

## Matthew 20:1-16 **Eleventh Hour Laborers – Kingdom of Heaven**

### Hiring servants

<sup>1</sup> "For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. <sup>2</sup> Now when he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. <sup>3</sup> And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, <sup>4</sup> and said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.' So they went. <sup>5</sup> Again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did likewise. <sup>6</sup> And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing idle, and said to them, 'