

## Interpretive perspectives on Luke 19.11-27

### OLDER STYLES

- Ancient allegorical:** following the pattern of the “Church Fathers,” the story is read as an expression of the relationship between God and the individual soul, with the characters expressing attitudes one might have toward God OR as representatives of groups, e.g., the Jews, the Gentiles, or faulty disciples.
- Modern allegorical:** Jesus = nobleman, disciples = slaves: Jesus will “return” [concern is “delay of the *parousia*”] to reward his faithful ones and slaughter his opponents, so in the meantime, the disciples should be “productive” with their time/energy.
- Capitalist:** reading the “nobleman” as Jesus calling disciples to “good stewardship” of money/resources that return a profit.
- Historical/redactional:** seeking to separate the “real” parable allegedly told by Jesus from Luke’s editorial “frame,” as with previous parables in Luke. In these readings, the third slave is seen as a symbol of a group, e.g., “exclusive Jews,” “the scribes,” etc.

*“It is important to note that all the previous interpretations, without exception, interpret the nobleman in the parable as a positive figure, praise the actions of the first two slaves and vilify the third.” (vanEck, 2010, p. 5)*

### MORE RECENT STYLES

- Social scientific:** engaging the socioeconomic context of the 1<sup>st</sup> century regarding masters/slaves, wealth and resistance.
- Parody:** read in light of Josephus’ story of Archelaus seeking royal power, as a parody of imperial reign in the face of Jesus’ proclamation/embodiment of the reign of God.