

"Our Concubine and King" | Rev Tim Frickenschmidt | May 24, 2020

OT Reading [Judg 19:1-4, 14-16, 20](#)

19 ¹ In those days, when there was no king in Israel, a certain Levite was sojourning in the remote parts of the hill country of Ephraim, who took to himself a concubine from Bethlehem in Judah. ² And his concubine was unfaithful to him, and she went away from him to her father's house at Bethlehem in Judah, and was there some four months. ³ Then her husband arose and went after her, to speak kindly to her and bring her back. He had with him his servant and a couple of donkeys. And she brought him into her father's house. And when the girl's father saw him, he came with joy to meet him. ⁴ And his father-in-law, the girl's father, made him stay, and he remained with him three days. So they ate and drank and spent the night there. ... ¹⁴ So they passed on and went their way. And the sun went down on them near Gibeah, which belongs to Benjamin, ¹⁵ and they turned aside there, to go in and spend the night at Gibeah. And he went in and sat down in the open square of the city, for no one took them into his house to spend the night. ¹⁶ And behold, an old man was coming from his work in the field at evening. The man was from the hill country of Ephraim, and he was sojourning in Gibeah. The men of the place were Benjaminites. ... ²⁰ And the old man said, "Peace be to you; I will care for all your wants. Only, do not spend the night in the square."

Epistle Reading [Acts 1:1-11](#)

1 ¹ In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, ² until the day when He was taken up, after He had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom He had chosen. ³ He presented Himself alive to them after His suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. ⁴ And while staying with them He ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, He said, "you heard from Me; ⁵ for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." ⁶ So when they had come together, they asked Him, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" ⁷ He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by His own authority. ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." ⁹ And when He had said these things, as they were looking on, He was lifted up, and a cloud took Him out of their sight. ¹⁰ And while they were gazing into heaven as He went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, ¹¹ and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw Him go into heaven."

Gospel Reading [Luke 24:44-53](#)

24 ⁴⁴ Then He said to them, "These are My words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." ⁴⁵ Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, ⁴⁶ and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, ⁴⁷ and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹ And behold, I am sending the promise of My Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high." ⁵⁰ And He led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up His hands He blessed them. ⁵¹ While He blessed them, He parted from them and was carried up into heaven. ⁵² And they worshiped Him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, ⁵³ and were continually in the temple blessing God.

Introduction

In the time of Judges, there was no King and the world was in chaos, confusion and uncertainty. Do we live, now, as if there is no King? We don't have to live as if there is no King. Two questions: (1) Where is Jesus? (2) What is He doing?

Background

1. Where is Jesus?

- In heaven: Acts 1:9 – a cloud took Him ... the cloud being God the Father. Just as when Moses was being led through the wilderness by a cloud ([Ex 13:21](#)); and during the transfiguration when a cloud overshadowed them ([Mark 9:7](#)).
- Heaven is not only our answer but also our problem. Our problem is that we often think heaven is far from us. And, if He is far from us, He can't be involved in our lives, so we have to fend for ourselves, take matters into our own hands. Not true: heaven is God's space; He, therefore, is close to us and all around us, spiritually.
- The "So what" (of heaven being all around us) in our chaotic lives is that Jesus is not far away. If Jesus went into heaven on our behalf, as a King into God's space, He rules our space and we don't have to take matters into our own hands.
- Jesus is sitting (at the right hand of God) because everything necessary has already been done (for our lives to be set right) ... as Christ said: "It is finished."
- At some point, He will stand back up to finish what has already been accomplished (by defeating all sin, death, disease, abuse, poverty, racism, murder, etc).

2. What is Jesus doing?

- He is baptizing people so that they might be witnesses. In Luke 24, being baptized is like being clothed in new spiritual garments – giving new lives to be witnesses.
- Jesus, in heaven, is transforming power and how we, in our earthly realm, use it.

Power in our broken world is about strength to force others to do what we want them to do. [Nietzsche](#) taught we live in an age that is dying for power, and in fact, is dying of power. In some way is this our story? is this our life, our marriage? is our parenting like this? is our work behavior like this? do we manipulate? do we lie, shout, intimidate others, loving worldly power?

- Should we want to be oceans or puddles? Jesus made Himself nothing [Phil 2:6](#); He made Himself a slave (like the concubine shoved out the door [Judg 19:22-30](#)) to die in shame, to bear our guilt to suffer what we deserve.
 - The only thing worldly power can do it kill, and that's what we did with Jesus. But, we didn't know He would die for us; dying to defeat the strength of worldly power by the greater strength of the power of divine love.
 - Love is a deeper strength; it's a strength to give ourselves away to do what others need; that's what Jesus did for us.
- From heaven Jesus is clothing us with His divine love, giving us new lives so we can give up our love of worldly power.

Discuss

- Is it comforting or unsettling to think of heaven as being all around us?
- Jesus is sitting because everything necessary is finished. What is "everything?"
- He will return to finish what has already been accomplished (in some?).
- Jesus, in heaven, is transforming power and how we, in our earthly realm, use it.
- [Teresa of Avila's](#) poem: [Christ Has No Body](#)

Conclusion/Application

•Give up our worldly power and exert the power of divine love within us because our world so desperately needs to know Jesus' divine love and that He lives and reigns, not chaos, not confusion, not fear, not uncertainty, not death. And, we as Christians are the way the world will know – because we are His witnesses; He is clothing us with His power of divine love until He returns.

•[Teresa of Avila](#) may have said it best in her poem: [Christ Has No Body](#) but yours. So, we ask: Where is Jesus? Yes He is in heaven but He is also here, speaking to us in His Word, feeding us with Himself through the sacraments and, also, being in each of us. Exert the power of His divine love for the sake of the world.

