

Twist on the Story of the Rich Man and Lazarus¹ (The Unbeliever and the Believer) 231203

There was a very outspoken unbeliever who wrote books denying the creative power of God, denying even His existence. He treated believers with contempt and attacked them in his writings every day, trying to cause them to lose their faith.

He spread his critical arguments all around him, posting them in mocking language around the country, where no believer could escape the confrontation. One particular believer was plagued by doubts because of this, but remained faithful even when others ridiculed him.

The time came when the believer died, and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The unbeliever also died and was buried. In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with the believer by his side. So he called to him, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send the believer to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.'

But Abraham replied, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime your words were popularly received, while the believer was persecuted, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been set in place, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.'

He answered, 'Then I beg you, father, send the believer to warn my many followers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment. Enable him to counter the effectiveness of my abusive words! Especially for the weaker or uncertain believers.'

Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the Prophets, and they have the Gospel; let them listen to them.'

'No, Father Abraham,' he said, 'but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.'

He said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets and the Christ, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.'"

1. Luke 6:19-31