

## Commentary — From the Margins

### *Lazarus and Dives*

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Hock, “Lazarus and Micyllus,” argues against the notion that an Egyptian folktale concerning the contrast in otherworldly fate between a man buried splendidly and another buried simply is the source of the parable of Dives and Lazarus. Instead he cites the *topos* of the Greco-Roman rhetorical tradition of fortune reversal after death. We have already seen this in the satires of Lucian, whose *Gallus (The Cock)* and *Cataplus (The Downward Journey)* Hock cites. Hock concludes: “The parable of Lazarus has an unmistakable Cynic coloring” (462). For the assignment of influence to the Egyptian folktale, see Joachim Jeremias, *The parables of Jesus*, rev. ed. (New York: Scribner’s, 1963).

Citation from: Bernstein, Alan E. Footnote # 24; “Damnation.”  
*The Formation of Hell*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1993.

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In the vision of John the Revelator, the glorified Jesus said, “Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay everyone for what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. ... I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star” (Rev 22:12-13, 16). The churches to which Jesus refers are the seven named churches of chapters two and three.

If the rich man in the parable Luke records (Luke 16:19-31) is in Hades being tormented while his brothers yet live during Jesus’ lifetime or earlier, then what recompense will Jesus bring with Him at His return for this rich man? What additional recompense will there be other than fiery torment (Luke 16:23)? And herein lies the fundamental problem with traditional understandings of the Lazarus/Dives parable: in order for this rich man to receive torment after death, he must have life that the Apostle Paul says is the free gift of God, “eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom 6:23), for the wages of sin are death, not everlasting life in a rotisserie not quite hot enough to consume the person whereas the prophet Ezekiel, writing about a spiritual king of Tyre who had been in Eden, the garden of God, and who was an anointed cherub (Ezek 28:12-14), has *YHWH Elohim* saying about a future event that from the perspective of heaven has already occurred, “I cast you to the ground (*cf.* Rev 12:9-10; Dan 7:26); I exposed you before kings, to feast their eyes on you (*cf.* Isa 14:3-21; Rev 20:1-3, 7). By the multitude of your iniquities, in the unrighteousness of your trade you profaned your sanctuaries; **so I brought fire out from your midst; it consumed**

**you, and I turned you to ashes on the earth in the sight of all who saw you. All who know you among the peoples are appalled at you; you have come to a dreadful end and shall be no more forever”** (Ezek 28:17-19 – emphasis added).

The above spiritual king of Tyre is the Adversary, Satan, the old dragon, and if God brings fire out from his belly to utterly consume Satan, making him no more forever, then who is in charge of Hades? And why won't Dives [Latin for “rich man”], likewise, be utterly consumed? Is that the recompense Jesus is bringing with Him when He comes again? An end to Hades? John the Revelator saw Death and Hades “thrown into the lake of fire” (Rev 20:14), thereby making Hades really a euphemistic expression for the grave, for Hades followed Death, the rider of the fourth horse of the Apocalypse to whom power was given to kill a fourth part of humankind (Rev 6:8).

John the Revelator saw a great White Throne, and judgment of the dead, great and small (Rev 20:11-12). Death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each of these dead men and women were then judged, “according to what they had done” (v. 13). They had not previously been judged, an important concept to note. The rich man had not been judged when he was being tormented in the Lazarus/Dives fable. He entered Hades upon death and was tormented before his judgment was revealed. The Apostle Paul wrote concerning his ministry and those who were already accusing him of being false:

I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me. Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive his commendation from God. (1 Cor 4:4-5)

The Apostle John wrote, quoting Jesus,

Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise. For the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing. And greater works than these will he show him, so that you may marvel. **For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will.** The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. (John 5:19-23 – emphasis added)

So in order for the Lazarus/Dives fable to be a revealing of afterlife fates, the Father must consign unjudged humankind to torment or to the bosom of Abraham, where the Son will find them on one side or on the other side of a great abyss where He will then judge these men and women upon His return as the Messiah. That is nonsense, for the Father judges no one, and consigning one person to torment and one to paradise is certainly the judging of personhood.

