

BEREANS Bible Institute Module III

“Ghost Stories” in the Bible – Part 3

The Rich Man & Lazarus as Ghosts? (Part 1)

- A. An allegory about Jesus (Lazarus) and the destruction of Jerusalem & Priesthood (The Rich Man)
1. All of the elements of this allegory/parable are drawn from four OT prophecies, **all of which prophesy the destruction of Jerusalem & the priesthood in AD70**. Deut. 31:28-30; 32:5,15-29; Isaiah 28:1-19 & 29:1-14; Isaiah 50:6-11; Mal. 1:6 – 3:5
- B. Components of the Rich Man and Lazarus parable (Luke 16:19-31)
1. An allegory/parable, **not literal history**. One of the earliest manuscripts, **Codex Bezae** (5th century), begins vs. 19 as follows: *Εἶπεν δὲ καὶ ἑτέραν παραβολὴν – “But He spoke also another parable, ...”*
 - a. The last in a series of parables spoken to the Jewish leadership. (compare Lk. 16:1)
 2. Characteristics of the “Rich Man” – the apostate Jewish Priesthood – Levi & Levites
 - a. Justified themselves (Luke 16:15 / Mal. 1:6; 2:14,17; 3:8,13)
 - b. Improperly divorced wives and remarried (Luke 16:18 / Mal. 2:13-16)
 - c. “Lovers of money” (Luke 16:14) who had “robbed God” (Mal. 3:8-10).
 - d. Dressed in purple and fine linen
 1. “Purple” was the clothing of kings (Mark 15:17).
 2. “Fine linen” was the clothing of priests (Ex. 39:27-29).
 3. The Hasmonean Dynasty (descended from the Maccabees) were “priest-kings,” and continued to rule Israel in both roles under Herod the Great.
 3. “Lazarus” – Jesus Christ, Greek form of the Hebrew name “El’eazar,” “El” is the short form of “Elohim”=God, + “eazr” = “My Help.” Thus “*God is My Help*”
 - a. Aaron’s son, “Eleazar” was the faithful High Priest who succeeded Aaron (Num. 20:25-29).
 - b. “Eleazar” (God is My help) applied to Jesus several times: (Psalm 22:16-19; Psalm 40:6-17)
 - b. The name “Lazarus” was drawn directly from Isaiah’s prophecy of Jesus and the destruction of the Levitical priesthood (Isaiah 50:6-11). “*God is My help*” appears in vss. 7&9.
 4. Jesus/Lazarus came as a “poor beggar,” born in a stable, homeless, dependent on support of others.
 - a. Luke 9:58; 2 Cor. 8:9
 5. Full of “sores” – Jesus bore our diseases and infirmities (Matt. 8:16-17; Isaiah 53:4-5 LXX)
 6. The “dogs” who honor Jesus – the Gentiles (Matt. 15:22-28)
 7. Desiring to eat the crumbs (as a Man, Jesus ate humble food)
 8. The beggar died – the crucifixion of Christ.
 9. Carried by the angels – His bodily ascension w/angelic accompaniment (Acts 1:9-11, cf. Matt. 24:31)
 10. Abraham’s bosom/embrace
 - a. A term used only in Gen. 16:5 for Abraham’s intimacy with his wife to produce an heir.
 - b. Lazarus in Abraham’s embrace shows that He (Jesus) was the promised Seed of the Covenant.
 11. The rich man died afterwards – the destruction of Jerusalem 40 years later in AD 70
 - a. Priesthood demolished – Deut. 32:19-22; Isaiah 28-29; Isaiah 50:11; Mal. 1:6 – 3:12
 12. “In Hades” – refers to the priesthood in exile from the Land & Temple.
 - a. “Hades” is the “grave” of humanity (Num. 16:33; 1 Kings 2:9; Ezek. 32:27; 1 Cor. 15:55).
 - b. The unfaithful priesthood punished in “Hades” (Deut. 32:19-22; Isa. 28:15,18; 29:4).
 13. Tormented in the flames – God’s wrath (Deut. 32:19-22; Isa. 50:11; Mal. 3:2-3).
 14. Send Lazarus to bring relief – Send the Messiah to restore Israel (Hosannah – “save now”)
 15. The Great Gulf – the blindness imposed on Israel (Isa. 6:9-13; Matt. 13:10-15; Rom. 11:7-10).
 16. Five Brothers – the other 5 tribes of Israel from the same mother – Leah
 - a. Levi had 5 brothers: Reuben, Simeon, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun (Gen. 30).
 17. If they will not hear Moses, they will not hear the One who rose from the dead – Jesus.
 - a. No sign would be given to that wicked generation (Mark 8:11-12). (For the “sign of Jonah” see the following article: <http://www.4windsfellowships.net/articles/Chronology/jonah.pdf>)
 - b. Jesus refused to show Himself resurrected to unbelievers (Jn. 14:19-20; 1 Cor. 15:3-8).