



Links Players

The Return of The King

For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God. (1 Thessalonians 4:16).

On April 8, 2004, the crowd at Augusta National was anticipating the start of the 68th Masters Tournament, especially the return of the man known as “The King”—Arnold Palmer. This day was extra special because it marked Arnie's 50th consecutive Masters appearance, a record that still stands. At age 74, he had made it known beforehand that this one would be his last.

You could argue that The Masters made golf, and that Arnie made The Masters. He first appeared at Augusta in 1955, and three years later, he won the first of four green jackets. By the end of the 50s, the huge gallery that followed Palmer had become known as Arnie's Army. He connected with his fans like no other golfer before or since. But now it was time to say goodbye.

The next day was Arnie's final round on the course he loved. His adoring fans were emotional, and so was Palmer. After the round, he said, “One of the things I wanted to do was...to finish 50 years at Augusta. That has never happened before at any golf tournament. That's very special, something I wanted.”

For the record, Arnie's final Masters scores were 84-84, for 168, missing the cut by 20 strokes. But that was secondary. This was about honoring the final return of the King and then saying farewell.

By reading through the Bible, we see many references to the return of another King: Jesus Christ, the King of Kings.

We are told how it will happen. At the conclusion of his post-resurrection appearances, Jesus gave final instructions to his disciples on the Mount of Olives. Then, “he was lifted up and a cloud took him out of sight...he will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.” (Acts 1:9-11).

We don't know when it will happen. “The day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.” (1 Thessalonians 5:2).

But we know why it will happen. “So Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for Him.” (Hebrews 9:28). There are other verses as well, but the point is this: The King will return, and we need to be ready.

Arnold Palmer received a king's welcome at his 50th Masters, but his final return was only for two days. Jesus' return will be for eternity, and there will be great rejoicing for us who acknowledge Him as Lord and Savior.

Billy Graham said about Christ's return: "That is why a Christian can smile in the midst of all that is happening... We know what the end will be: the triumph of the Lord Jesus Christ." To that we say "Amen! Come Lord Jesus!" (Revelation 22:20).

Prayer: Lord Jesus, help us to serve you faithfully in this life, as we confidently await your return and our glorious reward of being with you for eternity. Amen

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