

## **Matthew 19:16-26**

Mostly covered in my commentary on Mark (chapter 10).

### **19:23-24**

**24 And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.**” The “Kingdom of Heaven” (verse 23), then, is the same as this **Kingdom of God**.

### **19:26**

**But Jesus looked at *them* and said to them, “With men this is impossible, “hard” has been upgraded to impossible.**

**but <sup>y</sup>with God all things are possible.**” This is not a catch-all, theological statement as much as it is declarative within this context.

### **19:27**

**Then Peter** finds an easy comparison.

**answered and said to Him, “See, <sup>z</sup>we have left all and followed You.** Jesus doesn’t argue with him. Not only that, if Peter was as well off as it appears (father having a fishing business), this was no small thing. **Therefore what shall we have?”** He wouldn’t **follow** You for “treasure in Heaven;” what about us?

### **19:28**

**So Jesus said to them, “Assuredly “Amen” I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, <sup>a</sup>you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.** Here is a good hint that Jesus was starting a New Israel. This makes sense: Jesus is the “New Moses” as we have been discussing. He is going to begin again (**regeneration**),<sup>1</sup> and if we have the literal, ethnic tribes of Israel ruling, it won’t be the literal sons of Jacob ruling them.

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<sup>y</sup> Gen. 18:14; Num. 11:23; Job 42:2; Is. 59:1; Jer. 32:17; Zech. 8:6; Luke 1:37

<sup>z</sup> Deut. 33:9; Matt. 4:20; Luke 5:11

<sup>a</sup> Matt. 20:21; Luke 22:28–30; [1 Cor. 6:2; Rev. 2:26]

<sup>1</sup>Used only in Titus 3:5 and here.

## Chapter 20

### 20:1

“**For** Jesus says “keep reading” with this little word **for**. It seems, then, that this parable serves as an answer to Peter. The man gets “treasure in Heaven” if he “leaves all and follows” Jesus, so Peter is interested in what he gets for “leaving all.” This connection is further reinforced when we realize the Gospel is answered with a desire to rule in the kingdom. They simply aren’t getting the concept. They are told they will all get a “denarius” and they then want “spots 1 and 2” in the passage to follow.

No, these disciples didn’t change at all: Keep the kids away (chapter 19) and keep the blind away (end of this chapter). Not only that, Peter probably thought there was much to gain from the beginning of the story as Jesus is building His cabinet (Matthew 16:18). Peter and the disciples think they’re better than the kids and the blind—of course the disciples have their mama talk for them (20:20).

**the kingdom of heaven is like** There is no chance the listener was thinking this would take 2000 years to transpire. This parable is not about the church age.

**a landowner who went out early in the morning** Mark 13:35 names this as the last watch of the night. This could have been as early as 3 or 4am. **to hire laborers for his vineyard.** He doesn’t tell us anything about the nature of this **vineyard** regarding ethnicity because everybody involved in the immediate context is Jewish; nor is he speaking about the evils of capitalism.

### 20:2-7

**3 And he went out about the third** about 9am.

**5 Again he went out about the sixth** about noon **and the ninth hour**, about 3pm. **and did likewise.** <sup>6</sup> **And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing <sup>1</sup>idle, and said to them, ‘Why have you been standing here idle all day?’** The manager of the vineyard is not in a hurry. He knew these were here **all day**, and did not hire them. Apparently, it can take all day to get one in the vineyard and it proves fine for this “lord.” <sup>7</sup> **They said to him, ‘Because no one hired us.’** Whether the first hour or the 11<sup>th</sup> hour, the laborer never chose the “lord of the vineyard.” Rather, He **hired** them. If one is in the kingdom then, it was because they were found and **hired.** **He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, <sup>2</sup>and whatever is right you will receive.’** Notice how the system doesn’t work so that there is a predictable pay-off.

### 20:8-12

**12 saying, ‘These last *men* have worked *only one hour*, and you made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the heat of the day.’** “We worked 12 hours and got the same lousy “denarius.” This is a story of a man who wanted some to do His work and He paid them all handsomely. The issue here is that the disciples’ hearts are not right. They are angry that they got in right away and that there are others who get in...eventually...while getting paid the same.

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<sup>1</sup> NU omits *idle*

<sup>2</sup> NU omits the rest of v. 7.

