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Matthew 20

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



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Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Matthew 20.

Topics.

- The Kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house.
- Facts regarding the denarius.
- Jesus begins to go to Jerusalem.
- Jesus tells the disciples he will be killed and raised on the third day.
- A mother asks Jesus if her two sons can sit at his side in the Kingdom.
- Those who serve Christ are to be servants of all.
- Jesus heals two blind men.

The Previous Chapter: in the previous chapter Jesus healed the crowds and talked about laws concerning marriage and divorce; the Kingdom of God belonging to little Children; a rich man and being perfect; a camel going through a needles eye; many who are first, being last and the last being first; about all things being possible with God; many receiving a hundredfold and of the Son of Man sitting on his glorious throne in the New world.

NOTE: for information concerning people, places and the meaning of words see Map Locations and People of the Bible, and Bible Dictionary on Website Menu.

MATTHEW 20:1-16

The Kingdom of Heaven is like a Master of a House.

- **Matthew 20:1-16:** “For the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house who went out early in the morning to hire labourers for his vineyard. ²After agreeing with the labourers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. ²After agreeing with the labourers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. ³And going out about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, ⁴and to them he said, ‘You go into the vineyard too, and whatever is right I will give you.’ ⁵So they went. Going out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour, he did the same ⁶And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing. And he said to them, ‘Why do you stand here idle all day?’ ⁷They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You go into the vineyard too.’ ⁸And when evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, ‘Call the labourers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last, up to the first.’ ⁹And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, each of them received a denarius. ¹⁰Now when those hired first came, they thought they would receive more, but each of them also received a denarius. ¹¹And on receiving it they grumbled at the master of the house, ¹²saying, ‘These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.’ ¹³But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius?’ ¹⁴Take what belongs to you and go. I choose to give to this last worker as I give to you. ¹⁵Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or do you begrudge my generosity?’ ¹⁶So the last will be first, and the first last.”

The Denarius: was a Roman day’s wages.

Early in the morning would be around: 6am (Sunrise).

3rd hour is 9am.

6th hour is 12noon.

9th hour is 3pm.

11th hour is 5pm.

THE STORY

The master of a vineyard offers some workers a denarius for a day's work so they agree and begin working at Sunrise. Then at 9am, 12noon, 3pm and 5pm the master hires some more men who wanted to work and simply tells them he will pay them whatever is right and they accept his offer and go to work. When evening came the master sent his foreman out to pay the men their wages. All men were paid the same (a denarius) so the men who had worked all day complained saying it is not fair that those who began to work later in the day should be given the same wage, but the master reminds them they were happy to work for a denarius so why are they now complaining because he has chosen to show kindness and compassion to the others.

This story can apply to the following two groups of people:

1. Israel as a nation was chosen to be God's people the Jewish faithful have endured great persecution to maintain their faith and four-thousand years later the Gentiles are accepted into the Kingdom and immediately inherit all the promises made to Israel.
2. The Kingdom of God will have some who are saved at the beginning of their life and others who enter it at the end of their life, those who entered the Kingdom at the beginning may have endured trials, testing's and persecutions because of their faith whereas those who come in later have only had to endured for a very short period of time.

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The moral of the story: no matter how long someone has been saved they should never be jealous of those who enter the Kingdom at a later time and receive the same rewards. A Christian's attitude should always be one of desiring the best for others and rejoicing over the abundant goodness and kindness of God.

The last will be first, and the first last: this verse can also have two applications, because first can mean first in time or first in importance.

The first application: Israel was the chosen nation of the Old Testament, but when Jesus came, they were grafted out and the Gentiles grafted in. In this sense the first ones chosen were the Jews and the last were the Gentiles. In this manner many Jews who were first chosen will be last to enter the Kingdom of God and many Gentiles who were last chosen will be first, this especially applies to the time of Christ's ministry on earth, the majority of the Jewish nation rejected Christ while multitudes of Gentiles embraced him.

The second application: many that were considered the most important (i.e. the Jews or the religious leaders of Jesus era, the Pharisees, chief priests and scribes) will be the least important while the common people and the Gentiles who were looked upon as being the least important will be considered the most important, both the first and second applications can apply to the words, "The last will be first, and the first last."

MATTHEW 20:17-19

Jesus begins to go to Jerusalem.

- **Matthew 20:17-19:** And as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside, and on the way he said to them, ¹⁸“See, we are going up to Jerusalem. And the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death ¹⁹and deliver him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified, and he will be raised on the third day.”

How amazing is this and how Horrific! Jesus knows that before being resurrected and glorified he is going to be mocked, flogged and cruelly crucified as a common criminal. The disciples never fully understood what Jesus meant until they saw him after his death and resurrection.

NOTE: sometimes when life is not going smoothly for a Christian or they are facing a crisis situation there is a danger of thinking God does not love them, this idea comes from distorted teaching that presents God as a kind of Santa Claus who has a bag of good gifts to constantly give out, but this is not real life or the way the Bible presents God. If a Christian is ever in doubt about God’s love for them all we have to do is take a moment to look at the bloodstained cross and ponder what it cost the Father to save us and what it cost Christ to redeem us.

MATTHEW 20:20-28

Sitting at Christ’s side in the Kingdom of God.

- **Matthew 20:20-28:** Then the mother (Salome) of the sons of Zebedee came up to him with her sons (James/John) and kneeling before him she asked him for something. ²¹And he said to her, "What do you want?" She said to him, "Say that these two sons of mine are to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your kingdom." ²²Jesus answered, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am to drink?" They said to him, "We are able." ²³He said to them (Salome, James/John) "You will drink my cup, but to sit at my right hand and at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father." ²⁴And when the ten heard it, they were indignant at the two brothers. ²⁵But Jesus called them to him and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. ²⁶It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, ²⁷and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, ²⁸even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

The sons of Zebedee were James and John and their mother was Salome, they probably lived in the vicinity of Bethsaida. Salome was one of the women who accompanied Jesus in Galilee and ministered to him and was present at the crucifixion of Jesus and among those who on Sunday morning came to the tomb to anoint the dead body of Jesus. Salome understood that Jesus was going to have a future Kingdom so she asks him if her two sons could sit at his side in the Kingdom.

(Matt. 4:21) (Mark 1:19) (Matt. 27:56) (Mark 15:40-41) (Mark 16:1).

Great leadership: those who rule over the people of the secular world take authority over them, but this should not be the way of Christian leaders. Jesus says to be a great leader over the Lord’s people those in leadership must see themselves as the servant of those they are ministering to such was the way of Christ. The attitude and mindset of leaders who want to be great before the Lord should be one that does not look to others to serve them, but rather see themselves as servants to those following them. They should be aware that the purpose of their life is to serve others and be willing to give their time and labour toward achieving this goal.

MATTHEW 20:29-34

Jesus heals two Blind Men.

- **Matthew 20:29-34:** And as they (Jesus and the apostles) went out of Jericho, a great crowd followed him. ³⁰And behold, there were two blind men sitting by the roadside, and when they heard that Jesus was passing by, they cried out, “Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!” ³¹The crowd rebuked them, telling them to be silent, but they cried out all the more, “Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!” ³²And stopping, Jesus called them and said, “What do you want me to do for you?” ³³They said to him, “Lord, let our eyes be opened.” ³⁴And Jesus in pity touched their eyes, and immediately they recovered their sight and followed him.

The two blind men did not know if Jesus would heal them, but they did know he could heal them.

NOTICE: they did not demand or claim to be healed as some teach today but rather humbly asked Jesus to have mercy on them and heal them.

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.

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