Contained with the passage about all judgment being given to the Son is the statement that *like the Father, the Son will give life to whom He will.* This

statement contains the implicit concept that the Father gives life to whom He will, which would make the Father a respecter of persons if He does not give life to everyone. His will must, then, be that everyone is raised from the dead. But the writer of Hebrews says, “And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, so Christ, having been offered once to bear sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him” (Heb 9:27-28). Thus, when Christ, to whom all judgment has been given, returns as the Messiah, He does not come to deal with sin, but to save those who await His coming.

The world does not await His coming.

When does Christ deal with sin, especially considering that all judgment has been given to him? Jesus told the Pharisees, “Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. There is one who accuses you: Moses, on whom you have set your hope. If you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?” (John 5:45-47).

If Jesus accuses no one of sin, letting Moses do that work [which he does in Deuteronomy 31:26-27], and if He does not deal with sin upon His return, then who accuses the portion of humankind of wrongdoing that has never heard of Moses? A problem appears to exist that doesn't really exist at all; for the Apostle Paul wrote,

For all who have sinned without the law will also perish under the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified. For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse and even excuse them on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus. (Rom 2:12-16)

The thoughts of those who sinned without the law will accuse these individuals of sin, thereby causing them to perish. The thoughts of those who have the precepts of the law written on their hearts and in the consciences, but who have never heard of Moses, will accuse *and will excuse* those who are judged by God through Christ Jesus, and who are thereby justified by Jesus being the propitiation of their lawlessness (Rom 3:25). The righteous requirements of the law must be fulfilled (Rom 8:4). But again, the Father judges no one; He has given all judgment to Jesus. Yet the Father judges through Jesus, so there can be no judgment of anyone revealed until after Jesus returns to not deal with sin but to reveal judgments of those whom the Father has raised from the dead.

But the Father has only raised from the dead whom He will at this time, and here is where problems enter the traditional teachings of Christendom: the Apostle Peter wrote, “For it is time for judgment to begin at the household of God; and if it begins with us, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey

the gospel of God” (1 Pet 4:17). The household of God are those whom the Father has raised from the dead—and endtime disciples of Christ Jesus do not find that the world is, today, the household of God. The dead remain dead. There has been neither a resurrection of the dead from Hades, nor has the sea given up its dead (Rev 20:13a).

In the context of saying that the Father judges no one, Jesus said, “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life” (John 5:24). So the person who hears Jesus’ words and believes that the Father sent Him (this requires more “belief” than is initially apparent, for it requires the person to believe that the Son and the Father are two deities, *Theos as His Son plus Theon*, not one deity) does not come under judgment, why? Why no judgment on those who hear and believe? This would seem to make God a respecter of persons if a portion of humankind is not judged.

Is “not coming under judgment” because judgment is presently on those who are of the household of God? If this is the case—and it is—then baptism into the Body of Christ equates to “real” death; for judgment follows death and does not precede it. Belief, now, equates with keeping the precepts of the law. Belief does not occur where sin exists, and sin is the transgression of the law; i.e., lawlessness (1 John 3:4). Thus, to hear the word of Jesus and believe the One who sent Him requires the person to keep the commandments of God by faith, which now causes the provisions of the second covenant mediated by Moses and made with Israel on the plains of Moab (Deu chaps 29-31) to come into play. And the terms of this second covenant offers to Israel circumcised hearts (Deu 30:6) upon returning to God when in a far land (*vv.* 1-2), with returning to God described as loving God with heart and mind [nephesh], and obeying the voice of God to keep His commandments and statutes and all that is written in “this book of the law—Deuteronomy” (*v.* 10).