**only one hour** It seems as though Jesus is saying that the “rich young ruler” will get saved, and that he will get the same “denarius.” In the Kingdom to come, learn the disciples, everybody gets rich. It seems as though Jesus is forecasting his salvation. See the spreadsheet of the 12 parallels between the Corinthian epistles and the Gospel of Matthew. Look at this passage

*1 Corinthians 15:3-8 For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, 5 and that He was seen by Cephas, then<sup>j</sup> by the twelve. 6 After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. 7 After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. 8 Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time.*

		Matthew	Corinthians
1	Avoidance of judging	7:1-2	11:31
2	Wisdom: Christ's person	11:25	2:6-7
3	Stewards of mystery	13:11-12	4:1-2
4	Faith in the Gospel	17:22-23 & 18:6	15:1-4
5	Offending unbelievers	17:27	10:32
6	Church Discipline	18:15-17	5:12-13
7	After restoration	18:21-35	2 Cor 2:6-9
8	Presence “in spirit”	18:20	5:3; 2 Cor 2:10
9	Marriage Definition	19:4-6	6:15-16
10	Possibility of divorce	19:6	7:26-28
11	One cause for divorce	19:9	7:2, 14-15
12	Kingdom Eunuchs	19:11-12	7:6-8; 7:27-33

This bold portion is one Greek word and is found only once in the New Testament. Paul sat under a teacher, we find out from the book of Acts, in

Jerusalem. He was often around the peers of Jesus. Here, Peter and the apostles saw Jesus (and became believers) first, while He describes himself as one who was “born” later than expected. It seems that Paul, like Peter, lost it all...and found Christ...”late,” in the 11<sup>th</sup> hour.

**the heat of the day** We’re not talking about a minister who started at the beginning of the church age. The disciples are not still working (directly) in the vineyard.

**20:13-16**

**15<sup>a</sup> Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own things? Or<sup>b</sup> is your eye evil because I am good??** This is almost exactly the question posed to Jonah (Jonah 4).

**16<sup>c</sup> So the last will be first, and the first last.** This is the only part of this entire parable found in the Gospel of Mark.

**20:17**

**Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart.** If you were looking at a map, they would be heading south. Jericho is northeast of Jerusalem and they are heading up a mountain and so it says they were going up to Jerusalem. Why did Jesus take them out of the way? Well, there were lots of people with them because they were in one of the four Passovers

<sup>j</sup> Matt. 28:17

<sup>a</sup> [Rom. 9:20, 21]

<sup>b</sup> Deut. 15:9; Prov. 23:6; [Matt. 6:23]; Mark 7:22

<sup>c</sup> Matt. 19:30; Mark 10:31; Luke 13:30

recorded in the Gospels. We have before Passover is mentioned here. John 2, John 5, John 6 and Matthew 26. You understand that all male Jews were required to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem at the feast of trumpets in the fall, Pentecost and Passover in the spring. So most of Jesus' ministry since chapter 14 or 15 has been in a mob of people coming from northern Israel down through Perea on the east side of the Jordan River there, all the way across that valley up into Mount Zion and so when it says that he took them out of the way, there is a good reason. He was with a huge crowd of people and he wanted to discuss things with his disciples.

Jerusalem used to be called Jebus, according to Judges 19. It is the old part of Jerusalem. In the book of Joshua, it was ruled, as part of the tribe of Judah's real estate. Joshua says the Jebusites took it back over somehow. Then we find that it was reconquered by the tribe of Judah. David reigned there as king for 33 years of his 40 year reign and then Solomon reigned there 40 years and actually had the tabernacle resting there and built the temple there on Mount Zion.

He pulls them aside on that trail up the hill. He pulls them aside from the mob. In Mark 10 it says "he was leading the crowd and the disciples were amazed and afraid." Why? It says he led the whole crowd. All the people that were with him had been with him for some time watching him do miracles and they were ready to have someone save them from the Romans. He steps aside on the path and says, "I want to tell you something, I'm about to be betrayed and condemned and crucified by the Romans." What transpires in Matthew 21 should convince the reader that the crowd was ready to crown Jesus king.

**We are going up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests, unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death.** Now, this is not the first time that we have mentioned Jesus promising he's about to die.

*Matthew 16:21 From that time forth began Jesus to show on to his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and the chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.*

You notice Peter's response,

*Peter took him, and began to rebuke him.*

"Jesus, you've got this all wrong. You're not going to die and you're certainly not going to rise again the third day. We're not having that. How are we supposed to rule and reign from Jerusalem if you're dead? That's silly. We can't do that."

*Matthew 17:22 And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men: **And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again.** And they were exceeding sorry.*

There is no hint whatsoever as to how Jesus is going to die in Matthew 16 and in Matthew 17, so if you're in the audience and you're in Matthew 16 in Caesarea Philippi, you're in Matthew 17 in Capernaum, and you hear that Jesus is going to be betrayed and beaten and killed in Jerusalem, what are you going to think? "How is that going to happen?" How would the Jews kill people? They'd stone him. So the disciples are expecting Jesus to get stoned for blasphemy.

The disciples are expecting that Jesus who is going to become a king...no, King Herod is not going to put up, King Herod Antipas is not going to put up with a rival and he's in town because of the Passover and King Herod Antipas. We see him in Luke's Gospel. He's obviously going to be killed because he's going there to set up his kingdom. Remember, we've been seeing that through Matthew for almost two years. Jesus is here to set up a kingdom.

