

Agnes Wyman

Professor Steven Notley

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The Parable of The Rich Man and Lazarus Luke 16:19-31

Introduction

Background Information

The book of Luke was written by Saint Luke, who is also commonly referred to as Luke the Evangelist. However, there has been constant debates on the real authorship of the Gospel of Luke, with most concerned scholars basing their arguments on the timelines. In many cases, Saint Luke is referred to as the companion of Paul. The companionship is manifested by Paul mentioning Luke several times in his letters. In Philemon 1:24, Paul refers to Saint Luke as his coworker (Bible gateway passage: Philemon - new international version). And in second Timothy 4:11, Paul also confesses to Timothy that only Luke is with him during his imprisonment. From that reference, we can, without a doubt, conclude that Luke must have accompanied Paul on quite a number of his missionary visits. Considering these references and information from Acts 16:10, it is most likely that Luke met Paul in Traos, from where they traveled to Macedonia.

At one point, Paul also refers to Luke as "the beloved physician" (Colossians 4:14). Just like always known as a tent maker Luke had strong abilities to do medical analysis and use traditional terms in healing. Luke's specialty in healing must have played a critical role to Paul during their journeys. His collaboration with Paul shows just how important he was in the early Christianity.

This research paper focuses on the parable involving a rich man in ancient Christianity times whose name isn't mentioned and a poor man named Lazarus(Luke 16:19-31). This parable about Lazarus and the rich man portrays teachings on earthly possessions, kindness, Social Justice, and life after death. This paper is there for going to focus on finding out the cultural and historical context of the parable. The research will then evaluate the context and structure of this parable while specifically taking keen note of the symbolic imagery and the parable's theological insinuations. The research will further consider the broader significance of the parable with respect to the Gospel of Luke and the New Testament while exploring its relation to the teachings of Jesus Christ on poverty, wealth, and life after death. This paper will therefore play a key role in designing the message in the parable and its application to the present-day discussions on economic equity.

This paper, through its Detailed analysis of this parable about the rich man and Lazarus, argues that the teachings of Jesus challenge the common belief that wealth is associated with prosperity. Through expounding on the historical context of this parable, its structure, and theological implications, this paper explains how the teachings of Jesus challenge presidential debates about social injustice and inequality.

Historical And Cultural Context

This parable is most likely associated with the political and socio-economic iniquity in Palestine. The parable's context is likely to be when Palestine was under Roman rule. At this time, Roman rule favoured the rich but highly exploited the poor by forcing them to pay significantly high taxes. This ruling system really oppressed the poor but, on the other hand, favoured the rich, who enjoyed freedom and power. In simple terms, this government took the little the poor had but left the rich to enjoy every bit of their wealth.

The context of this parable is likely to be in the background of a highly developed aristocratic culture in which favouritism served a major role. Oppositions within the parable point out the sole resemblance between the rich and the poor, which is _those in a position to help do not assist. Therefore, the parable criticizes the rich for not sharing and caring for the poor.

Interpretations of The Parable

Summary of Various Interpretations of The Rich Man and Lazarus' Parable

Over the years, various scholars have provided various interpretations concerning the parable of the Rich man and Lazarus. Some scholars emphasize the reversal of the Fate of Lazarus and the rich man in the afterlife and tie it to their experiences of poverty and wealth during their lifetime. You find that after death, the rich man who was living lavishly and Large has no name finds himself in hell where he undergoes suffering and punishment (Luke 10:15). Lazarus, on the other hand, after death, is flown to a high place where he sits beside Abraham (Luke 13:28-29). The rich man in this state requests Abraham to send Lazarus to go and ease his pain. Abraham, without second thoughts, declines the request and tells the rich man that the rich man's fortune is shifted. Just as it was during their lifetime, a great rift now exists between Lazarus and the rich man. Some scholars have also centred their argument on the earthly possessions bit of the parable. These scholars explain that the parable majorly focused on warning Christians and people in general about being too attached to their earthly possessions at the expense of the kingdom of God.

Other scholars also view this parable as a criticism of the Hypocritic lifestyle of the Pharisees. This group of scholars draws our attention to the lifestyle of Pharisees who claimed to be adherents to the law of Moses but in real sense, lived a life that was deficient of compassion

and kindness for the poor members of the community("parable of the rich man and Lazarus (16:19-31) 1124-1136). Some scholars have also viewed this parable as a reflection of the relationship between the gentiles and the Jewish people.

Comparison and Key Themes of The Parable

The parable of the rich man and Lazarus has one of its key themes as the difference in which the kingdom of God views earthly possessions. During the rich man and Lazarus' lifetime, the Rich man viewed Lazarus as just a servant who was useless to him. The rich man, therefore, treated Lazarus as somebody who was of no use and had no significance in his life at all. He, therefore, thinks that even in heaven, where he sees Lazarus seated beside Abraham, Lazarus is still a meagre servant. The rich man, therefore, fails to note that in heaven, things are quite different.