Part of this second covenant mediated by Moses and made with the mixed circumcised and uncircumcised nation of Israel is choosing life or death on “this day, today” (Deu 30:15), the day of salvation. And here is where what Paul writes about the righteousness that comes from faith (Rom 10:6) is poorly understood by Christendom: on the plains of Moab was the assembled nation of Israel, none of which (except for Joshua, and Caleb) had been counted in the census taken in Numbers 1:1. This was a new nation of Israel, a nation of the children of Israel and of the mixed multitude that had escaped from Pharaoh. And the entirety of the nation was assembled before Moses to hear the terms of this second covenant that would, when accepted, be ratified by a song (Deu chap 32), a better sacrifice than the blood of bulls and goats (Exod 24:5-8)—the song was a heavenly sacrifice that purified this covenant as a spiritual or everlasting covenant (Heb 9:23) and not as a shadow of a future covenant. This is an important concept to note: this second covenant will get a new mediator in Christ Jesus, but this second covenant, itself, endures with the better promises brought to it by its new mediator. It will never be replaced by another covenant. And the terms of this covenant require that on a particular day, the day when this covenant is made

with Israel, that the circumcised or uncircumcised Israelite chooses life or death, with the choice of “life” being made through loving God with heart and mind, with this love for God revealed by the Israelite obeying His voice to keep His commandments.

On the day when an Israelite enters into the second covenant with God, this covenant now mediated by Christ Jesus, the person who is of Israel will choose either life or death. If this Israelite chooses life by hearing the words of Jesus and believing the One who sent Him, this Israelite passes from death to life and does not come under judgment. Why? Because Christ Jesus as the Master Potter now sculpts this person into a vessel for honored usage (Rom 9:21-24)—from the same lump, the mixed circumcised and uncircumcised nation of Israel, Christ Jesus forms the person who by faith keeps the precepts of the law into a vessel for honorable use, while He sculpts the person who chose death by choosing to reject keeping the precepts of the law into a vessel for dishonorable usage, a vessel of wrath, a vessel of destruction to be endured for a season. One lump, Israel, made alive by the Father through Him giving to this nation His Spirit. Now not a physical nation but a spiritual nation that was not before a nation (1 Pet 2:9-10); a chosen people who, literally, have been chosen one at a time to be drawn by the Father (John 6:44) from all of humankind—this is the Israel who has life and death placed before them on a particular “day,” which is not a twenty-four hour period but a short period of darkness after spiritual birth with light coming from this darkness. And the promise of entering into life, into God’s rest, will close on the born-of-Spirit disciple as it closed on the natural nation of Israel when this nation believed the ten spies rather than the two (Heb 4:1 – cf. Num chap 14; Heb 3:16-4:11).

Ten against one who spoke (Caleb) and one who was silent (Joshua)—who would you believe? The ten? Logic would say, yes, the testimony of ten is more trustworthy than the testimony of one. But what if the ten were wrong? How would you know? How would you keep from being an Israelite who was condemned to die in the wilderness of Sin/Zin because of unbelief (Heb 3:19), never able to enter the Promised Land of God’s rest (Ps 95:10-11) even though you repented of your unbelief (Num 14:40-42)? When is repentance not enough? If Israel acknowledged its sin but still stood condemned to death before God, which is the case when Israel refused to enter into the Promised Land when the promise of entering stood, then there is a time when changing one’s mind about whether to choose life or death will be ignored by God. Certainly changing a person’s mind after judgments have been revealed is pointless. Repentance then could only be interpreted as a ploy to save one’s life. So if repentance is to have any meaning, then repentance must occur while the promise of entering into God’s rest still stands—and this promise only stands on the person’s day of salvation, which again is not a calendar day.

The above goes against traditional teachings of Christendom, but so does Hades being thrown into the lake of fire ... the problem can be reduced to Christendom not understanding that there will be two harvests of God, both represented by the grain harvests of Judea. The first harvest—the harvest of

firstfruits; the barley harvest—began with the resurrection of Christ Jesus, the First of the firstfruits, and continues until His return when judgments are revealed for all who have been born of Spirit [i.e., raised from the dead by the Father while still physically alive through being born of Spirit]. This is the initial harvest that ripens by the coming of the early rains, with these early rains forming the shadow and copy of the giving of the renewing Breath of God, the Holy Spirit [*Pneuma 'Agion*], to the holy nation of Israel.

