (TLSB)

Abraham's side. The Talmud mentions both paradise (see 23:43) and Abraham's side (traditionally "bosom") as the home of the righteous. Abraham's side refers to the place of blessedness to which the righteous dead go to await future vindication. Its bliss is the quality of blessedness reserved for people like Abraham. (CSB)

Lit, "Abraham's bosom." Perhaps the place of honor at the heavenly banquet (cf Mt 8:11; Jn 21:20). (TLSB)

εἰς τὸν κόλπον—Although this phrase *can* mean “closest communion” apart from a meal context, it also refers to one who reclines at table at a festive meal in close proximity to one of the guests, perhaps even the host (cf. Jn 13:23–25, which also uses κόλπος, “bosom,” when John reclines with Jesus at the Last Supper; J. Nolland, *Luke 9:21–18:34*, 829; I. H. Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, 636). This is consistent with the picture of the messianic banquet, where the righteous will recline at table in the kingdom of God with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and all the prophets (Lk 13:28–29). The plural form (κόλποις; 16:23) is classical]). (CC)

This means “into the bosom or breast which is the place of honor at the great feast to come” (John 13:23; Luke 13:28-29). (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 8, Part 4)

Luke 1:52 “He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble.”

16:23-31 There is a break here. The chiasm comes to an end. The scene now shifts from earth to heaven and hell. The main focus is on the rich man and his conversation with Abraham. This dialog has two parts: (A) a description of the heavenly life of Lazarus in contrast to the eternal torment of the rich man (16:23–26), which sets the stage for (B) a discussion of how to be prepared for the life of the age to come (16:27–31). (CC p. 634)

16:23 *hell*. See NIV text note. Hades is the place to which the wicked dead go to await the final judgment. That torment begins in Hades is evident from the plight of the rich man. The location of Abraham’s side is not specified, but it is separated from Hades by an impassable chasm. Hades includes the torment that characterizes hell (fire, Rev 20:10; agony, Rev 14:11; separation, Mt 8:12). Some understand Jesus’ description of Abraham’s side and Hades in a less literal way. (CSB)

The rich man has completed his life and is tormented for his heartlessness. Though the story provides a glimpse of the afterlife, other passages of Scripture are needed to gain a clear and comprehensive teaching of that doctrine. (TLSB)

This was the place where the unbelieving people went after death and still is true today. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 8, Part 4)

SAW ABRAHAM – The man is isolated from God and His servants. (TLSB)

Looking up from his place of torment in Hades, the rich man sees Abraham from afar and Lazarus reclining at his bosom at the heavenly table (16:23). (CC p. 634)

A question pertinent to this story is the extent to which Jesus would have the hearer understand the details as literal descriptions of life in heaven and hell. Specifically, the hearer may wonder whether those in glory can view those in hell and whether communication between the two is possible. On one hand, the story may be similar to a parable, even though it is not called a parable (see textual note on 16:19). In that case, the hearer would not want to press the meaning of

every detail. On the other hand, some other passages (e.g., Is 66:24; Rev 14:9–11) do seem to suggest that the saints in glory will see those in hell, in accord with a literal understanding of our story. The hearer might also trust that Jesus would not describe the kingdom or the age to come in a way that would be misleading or contrary to fact. The surest route of interpretation, however, is to emphasize the main points of the story that relate to Jesus' teaching in the context of the chapter: the proper use of possessions in view of the coming age and the OT testimony, including resurrection, that prepares people for the Gospel and the life to come. (CC p. 634)

Lazarus and Abraham are clearly in heaven. The image is striking. These two places are separated (16:26), but (for the purposes of this story) they are close enough that a conversation may take place between inhabitants of these two completely different realms. It is clear that hell is a place of torment, and heaven a place for the messianic feast. (CC p. 634)