So they approach Jerusalem. They are expecting now that Jesus is going to Jerusalem for one purpose and that is to sit on his rightful throne of his father David. He had the right to.

Now he tells them a third time, "I'm going to die," but he tells them how it's going to happen. They still don't know how to take it. He says he's going to be delivered to the Gentiles, verse 19. Well, who are the only Gentiles ruling and reigning there in Jerusalem? The Romans. And how did the Romans execute people? Crucifixion. They crucify him and on the third day he will rise again. Now for the first time he mentions crucifixion and then it starts to make sense because back in Matthew 10 he said, "If you're not willing to take up your cross and follow me," they thought he was just speaking, he is, after all, a Rabbi and Rabbis speak with great wisdom so. "I'm sure that Jesus is just speaking in hyperbole. He's just using a metaphor. We're not going to have to take up our cross to follow Jesus. He's here to reign."

This is a paradox because what we have in verse 17 through 19 is Jesus being victimized, it seems, but then we look at chapter 20, verse 28 and we see "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." Jesus, oh, make up your mind. Are you going to be murdered or are you going to commit suicide? I mean, this doesn't seem right. What are you talking about? Can you understand the dilemma the disciples were facing? The Jesus of the Bible is a tad more complicated, especially if you're a disciple following him around. "This isn't how it's supposed to work out. How are you going to both reign on your father, David's throne, and die? This is ridiculous."

## **20:20**

**Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children.** We find out from later on in the book, this is Salome. This is Mary, the mother of Jesus' sister. So James and John the sons of Zebedee were Jesus' first cousins.

**worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him** We find her all through Jesus' ministry. We find her in Luke 8; we find her at the cross. So here is one of the parents who steps up from the crowd and says, "Well, here's what I would like. I would like for you to give me something."

## **20:21**

**Jesus said unto her, "What wilt thou?" She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit,** They are better than kids, than blind man, and the rich man, and now...each other. **the one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left,** being a part of the kingdom is not nearly good enough. **in thy kingdom.** "Hello! I just told you I'm going to die. Why did she all of a sudden make this association: my son is going to sit on the right hand and left hand? Here's why:

*19:27 Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore? And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*

“So, okay, this is good. This is good. All right, this is good. All right, we all get a seat. All right, now, I want to sit the closest to the king and then we're going to have my mom ask for it.” We find out that's exactly what happened. Now, please notice that Jesus knows who asks. It's one of those things like my son when we have company over, he sends the company to come and ask us if they can watch a movie; if they can play a game; if they can go in the backyard and strip the bark off of trees. You know, that kind of thing. And we all know that the reason that they're coming to ask is because Jake has told them to come and ask.

### **20:22**

**You know not what you ask.** Are you looking over their mother's shoulder, Jesus addresses them. **able to drink the cup?** He looks past mom to James and John, the two brave men that are going to help them lead the kingdom and says, **Are you able to drink the cup that I drink of and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?** And they say unto him, "Yup, **we are able.**" Now, fast forward a week. Jesus is in the garden of Gethsemane asking that if possible the cup be taken from him and James and John said, "We can drink your cup. I mean, you're just going to be crucified" (four verses earlier). In any regard, the first martyr was James, the son of Zebedee. He had his head taken from Herod in Acts 12:4.

### **20:23**

**Ye shall drink indeed of my cup,** and James was the first martyr who died in Acts 12, he had his head taken. And John was the last apostle who died. He wasn't martyred, he got away by merely being boiled in oil.

**but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give.** Can you imagine Jesus saying, "It is not up to me where my cabinet sits in the kingdom?" Let that sink in. You have Jesus saying, "I don't have the authority to give you a particular place in the kingdom." But who has it? **It shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father. And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren.** So please don't think that the other ten were really good natured guys. The fact is, James and John beat them to the punch. James and John saw their angle. Can you remember what happened to Peter last which might have made James and John think they had a chance of sitting at the right and left hand of Jesus? In chapter 16 Peter told Jesus that he really wasn't going to die; he really wasn't going to rise again from the dead. There wasn't any need to rise from the dead because he wasn't going to die. They weren't going to let their King die. Remember that?

And Jesus said, "Get behind me, Satan." Not very many people had the prestigious place, of being called "Satan" by Jesus. Very few are in that elite group. In fact, I think just one, alright? So Peter is probably in the eyes of the other apostles, probably slipping down in his placement. Remember, we're dealing here with a real group of people. I mean, think about it: they get the opportunity to rule with a king in his kingdom and they're not sure when the kingdom is going to start; they are suspecting it's going to start very soon because they're approaching Jerusalem and it's Passover when there will be probably, Josephus says, over two million people in the city of Jerusalem.