The second harvest, the main crop wheat harvest, occurs after the thousand year long reign of Christ Jesus as King of kings and Lord of lords. This harvest occurs when Death and Hades gives up all that is in them. This is the great White Throne Judgment, when every human being not previously born anew, or born of Spirit, will be resurrected from death to receive the honor or condemnation of the person's thoughts that either accuse and excuse the person, or accuse and not excuse the person, according to Paul's gospel. This is the harvest of the latter rains, which do not come in the spring but in the late summer. So even though most of this harvest will have physically lived before and/or with the firstfruits, this latter harvest was not "watered" with the renewing Breath of God until the last great day, the day following Sukkot. This harvest will be of all those that traditional Christendom has consigned to an ever-burning lake of fire. This harvest will be of the Buddhist, the Hindu, the Muslim, the ones who worshiped Zeus and Molech and any number of pagan deities. None will be left out, except for those who had their judgments revealed upon Christ Jesus' return. And the one who was without the law but who kept the precepts of the law will receive everlasting life. The one who sought righteousness by a different path will now obtain that righteousness by belief of the type expressed by the second thief on the cross (Luke 23:39-43).

Finally, the Lazarus/Dives fable has a theological basis for understanding what it was that Jesus said.

The gospels record the beginning and end of Jesus' ministry, with very little of the intervening three years mentioned, for what the gospels record is also the shadow and copy of the endtime ministry of the glorified Christ. And Luke's gospel account has a timing mark in chapter nineteen, when Jesus enters Jerusalem on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of Abib, four days before He is to be taken and crucified on the Preparation Day for the high Sabbath (John 19:31), the first day of Unleavened Bread (Lev 23:5-8). So when parables are told after Luke 19:28 is known within the precision of four days.

Since the cleansing of the ten lepers (Luke 17:11-19) occurs on His way to Jerusalem as He was passing along between Samaria and Galilee, disciples will find that this trip to Jerusalem is the same trip on which He will enter Jerusalem on the 10<sup>th</sup> of Abib. Thus the parables told and the events recorded between Luke 17:11 and Luke 19:28 occurs in the preceding few days to the 10<sup>th</sup>; for in Luke 18:31, Jesus said to His first disciples, "See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished." This is the third time that Jesus told His disciples that He would be taken and killed.

The next earlier timing mark is the Sabbath on which Jesus healed a man (Luke 14:1); so the telling of the Lazarus/Dives fable occurs between this Sabbath when He healed the man and when Jesus entered Jerusalem on the Sabbath that was the 10<sup>th</sup> of Abib. The continuity of narrative requires that Jesus leave the house of a ruler of the Pharisees where He ate and told the parable of the great banquet; that He be accompanied by great crowds (Luke 14:25; 15:1) along with the scribes and Pharisees that had, most likely, been at the house of the ruler of the Pharisees; that He teaches about the cost of becoming one of His disciples (Luke 14:17). Thus, the incident with the rich young ruler (Luke 18:18-30) comes as a logical outgrowth of teaching about the cost of discipleship.

In fact, beginning with the Sabbath healing Jesus tells a series of parables that are thematically related: the invited guests do not come to a banquet given by a great man, so this man sends his servants out to bring to the banquet the poor and crippled, blind and lame—the maimed of Israel who could not be chosen as offerings to God if they were lambs; they would be “unclean” because of their infirmities. The cost of discipleship relates to the great man who gave the banquet being able to finish what he began even though his invited guests did not come, with this cost of his guests not coming being tallied while the time for the banquet is still a great ways off; for the great man’s invited guests were like salt that had lost its “saltiness,” which when thrown out is neither good for the soil nor for the manure pile.

Tax collectors and sinners were drawing near to Jesus, for they were hearing about ones like themselves being gathered to fill the available seats at a great banquet—no, these publicans and sinners did not hear what Jesus said in the house of the ruler of the Pharisees, but they *knew* what was being said for the murmurings that would have taken place among the scribes and Pharisees would have carried the essence of the parable outward into the crowds. So Jesus adds to the Pharisees’ discomfort by telling the parable of the ninety-nine sheep, who were like the Pharisees in that these sheep were where they belonged—the shepherd leaves these sheep who are where they belong to go after the one that is lost, with great rejoicing to occur when the lost sheep (like the publicans and assorted sinners) are found by the shepherd. And in the parable of the lost coin, a similar message is relayed, with Jesus adding, “I tell you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents” (Luke 15:10), and Jesus launches into the parable of the prodigal son (*vv.* 11-32). So there is no narrative break, no break in thought, between when Jesus heals the man on the Sabbath and the beginning of Chapter 16. All could have occurred on the same day, or within a day or two. All probably occurred on the Sabbath, when Jesus delivered the speech-acts of the Father in the form of figurative speech and healings (see [Water & Fire Vol. 3](#), especially Chapter One).

