

# A Different Take On: The Unjust Judge Parable

One standard take on this parable among Christians is that Jesus will vindicate us by undertaking justice on our behalf to deal with those who wrong us, both now and in the ‘hereafter’. Unfortunately, that’s an Old Covenant (OC) interpretation of the parable that doesn’t belong in the Kingdom under the New Covenant (NC). Therefore, we should not interpret it that way. Jesus’ parables were always about sowing a Kingdom ‘seed’ in the minds of his hearers, not a natural one.

Lets see what Jesus was wanting his listeners to know, then we can extrapolate to see how that impacts us today, as sons of the Kingdom.

## 1<sup>st</sup> Century Understanding

On his way to Jerusalem,<sup>1</sup> Jesus was talking to the villagers of the 1<sup>st</sup> century under the OC who were wanting YHWH to release them from Roman occupation and vindicate them. However, he was wanting them to hear about the reintroduced Kingdom of Heaven on Earth, not about liberation from their invaders.

Here’s his concluding comments to the parable:

**Luke 18:6-8 (NIV)** – *And the Lord said, “Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?”*

**Luke 18:6-8 (YLT<sup>2</sup>)** – *And the Lord said, ‘Hear ye what the unrighteous judge saith: and shall not God execute the justice to His choice ones, who are crying unto Him day and night – bearing long in regard to them? I say to you, that He will execute the justice to them quickly; but the Son of Man having come, shall he find the faith upon the earth?’*

Again, here’s those verses rendered in the MIRROR translation:

**Luke 18:6-8 (MIRROR)** – *The Lord said, “Now, listen to the reasoning of this unjust judge. We’re comparing notes here; if even an unsympathetic judge will come through for an unrelated person nagging him, how much more certain will God not, with unending compassion, vindicate his own, who implore him day and night. I assure you, he will speedily vindicate you; the day of the son of man is about to dawn. Will the Messiah find a people standing on tiptoe in full expectation of his coming.” (Jesus is not talking about some future coming of the Son of Man – Not in this, or in the previous chapter.)<sup>3</sup>*

There are actually two concluding comments that Jesus made:

1. His chosen people will be vindicated speedily.
2. Will Jesus find faith in his people?

Those two components represent his points on the two covenants that were colliding at that time. That’s why he gave two parts to his statement:

1. The Jews were still living under the OC, so Father will give them justice very soon (“speedily”) when the NC would release them from Jewish bondage and completely justify them. It wouldn’t be the removal of the Romans, but the removal of the bondage to the religion of Judaism on the Law.
2. From the Kingdom perspective, what’s needed in the NC is people operating by faith, not complaining to Father (YHWH) about their problems.

The first point would be accomplished shortly (“speedily”) in the work of the Cross and the Resurrection, and

1 – There’s no exact location mention, only this: “Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus travelled along the border between Samaria and Galilee.” (Luke 17:11 NIV)

2 – Young’s Literal Translation

3 – MIRROR commentary statement (“Scripture taken from THE MIRROR. Copyright © 2012. Used by permission of The Author.”)  
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ultimately with the end of Judaism and ritual sacrifice at the fall of Jerusalem in 70AD.

The second – a comment unrelated to the people’s immediate issues – was the important one as it was a Kingdom comment, one he was always wanting to plant in them.

## **21<sup>st</sup> Century Implications**

The parable is about the people complaining, and wanting justice, but Jesus was more interested in their faith. There’s always a clash between personal desires and the protocols of the Kingdom, which leaves people missing out on the advantageous life that the Kingdom provides.

If we focus on the Kingdom point, as it should be, rather than the widow and judge as the characters in the parable, our interpretation of the parable radically changes. It must be, in this case and in the other parables Jesus spoke, a focus on his Kingdom angle, not the natural one. That was his purpose in using metaphorical language.

We gain a more important understanding from the parable if we take a different perspective even still:

- Wanting justice is a self-centred attitude
- Operating with faith is centred on love and relationship with Father

So, while ever we focus on justice, we’re operating in the natural, not the spiritual. That was the problem with the hearer’s of Jesus’ parable. Our focus and mode of operation must be unconditional love and the best for others, that would then be representing his heart, not our own.

## **Messianic Perspective**

From a different perspective altogether, this parable follows immediately on from Jesus’ answer the Pharisees about when the Kingdom of God would come. The opening statement to the unjust judge parable is therefore more logical like this: “In order to encourage them not to quit in their Messianic expectation, whenever there seems to be no immediate answer to their prayers, he told them the following parable...”<sup>4</sup>

From this perspective, the people are complaining because YHWH hasn’t sent his Messiah to rescue them from the Romans. If that was Jesus’ contention, then the parable’s relevance for us is mute (zero).

**NOTE:** The expression “*bearing long in regard to them*”<sup>5</sup> is rendered elsewhere as “*yet he exercises patience with them*”, indicating that YHWH is ‘putting up with’ the Jews, rather than being slow to answer them as other translations have put it. This speaks more to their bad relationship with them, than about answering their petitions. This is his response to their spiritual state at the time, one which resulted in them not recognising the Messiah and supporting the religious leaders in having him executed.

## **Believe It or Not!** **The choice is yours**

*Whatever you choose to believe won't negatively impact Father's relationship with you*

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(Readers will need to look up for themselves any scriptures alluded to in this document)

4 – Luke 18:1 (MIRROR) “Scripture taken from THE MIRROR. Copyright © 2012. Used by permission of The Author.”

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5 – Luke 18:7 (YLT) See also KJV, NKJV, Darby Translation, Jubilee Bible 2000, Webster Bible,