

BEREANS Bible Institute Module III

“Ghost Stories” in the Bible – Part 3

The Rich Man & Lazarus as Ghosts?

A. A Parable about Jesus (Lazarus) and the destruction of Jerusalem & Priesthood (The Rich Man)

1. All of the elements of this parable are drawn from four OT prophecies, all of which prophesy of the destruction of Jerusalem & the priesthood in AD70.
 - a. Deut. 31:28-30; 32:5,15-29
 - b. Isaiah 28:1-19; 29:1-14
 - c. Isaiah 50:6-11
 - d. Mal. 1:6 – 3:5

B. The Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16:14-31)

1. A parable, not historical persons. Some ancient mss. “*He spoke also another parable...*”
 - a. The last in a series of parables spoken to the Jewish leadership. (compare Lk. 16:1)
2. The “Rich Man” – the apostate Jewish Priesthood – Levites
 - a. Justified themselves (Luke 16:15 / Mal. 1:6; 2:14,17; 3:8,13)
 - b. Improperly divorced 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 (from the Maccabees) were “priest-kings,” and continued to rule under Herod the Great.
3. “Lazarus” – Jesus Christ. “E’leazar” means “God is My Help.”
 - a. A term 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 50:6-7).
4. He 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” – bearing our diseases and infirmities (Matt. 8:16-17; Isaiah 53:4-5 LXX)
6. The “dogs” – the Gentiles (Matt. 15:22-28)
7. Desiring to eat the crumbs (as a Man, humble food)
8. The beggar died – the crucifixion of Christ.
9. Carried by the angels – His bodily ascension into heaven (Acts 1:9-11, cf. Matt. 24:31)
10. Abraham’s Bosom – The Abrahamic Covenant
 - a. A term used in Gen. 16:5 for Abraham’s intimacy with his wife to produce an heir.
 - b. Lazarus in Abraham’s bosom shows that He (Jesus) is the promised Seed.
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” – in the grave refers to the priesthood in exile from the Land & Temple.
 - a. “Hades” is the “grave” of the body (Num. 16:33; 1 Kings 2:9; Ezek. 32:27).
 - b. The priesthood 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, Levi, 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.answersinrevelation.org/chronology/jonah.pdf>)
 - b. Jesus refused to show Himself resurrected to unbelievers (Jn. 14:19-20; 1 Cor. 15:3-8).