

Article of the Month – September 2012

Missions & Eschatology (6) – Luke

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In a new series we start next year, many other missionary aspects of the Gospels will be brought to your attention in nine articles. Now however, we continue our series of Missions & Eschatology with observations from six New Testament books, in five articles; the first of which deals with Luke's Gospel.

The 'be ready' motive of the end times¹ is prevalent in the Gospels and does not allow for a lack of vision for the future of the coming King and His Kingdom.

Whoever lives without this vision and does not expect Him, awaits judgment.² We cannot afford to only live in the here and now while giving most of our attention to temporary things.

It seems clear from this passage that not 'just all people' – not even 'just all Christians' are meant, but specifically the 'slaves' who have been put in charge of certain responsibilities. These slaves are the ones, sent on a mission, the apostles (it was Peter who asked the question!) or as it is today: the missionaries, with their stewardship responsibilities, caring for and feeding their Master's people.³

When Jesus spoke about His second coming⁴ He referred to the days of Noah and of Lot. These believers were neither ignorant nor surprised when judgment came. They had been alerted in time to be saved. We may assume that in the end times⁵ most believers will also, by proper knowledge of the Word and by revelation, have a collective awareness that the time is near. As in the days before the Flood and those of Lot, missionaries had a vital role to play in the days of imminent judgment, i.e. Noah by preaching and building the Ark, Abraham by interceding for the remaining righteous in Sodom.⁶

In His parable about the minas Jesus compared His going to heaven to be made King⁷ with 'going to a distant land'. His return to earth He calls 'returning home'.⁸ He had said before, that where your treasure is, your heart will be also.⁹ His heart is with us, His Bride on earth, to which He will return – not to depart again. No, He comes and brings with Him our reward,¹⁰

¹ Luke 12:35-48

² 12:46,47

³ 12:41-44

⁴ 17:20-37

⁵ 17:24,26,30,31,34

⁶ Gen. 6 & 18, respectively

⁷ Luke 19:12

⁸ 19:15

⁹ 12:34

¹⁰ 1 Cor. 3:14; 2 John:8; Rev. 2:23; 11:18; 22:12; Luke 19:16-19

at once also judging His enemies.¹¹ There was one ascension, there will be one return; not two of each, as some suggest.

Persecution will come upon *all* those who live *on the face of the whole earth*.¹² The only escape Jesus offers is that of watching and praying¹³ and not by suddenly been taken out of it. He says to His disciples – not to the crowds¹⁴ – that they must not be weighed down with dissipation, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, so that that day will close down on them unexpectedly, like a trap.¹⁵ It would have been unnecessary to say this *to the disciples* if they had already been raptured before such things happen. Jesus speaks alternately about the great distress¹⁶ and about the destruction of Jerusalem.¹⁷ That last event took place in AD 70. All other events He did not mention in vain, because *we who are still alive will be there as witnesses of this brilliant climax of history!*

¹¹ 19:27

¹² Matt. 24:29; Mark 13:9-28; Luke 21:26,35

¹³ 21:36

¹⁴ 21:5

¹⁵ 21:34

¹⁶ 21:8-19,25-36

¹⁷ 21:20-24