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Interpreting the parables of the Galilean Jesus: A social-scientific approach

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Abstract

This article proposes a methodology for interpreting the parables of Jesus. The methodology put forward is based on two convictions. Firstly, the difference between the context of Jesus' parables as told by Jesus the Galilean and the parables in the gospels has to be taken seriously. Secondly, an effort has to be made to at least try to avoid ethnocentrism and anachronism when interpreting the parables. In an effort to achieve this goal it is a methodology that presents itself as the obvious line of approach. Operating from these two convictions, the method being used is to discuss 12 statements (or theses) which are discussed as concisely and comprehensively as possible. It is intended that the main conviction of Jesus' parables was the non-apocalyptic kingdom of God, that the parables are atypical stories (corresponding to the way in which Jesus is depicted as a social prophet).

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