16:24 CALLED TO HIM – The rich man begins the conversation by asking “father Abraham” to have mercy on him. This title for Abraham tells us something about the rich man that we did not know before. He is a Jew and claims that Abraham is his father. This recalls the Jews who came to John the Baptist claiming “we have Abraham for our father” and yet refusing to show fruits of repentance and to submit themselves to John’s baptism (3:7–9). At the end of Jesus’ journey to Jerusalem, Jesus will call Zacchaeus, the chief tax collector, “a son of Abraham” (19:9). (The rich man in the story is like the Jews who refused to show fruits of repentance and also like Zacchaeus, who was rich; Zacchaeus, however, repented and welcomed Jesus into his home.) To be a “son of Abraham” does not protect one from eternal condemnation. (CC p. 635)

SEND...WATER – Formerly neglected, he is now seen as a potential minister in need. (TLSB)

Curiously, the rich man does not speak words of repentance, for he seems to realize that his condition of torment is permanent. His cry for mercy is *not* a cry of repentance, but a plea for help that results from a desperate situation. In fact, his status does not seem to affect his arrogance, for he views Lazarus, whom he knows by name, as a servant whom Abraham can send into his place of flames and cool his tongue with a drop of water (πέμψον, “send” [16:24], is an imperative). (CC p. 635)

J. Nolland, *Luke 9:21–18:34*, 830, asks: “Notably, the rich man asks only for an amelioration of his suffering, not for release from them: does he recognize that his sufferings are deserved, or is his modest request an understated bid for release from his miserable situation?” (CC p. 635)

The rich man still thinks of himself and his needs before those of Lazarus. (CC p. 635)

COOL MY TONGUE – The thought of such minimal relief moves him to beg, so great is the torment. (TLSB)

FIRE – As in Ps 106:18, flame burns up the wicked. Augustine: “Proud in the world, in hell a beggar! For that poor man did attain to his crumbs; but the other attained not to the drop of water” (*NPNF* 1 6:426). (TLSB)

16:25 BUT...SON – Father Abraham does not disown him as his descendant. (TLSB)

νῶν—The use of this word recalls the beatitudes in the Sermon on the Plain: “Blessed [you] hungering now [νῶν], for you will be satisfied” (6:21). Lazarus, who was hungry in life, *now* is comforted in afterlife. (CC p. 631)

Abraham addresses the rich man as “child” (16:25), an expression of intimacy and genuine concern. But Abraham’s words betray the hopelessness of the rich man’s condition. He calls the rich man to “remember” what happened to him and to Lazarus during their lifetime (μνησθητι, “remember,” is an imperative). (CC p. 635)

God’s remembrance (μνησθῆναι) of his mercy (1:54—which follows closely on Mary’s statement of reversal at 1:52–53) and of his covenant (1:72) figured prominently in the Magnificat and the Benedictus, respectively. To remember is part of the hermeneutic of Luke’s gospel in his final chapter when the women are instructed by the angels to remember Jesus’ words in Galilee about his suffering, death, and resurrection (24:6, 8). (CC p. 635)

To remember is to read back and interpret the events that had taken place. Father Abraham exhorts not only the rich man to do this, *but also the hearer of the gospel*. The rich man is to remember how in his life he received good things (his consolation) and Lazarus received bad things (his hunger for the rich man’s crumbs), but *now* the Great Reversal has taken place. *Now* Lazarus is comforted (παρακαλεῖται) by God, and the rich man is in torment. The hearer cannot help but remember that Jesus’ beatitude and woe in the Sermon on the Plain is coming to fulfillment in this parable: “Blessed [you] hungering now, for you will be satisfied [χορτασθήσεσθε]. ... But woe to you, the rich ones, for you have already now received in full your consolation” (παράκλησιν; 6:21, 24). There could hardly be a clearer illustration of the nature of the kingdom. And with the Great Reversal there is a great divide (cf 2:34–35)—the chasm between heaven and hell is such that there is no crossing over from one to another. (CC pp. 635-636)