Another key theme of the parable is the contrast between poverty and wealth. The parable explains how big the rift is between Lazarus, who is poor and the rich man who is leaving Large and treats Lazarus as no one. The parable then further explains The turn of events in their afterlife, where we see Abraham seated next to Lazarus while the rich man suffers in hades. The parable also teaches the importance of kindness and caring. It explains the uncompassionate treatment the rich man gave to Lazarus and how Lazarus was accorded good treatment in his afterlife while the rich man suffered. This theme is closely tied to the theme of morality. The morality bit of this parable is magnified by the consequences the Rich Man undergoes for not caring for Lazarus during his lifetime.

The parable of the rich man and Lazarus also tell us more about accountability in God's Kingdom. This is magnified by how the rich man is punished for his sins which in this case is neglecting Lazarus at the point of his need. The parable father emphasizes accountability by

Abraham declining to send Lazarus to ease the pain of the rich man. This analysis helps us further understand the relevance and message of this parable to debates about poverty, wealth, and justice.

Importance of The Rich Man and Lazarus Parable in the Christian Tradition

This parable has played a critical role in the Christian tradition serving as a pivotal reminder to care for the hopeless and the poor. The parable sheds more light on the kind of life people live, full of inequality and lack of compassion. It explains the social injustice that the poor and marginalized community members go through at the hands of the rich and the powerful. The theologians, therefore, use this parable to preach and advocate for social equality importance of caring, and the need for social justice among Christians. This parable also serves a greater role in Christian tradition by making Christians look into the ways of life and remember that there will be judgment in the afterlife. The parable has also turned out to be a great subject of debate and analysis, with various scholars presenting different analyses and interpretations. Most scholars have given much interest in the reversal of fate between the two individuals betrayed. This parable is a very significant text in the Christian tradition and the broader scholarship giving Christians a challenge to reevaluate their lifestyles and imagine their final relationship with God.

Theology and Ethics Of The Parable

Implications of the parable on Christian theology.

This parable is of great significance in Christian theology. The parable raises its major focus on two controversial topics judgment and salvation. The case of this parable also prepares Christians for a possible shift in fate in the afterlife. It, therefore, encourages preachers to explain more about the importance of caring and being compassionate to the poor and the hopeless. Most theologians also use the parable as a tool to preach and make their followers understand the need

for repentance by warning them about the afterlife effects of material attachment and greed.

Some theologians also use the parable to emphasize their teachings to Christians against living the hypocritical lifestyle that Pharisees lived. This parable generally highlights matters of salvation and judgment and the link between life on Earth and afterlife.

Ethical Considerations Of The Parable concerning Wealth, Poverty, and Social Justice.

This parable portrays considerations that are ethically linked to poverty, wealth, and social justice. It questions our loyalty and attachment to worldly materialistic things and challenges Christians on their lifestyle. In the challenge to the Christianity lifestyle, the parable tells Christians to be responsible and caring towards the poor in society. It further explains how Christians should use their resources to advocate for equality and social justice for the less fortunate community members. The parable also raises serious questions about wealth and poverty and the limitations they pose on an individual's life.

Exegesis of The Parable

The parable in the book of Luke 16:19 to 31 is an elaborate and powerful illustration that gives Christians a sharp critique of religious and social values. A keen reading of the parable shows just how much it employs imagery and symbolism. It begins by explaining the difference in the lifestyle of the two individuals: the rich man and Lazarus. The difference in lifestyle portrays contrast. The imagery bit of this parable is manifested by how the lifestyle of the rich man is described. The book describes how the rich man often dressed in purple and fine linen while Lazarus suffered and had his body covered with sores. The great chasm between the unnamed rich man and Lazarus presents to readers an image of economic and social divisions among people.

Reception History of The Parable

Over time the parable has received a varying reception history. In medieval times this parable was majorly used to teach about the afterlife. This parable doesn't support the belief in the immortality of only the soul. Still, it depicts the afterlife as a situation involving real people who can hear each other speak to each other and even feel extreme environmental conditions such as heat and cold (Papaioannou 1). In ancient Christianity, however, this parable was majorly used to warn people about the dangers of wealth attachment and failure to care for the helpless people in the community. In present-day society, the same parable helps in pointing out and advocating against the wide gap that is growing between the rich and the poor. From these receptions, it is evident that this parable has had a great impact on Christian life and popular culture.

The Impact of The Parable On Christian Practice and Thought.

The parable of the rich man and Lazarus greatly impacted Christian life and thought. The parable has played a key role in helping Christians understand the need to take care of the less fortunate members of the community. It has further made Christians have a deeper thought of how being attached to material possessions can jeopardize one's chances of getting good treatment in the kingdom of God. This parable has also led to initiation of movements that fight for social justice and rights of the less fortunate members of the community by Christians across the world. Another key impact of this parable is how it has helped in shaping the church leaders' characters of claiming to follow the rules and laws of God but failing to act compassionately to the less fortunate members of the community.

Conclusion

In summary, this parable about the rich man and Lazarus is a complicated narrative that has undergone different analyses and interpretations from early Christianity to modern

Christianity. After a keen Reading of the parable, this paper has pointed out the historical context of the parable, its interpretations of theological ethics, and receptions in different periods. The paper has also explained the parable's use of imagery and symbolism as part of its literary features.

The world faces several social injustices, poverty, and economic inequality. It also provides critical insights into attachment to material wealth and the afterlife. Further research on the parable can focus on its impact on popular culture and Christian social justice movements.

Works Cited

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