Without a thematic break, Jesus tells the parable of the dishonest manager (Luke 16:1-13), who certainly could be likened to the scribes and Pharisees, “managers” of the secrets of God for Israel. Their debt to God as teachers who miss-taught the principles of God was greater than that of Israelites who were being miss-taught. Jesus finished the parable by saying that the one who is

faithful in little will be faithful in much, for no servant can serve two masters, God and money—and Jesus here stepped hard on the toes of the Pharisees who had shortly before eaten with Him. These Pharisees were certain that they served God, the justification for being called a *Pharisee*, and they sincerely believed that making money was their reasonable service as stewards of the treasures of God. So these scribes and Pharisees, all educated, intelligent men—not under-educated Galilean fishermen like Jesus’ first disciples—began to mock Jesus: Luke wrote, “The Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard these things, and they ridiculed him [Jesus]” (v. 14).

The Pharisees had taken one verbal punch after another since they had sat down to eat with Jesus on the Sabbath. Jesus had not cut them any slack. Telling them that they could be replaced by publicans and sinners was almost too much. Literally, Jesus had skewered those who sincerely believed they were above reproach; thus, when Jesus figuratively reached into their wallets to show them their greed, these Pharisees hit back by ridiculing Jesus. And it is this ridicule that establishes the context for the Lazarus/Dives fable.

Jesus did not like to be mocked. No person enjoys mocking, but Jesus as the Son of *Theos*, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, especially did not like being mocked by those creatures *Theos* had made from red clay mud. Therefore, in a brilliant overturning of tables (like when Jesus twice drove the moneychangers out from the temple) Jesus turns the mocking of the Pharisees back onto themselves: He calls them *Gentiles* without ever using the word, and He tells them in a way that only they can understand that they are *Gentile students at the feet of their Master*. Jesus uses the education of these Pharisees against them. And of Jesus’ first disciples, apparently only Luke has the education to understand or appreciate what Jesus does.

After being initially mocked, Jesus tells the Pharisees that they justify themselves before men but God knows their hearts (Luke 16:15); that what is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God. Then Jesus points to the apparent place where these mocking Pharisees transgress the Law of God, and this place is in allowing, even condoning divorce. The Pharisees are guilty because they have another god other than the Most High: this god is money and prestige, the perks of being religious rulers under authorities from Rome. And they have transferred their guilt to others by apparently “selling” divorce decrees, an unstated but relatively obvious accusation based upon the presentation order of subject matter.

And Jesus now tells these mocking Pharisees an after-death-fortune-reversal parable in the format of a Greek Cynic fable. Jesus tells these Pharisees a fiction, a story that suggests pagan “truths,” but a story that is definitely not Hebrew in origin or of Scripture. By Jesus telling these Pharisees a Greek pagan story, He calls them “Greeks,” and not just any *Greeks*, but Greek students who are hearing their Master deliver to them a childhood instructional fable.

As an educated person, a religious leader, a community leader, how would you like being called a dog, or even worse, a pup nursing the paps of a bastard from which you will get only condemnation? This is how those mocking Pharisees felt



when they heard Jesus relay the Lazarus/Dives parable. They understood perfectly the reason why Jesus was telling them a Cynic narrative. You too would understand if you were an educated person in that age of Classicism. But you are probably not so educated. So to you, the Lazarus parable is about entering Hades at death—while your siblings still live—and about a unbridgeable schism separating the just from the unjust. Which are you? On which side of the abyss will you enter Hades? Do you know? If you do, then you know what your judgment is even before it has been revealed, and so does everyone else. You see the problem: you cannot know what your judgment will be until Christ comes to reveal it to you. If this were not the case, those who did great works in the name of Christ Jesus but who taught disciples to be lawless entered Hades and will enter Hades with the rich man. Some of them will have “stewed” for two millennia waiting for the “mistake” to be corrected, but these teachers of lawlessness will be denied in their resurrection (Matt 7:21-23). They will not enter into Abraham’s bosom, from where they would have to be cast into the lake of fire when judgments are revealed.