Both the Pharisees and the disciples could see that these words of father Abraham apply to the Pharisees who were “lovers of money” as they illustrate the first part of the previous discourse (16:14–15). There are two themes: “(1) The first is that wealth is not necessarily a sign of righteousness. ... (2) ... God who looks on the heart regards anyone who is proud-exalted as an abomination.” The rich man did not use his wealth to give alms mercifully to poor Lazarus at his gate. The rich man’s wealth was a curse that led to eternal torment. His outward behavior of excessive feasting indicated that inwardly in his heart he was not a generous and merciful man but a proud and arrogant one. The only conclusion for the Pharisees is this: if they don’t stop scoffing at Jesus’

teaching about hypocrisy and the proper use of possessions, they will find themselves with the rich man in eternal torment.

D. Moessner, *Lord of the Banquet*, 163–64, makes these comparisons with the Pharisees:

The house of the Pharisees is like the rich man's, where repentance has become impossible through enslavement to "master mammon" (cf. 16:14–15). Whereas the "elder brother" epitomizes the proud Pharisee who begrudges Jesus' "bad company" (15:1–2), the rich man is the symbol of those Pharisees who are exalted among "men" through their manipulation of wealth (16:1–9, 14–15). Jesus' house or stewardship is thus aligned with the "poor," just as in 14:1–24 and 15:1–32. (CC p. 636)

The hearer would also see how this account illuminates the story of the unrighteous steward. He showed mercy to his lord's debtors because he trusted in the mercy of the lord, and thus he used his riches wisely in giving alms and gaining for himself a place among friends. Jesus exhorted his disciples to do likewise so they might be received into the eternal tents (16:9). Lazarus is one of those "friends" whom a disciple could make for himself by means of unrighteous mammon, and Lazarus would be one of those friends who would receive the disciple as a fellow guest at the messianic table. The Pharisees need to become like the unrighteous steward by seeing that their Lord is Jesus, and, relying on his mercy, to give alms to people like Lazarus. (CC p. 636)

REMEMBER – μνήσθητι—See comments at the Magnificat (1:54) and the Benedictus (1:72). (CC p. 631)

COMFORTED HERE – Contrasts between this life and eternal life, and how we perceive them, are the essence of the account. (TLSB)

παρακαλείται—This is a theological passive: "now he is comforted here" *by God*. (CC p. 631))

16:26 AND BESIDES ALL THIS – καὶ ἐν πᾶσι τούτοις—The antecedent here includes the circumstances of the life of the rich man and Lazarus, as well as the status they now have inherited after death. (CC p. 631)

CHASM...FIXED – Nothing can bridge the gap after death (cf Heb 9:27). (TLSB)

ἐστήρικται—The perfect tense suggests a permanent condition; the passive voice is theological: "has been fixed" *by God*. In the LXX of Gen 1:6–8, 14–15, 17, a noun from the same root is used of the "firmament" of heaven fixed or established by God. (CC p. 631)

16:27 SEND – Again, the rich man needs the humble beggar from his gate. (TLSB)

16:28 *I have five brothers*. For the first time the rich man showed concern for others. (CSB)

LET HIM WARN THEM – Their repentance would be to merely try to avoid the brother’s fate. (TLSB)

διαμαρτύρηται—Not “warn” (RSV) but “he might bear witness to them,” since this is its normal meaning in Acts. (Cf. Acts 2:40; 8:25; 10:42; 18:5; 20:21, 23, 24; 23:11; 28:23). R. Tannehill, *Narrative Unity I*, 186, notes: “Furthermore, 16:28 uses the word διαμαρτύρομαι (‘warn,’ ‘bear witness’), which is repeatedly used in Acts of Christian preaching and is a characteristically Lukan word, and the concluding comment about the inability of one who has risen from the dead to bring some to repentance fits neatly with the actual resistance which the preaching of the risen Christ will encounter in Acts.” (CC p. 631)

16:29 *Moses and the Prophets.* A way of designating the whole OT. The rich man had failed to pay attention to Scripture and its teaching, and feared his brothers would do the same. (CSB)

