

Luke 19:11-27, "Returning King, Part 1"

- ↪ This is a parable, a parable means "to place alongside"; or in other words, something that is familiar is being placed alongside something that is unfamiliar to make it easier to understand. Jesus always drew His stories from everyday life; stories that people would be able to immediately connect with. This story is very simple, a king, actually "The King", Jesus Himself is going away to receive the full rights to His kingdom and then return. This implies several things.
- 1) He is currently in his kingdom and will be leaving it, thus, His kingdom is the earth.
 - 2) There will be an undisclosed amount of time that He is gone.
 - 3) He will return at the end of that time to make His full authority known to all.
 - 4) He will be the King over everything and everyone. When that happens, everyone will be audited as to their relationship with Him.
 - 5) At the time of the audit, there will be only 3 groupings of people. The first group will be those who did what they were supposed to while He was gone; the second group will be those who did not do what they were supposed to, and the third group will be those who hated Him and never wanted Him to be their king.
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- ↪ The most compelling part of this story is that we are all in it! Jesus' ultimate point is for us to realize who we are in regards to His sovereignty. This story line would have been very familiar to the people of that day. A very similar thing had happened in their land. By the time Jesus is telling this story, the Herod's had ruled this region for at least half of a century. Beginning with Herod the Great who they called "Great" because he made them call him that. He was not a great person at all; he killed 3 of his own sons and one of his wives and had his troops kill every male child under the age of two in Bethlehem as well as many other atrocities.
- ↪ Herod the Great held the title, "the king of Jews," and that is the reason why he became so paranoid when the wisemen asked for the one who was "born King of the Jews." He purchased his title through a process similar to the one that Jesus portrays in this parable. Herod wasn't accepted as king in Judea, he wasn't even Jewish, nevertheless, he went away to Rome and had himself declared king of the Jews by the emperor. He was in the land as king but not accepted as the king. Herod went away to make it official, and then he returned to impose his sovereignty over the people whether they wanted him or not.
- ↪ After Herod the Great came his son, Herod Archelaus. He followed the same process of being declared sovereign as his father did with an added twist, on the first Passover after he became the king he had 3,000 Jews killed for no reason at all other than his own depravity. Politics were different back then, the politicians ruled by fear, and not by popularity. They didn't kiss babies, they killed them! When Archelaus went to Rome to be inaugurated as king, the Jews sent a delegation to the emperor saying that they hated him and did not want him to rule over them, just like in Jesus's story! On the contrary, in Jesus' coronation, He entered into the Holy Place in Heaven which was not made by human hands. Jesus sent His Holy Spirit to empower His church to be His witnesses. Do you remember the result? 3000 people were saved in a single day, not killed! Nonetheless, the scenario that Jesus lays out was one that everyone there would have been familiar with.
- ↪ Additionally, this story was told within the context of what had just happened in Jericho, the saving of Zacchaeus, **Luke 19:10-11**. Jesus knew what they were thinking. Nobody thought that this was what the Messiah would be doing when He came to His people. They had no room in their theology for "The King" to come save anyone. The Messiah was supposed to come and conquer the world and rid it of all who were disobedient to God. Jesus in no way denies this is true and, in fact, doubles down on that belief through the telling of this parable. But He makes it abundantly clear that before He does that, His first mission is to offer terms of peace and not terms of war. They had missed that part, even though it was written down for them way before hand in their own scriptures. They missed the suffering servant which was detailed in **Isaiah 53** and the crucified Savior of **Psalms 22** as well as His sacrifice of substitution portrayed in their Passover festivals and in the many sacrifices God had required of them to do in the Temple. They wanted death and retribution not knowing that God's deepest desire is to forgive and have peace with people, **Romans 5:1**. If Jesus' purpose is to bring us peace with God, and we reject Him, then we are at war with God and are to be considered as enemies of God. Having God as your enemy is not how you want to enter into the conclusion of all of this. Jesus' purpose in coming the first time was to save us from being on the wrong side once everything begins to shake loose. The King is going to return, and He is going to reign, and everyone will be held personally accountable to Him.

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- ✚ Jesus did not come to set everything right the first time; He came to set us right. Jesus didn't come to fix stuff; He came to fix us. Jesus didn't come the first time to overthrow the evil in the world, right social wrongs, straighten out the immorality in their society or correct economic injustices. He didn't come to make this world a better place to live in. He didn't come to stop crime, end abuse, end poverty, end slavery or fix all the corruption in the world. He will do all that someday, but He would not do it in that day.
- ✚ If Jesus came the first time to fix all the social and moral issues of the time and stop all the evil in the world, He failed miserably! There has hardly been a time in which injustice was greater than when Jesus walked the earth, but He didn't go out of His way to stop any of it. In fact, He allowed that corruption to end His life because through His death He would be able to save us all from a fate worse than living in this bad world. He came to do the work of salvation, winning people into His kingdom before imposing His kingdom on a rebellious world. Likewise, His church has no commission to fix current social issues or to force its morality on the world, unless by doing these things the church would be better enabled to carry the Gospel to a lost world which has the power to save souls from being the enemies of God. These things were not Jesus' bottom line when He came the first time so they cannot be ours during our time, they are a means to an end but never an end in themselves.

Jesus came the first time to do the work of salvation, saving people from being enemies of God by paying for their sins against God and giving them eternal life. When He does come no one will be able to resist His Lordship, every knee will bow, and every tongue will confess that He is Lord. So, bow your knee now; confess with your tongue now that He is your savior and Lord. He is away right now, but He will not be staying away forever. He will return and when He does the kingdoms of the world will become the kingdoms of the Lord and of His Christ.