If a person enters either Abraham’s bosom [i.e., paradise] or Hades upon death, and if judgments are not to be revealed until Jesus’ return, then what assurance does the person have who is in paradise that he [or she] will remain there when judgments are revealed? And from where did this person receive eternal life, the gift of God, given to those who have no sin imputed to them? The answer to the questions is that no person is born with an immortal soul that must go somewhere at death. The flesh of every person returns to dust. The person who has not been born of Spirit has no other life, and ceases to exist except as a name in the book of remembrance, a name that will be raised from the dead in the great White Throne Judgment. The person who has been born of Spirit is a son of God who enters timelessness as one who sleeps under the altar of God (Rev 6:9-11), awaiting awakening and the revealing of judgments. Jesus used “sleep” as an analogy for death. So the flesh sleeping forms the shadow and copy of what occurs to the spiritual son of God that had been domiciled in a tent of flesh when the flesh dies.

After Jesus tells the Lazarus/Dives fable, the Pharisees are no longer present. They have left, for they are now determined to kill Jesus—yes, these Pharisees will from henceforth support killing Jesus.

It isn’t always easy to get oneself murdered, especially when the crowds believe that you are the prophesied Son of David (Matt 21:9), the “*adoni*” who sits at the right hand of God. Therefore, Jesus had to provoke the scribes and Pharisees to get them to do what they must do before He would be free to marry another. And as it was, if Jesus had not kept quiet before Pilate, He would most likely have been set free.

But Jesus had to die on the Passover’s Preparation Day, and He had to die “between the evenings” as Pharisees then reckoned when the Passover lambs were to be slain. His provoking the Pharisees had to coincide with the Passover season; thus, on a Sabbath shortly before Jesus entered Jerusalem as Lamb and High Priest, Jesus spent a day verbally stabbing Pharisees who would determine

whether He lived or died. And the nastiest wound He inflicted was calling these Pharisees Gentiles, and in the process making Him their instructional master. Not even Jesus openly calling them hypocrites and vipers cut them any deeper.

There are as many explications of the Lazarus/Dives story as there are denominations. Every one of these explications either supports the idea of the “soul” of a person immediately going to Hades upon death, or supports some variation of the story being set in the future after judgments are revealed. Even cynical scholars have difficulty accepting the realization that Jesus really told a pagan Greek after-death-fortune-reversal story as a means to an end. It is easier, and more convenient to ascribe to Luke an evolving sense of the afterlife, revealed for the first time in this fable.

The Lazarus/Dives parable is important for another reason: it is an example of Jesus telling a fictional story, for Lazarus is not a real person, nor is the unnamed rich man a real person. Both figures are literary constructs, devices used in a figurative sense to deliver a differing message than the message that would be “normally” assigned to the linguistic icons of the text. And understanding the “figurativeness” of the fable becomes an important stepping stone in understanding that everything Jesus spoke was the words of the Father, which were about heavenly things that could only be “named” with icons used for linguistic objects in this world. Therefore, nothing Jesus spoke is as it seems. At best a hypostatical relationship exists in which the usually assigned objects for the linguistic icons become a type of the invisible and conceal heavenly objects that the Father intended for the words Jesus delivered—this means that the Father had Jesus deliver the Lazarus/Dives fable not for the usually assigned meaning but for an assignment of objects that has the Father telling these Pharisees that they are to Him as *the nations* are to Israel.

Jesus concluded the fable with an especially important statement: if a person will not believe Moses, the person will not believe one raised from the dead, with Jesus being this one.

The fable will be accepted as “fact” by biblical illiterates until Christ returns to reveal judgments. Hopefully no one reading these words will be in that category, or at least remain long in the pews of ignorance.

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