Repentance has already been demanded by the living God, a far higher authority than the brother who has died. (TLSB)

Μωϋσεία καὶ τοὺς προφήτας—Moses replaces “Law” from 16:16 and is the equivalent of “Torah.” On this expression in Luke, see Lk 24:27, 44; Acts 28:23. (CC p. 632)

LET THEM LISTEN – ἀκουσάτωσαν—On ἀκούω as a technical term for catechumens, see comments at Lk 5:1; the Sermon on the Plain (6:27, 47, 49); the parable of the sower (8:8, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 18); and Jesus’ discussion of the new kinship (8:21). (CC p. 632)

Abraham’s word about the great chasm could easily bring the story to an end. But the rich man continues the conversation and moves it in a different direction. He seems to have a change of heart. He finally thinks of someone else: his brothers in his father’s house. He wants Abraham to send Lazarus to “bear witness” to his family so they don’t end up where he is (16:27–28). The implication is that a miraculous appearance of someone from the dead will alert his brothers that they need to change their outlook and their behavior toward people like Lazarus so that they are not sent to eternal torment. Could the rich man’s brothers be his fellow Pharisees? Abraham’s reply is curt and pointed: “They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them” (16:29; ἀκουσάτωσαν is an imperative: “they must hear ...”). An intriguing suggestion is that the brothers need to hear Moses and the Prophets *as they are read in the synagogue*, i.e., they must heed what is regularly read in their own worship services and take it to heart! This is catechetical language in which Abraham is telling the rich man that if his brothers are to avoid torment in Hades, then they must become hearers of the Word, that is, hearers of Moses and the Prophets, for in them they will find all they need to know about the kingdom of grace, characterized by mercy and almsgiving to people like Lazarus. (E.g., Ex 22:21–24; Lev 19:9–10, 33; 23:22; Deut 10:17–19; 14:28–29; 15:1–11; 16:9–15; 24:10–18; Is 5:7–10; 30:12; 58:3, 7; Jer 5:25–29; 9:4–6; Amos 2:6–8; 6:1–

7; Hos 12:7–9; Micah 3:1–3; Zeph 3:1–3; Mal 3:5) The command to “hear Moses and the Prophets” also recalls the Father’s words on the mount of transfiguration when he called the disciples to hear Jesus as the new Moses (Lk 9:35, citing Deut 18:15). So to hear “Moses and the Prophets” is to hear Torah, or Gospel (see comments at 16:16 on “Law”) through the new Moses, Jesus. The Pharisees are being called by Jesus to listen to Moses and the Prophets as they testify to Jesus and as they are being interpreted by Jesus and fulfilled in him. The abiding validity of the OT as testimony to the promise fulfilled in Christ Jesus is maintained (16:16–18). (CC pp. 636-637)

R. Stein, *Luke*, 427:

Another theme found in the second part of the parable involves the continued validity of the OT (Luke 16:29–31). Luke prepared his readers for this by what he already had said about the OT Scriptures in 1:1f., but in the immediate context he prepared them for this in 16:17. From the first chapter of the Gospel (cf. 1:6, 45) to the last (cf. 24:25–27, 32, 44–48), from the first chapter of Acts (cf. 1:16–18) to the last (28:23, 25–27), the eternal validity of the OT Scriptures is taught both explicitly and implicitly.

16:30 *someone from the dead*. The story may suggest that Lazarus was intended, but Luke’s account seems to imply that Jesus was speaking also of his own resurrection (cf. v. 31; 9:22). If a person’s mind is closed and Scripture is rejected, no evidence—not even a resurrection—will change him. (CSB)

The rich man is hopeful but misjudges the stubbornness of human nature. Cf Dt 18:11; 1Sm 28:7. (TLSB)

πορευθῆ—This hints that Jesus’ journey to Jerusalem was when the “new Moses” taught about the kingdom, even as the first Moses taught Israel during the wilderness wanderings. Now the rich man expects another journey to take place, an extraordinary one “from the dead” back to those who are living. (CC p. 632)