### **20:25**

**But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them.** Gentile is shorthand for “anyone non-Jew.” “Heathen” would probably be a synonym that Jesus would have used in the Gospels such as in Matthew 18:20.

Jesus says, "You know that in this government, this worldly government, we expect people to lord over one another. We expect that." I mean, the mayor has to have a certain amount of authority to rule over his city council in certain models of government. The governor has to have a certain amount of ability to lord over his estate. The president has to be the chief executive. There are certain things that have to work in the Gentile world, in the world that we live.

Jesus prayed in John 17, "I pray not that you would remove them from the world, but that you should keep them from the evil one." Jesus said, "Don't take them from the world, just keep them protected while they're here." 1 Corinthians 7 says we use the worldly system, but we are not in love with it.

*1 Peter 5:1 [Pastors] which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed. 2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, **not by constraint.** 3 Neither as being lords over God's **heritage.***

How do you get things done without being a lord over them? But yet, back to Matthew 20, that is what Jesus requires of leaders within the church. A great leader is someone in a room full of volunteers that can somehow get people to do stuff for God. So the test of leadership, I guess, is being able to take non-salaried people and serve them until they want to serve. The challenge for anyone who leads anybody in church is serving until that person wants to serve.

## **20:27**

**whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant.**

*Matthew 5:19 Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, **the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.***

Practice what you preach. You get to be called “great,” or, “chief” in the kingdom of heaven.

*Matthew 18:1 At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, “**Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?**” 2 Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them. And said, “Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is **greatest in the kingdom of heaven.**”*

This is certainly not in an army leadership manual. You're saying that we have to become like little children and servants or slaves to our fellow man in order to be called “great” or “chief” in the kingdom? I want to be able to say “I'm a mighty warrior-leader.” I want to make things happen.

## **20:28**

**Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.** Just back in verse 19, Jesus is forecasting that he's going to be delivered to the Gentiles, first betrayed, verse 18, then condemned to death, verse 19, "delivered to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again." So it looks like on the outside Jesus is a victim, but Jesus is very clear in verse 28, "I am not a victim. I am laying my life down because it is the ultimate act of service." Now, if you and I lay our lives down for someone else, perhaps it would be a great act of service but it would not affect my eternity. But when Jesus lays down his life for many, he becomes their ransom! This, too, is a developing theme in the book of Matthew.

*Matthew 1:21 and will call his name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sin.*

Why? So who is it that we're hostage to that requires a ransom? What is it that we're hostage to? Our sin. Jesus said, "I'm going to come and I'm going to do a snatch-and-grab and I'm going to yank you out of sin's clutches." John 8:31, "If you serve sin, you are a slave of sin." Jesus said, "I am coming to rescue you from your sin." Everyone wants to be rescued from the Romans in their lives. It might be a job you don't like. It might be a "house that's too small." I'm not trying to pick on anyone. I'm just thinking of all the things that cross through this 38 year old, 2016 American. The things that go through my mind that I would love to be delivered from. Everyone wants to be delivered from the Romans, but how many of us are just craving for a Savior to ransom us from our sin? Everyone wants to go to heaven but, "Dear God, I'm not going to give up my sin." Find some application in that.

<sup>29</sup> **<sup>a</sup>Now as they went out of Jericho, a great multitude followed Him. <sup>30</sup> And behold, <sup>b</sup>two blind men sitting by the road, when they heard that Jesus was passing by, cried out, saying, "Have mercy on us, O Lord, <sup>c</sup>Son of David!"**

<sup>31</sup> **Then the multitude <sup>d</sup>warned them that they should be quiet; but they cried out all the more, saying, "Have mercy on us, O Lord, Son of David!"**

<sup>32</sup> **So Jesus stood still and called them, and said, "What do you want Me to do for you?"** for the 2<sup>nd</sup> time in two passages, He asks what the approacher desires.

<sup>33</sup> **They said to Him, "Lord, that our eyes may be opened."** <sup>34</sup> **So Jesus had <sup>e</sup>compassion and touched their eyes. And immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed Him.** We now have now seen a rich man leave the Lord and get nothing. We have a group of disciples leave everything to follow the Lord and get promise of everything. We have seen two blind men that expect nothing and follow the Lord, and get their sight.

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<sup>a</sup> Mark 10:46–52; Luke 18:35–43

<sup>b</sup> Matt. 9:27

<sup>c</sup> [2 Sam. 7:14–17; Ps. 89:3–5, 19–37; Is. 11:10–12; Ezek. 37:21–25]; Matt. 1:1; Luke 1:31, 32; [Acts 15:14–17]

<sup>d</sup> Matt. 19:13

<sup>e</sup> Matt. 9:36; 14:14; 15:32; 18:27