The story could also have ended after 16:29, but the rich man speaks again. He beseeches Abraham to let someone from the dead journey to his brothers so that they might repent (16:30). The rich man shows that he now sees that repentance is crucial. But he does not consider the Word of God sufficient to produce repentance, so he desires a miraculous sign. Jesus’ teaching had already condemned such desire for a sign, and he had exhorted his audience instead to hear the Word of God and keep it (11:14–23, 28–30). Abraham does not change his response with respect to Moses and the Prophets but does add an intriguing final twist: “If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, not even if someone were to rise out of the dead will they be persuaded” (16:31). The OT already contained accounts of resurrection (2 Ki 4:8–37; 13:20–21). If they did not believe the OT Scriptures, with their testimony to eternal life, hell, and resurrection, why would they believe another person’s testimony to those things? (CC p. 637)

GOES TO THEM – πορευθῆ—This hints that Jesus’ journey to Jerusalem was when the “new Moses” taught about the kingdom, even as the first Moses taught Israel

during the wilderness wanderings. Now the rich man expects another journey to take place, an extraordinary one “from the dead” back to those who are living. (CC)

16:31 Another Lazarus (Jn 11) did return from the dead. But not all witnesses were moved (Jn 11:45–53). Repentance and faith are wrought through the Word of God, not dramatic experiences. “The reason some are not saved is as follows: They do not listen to God’s Word at all, but willfully despise it, plug their ears, and harden their hearts. In this way they block the ordinary way [Luke 16:29–31] for the Holy Spirit so He cannot perform His work in them. Or, when they have heard God’s Word, they make light of it again and ignore it. But their wickedness is responsible for this <that they perish>, not God or His election” (FC Ep XI 12). (TLSB)

NOT LISTEN...WILL NOT BE CONVINCED – ἰ ... οὐκ ἀκούουσιν, οὐδ’ ἐάν ... πισθῆσονται—This saying asserts refusal to hear in *two* circumstances, a “double condition, expressive of present fact (they do not listen to the law and the prophets) and future possibility (if someone rises from the dead)” (CC p. 632)

SOMEONE RISES FROM THE DEAD – ἀναστῆ—This verb is used of the resurrection of Jesus. (See Lk 18:33; 24:7, 46; Acts 2:24, 32; 3:26; 10:41; 13:33–34; cf. also Lk 9:8, 19; Acts 9:40; 14:20) Could this one who rises from the dead be a reference to Jesus? (CC p. 632)

Moreover, Jesus is clearly alluding to his own resurrection from the dead, and the hearer cannot help but think of the Emmaus story. Those two disciples knew about the empty tomb and the angels’ words but were still downcast. But then they become enrolled into catechesis *on the road* when Jesus journeys from the dead to them and opens up “Moses and ... all the prophets” by interpreting them Christologically (Lk 24:27). This Jesus causes their hearts to burn (24:32), but their eyes are not opened to see the crucified and *risen* Christ before them. Only after he breaks bread—portending the eschatological banquet with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—are they able to see Jesus. At that moment, the Emmaus disciples enter into the ongoing feast; they receive a foretaste of the messianic banquet with Lazarus in the bosom of Abraham. Their participation begins when they become hearers of the Word and comes to fulfillment in the breaking of the bread. The Pharisees need to become hearers of the Word and repentant guests at Jesus’ Table. And to be hearers of the Word is to be drawn into God’s Great Reversal in Jesus Christ. Through radical repentance and a violent break with the past, one enters the kingdom where one shows mercy as the Father in heaven has shown mercy. (CC pp. 637-638)

16:19–31 Jesus challenges the belief that earthly blessings are a sign of God’s eternal favor. He teaches us to heed the Word of God now while faithful mercy can be shown, for this is God’s good and gracious will. • Lord, teach me to read and trust in Your gift of Moses, the Prophets, and all faithful witnesses to the Gospel. May my tongue speak now of Your grace for all who have ears to hear. Amen. (TLSB)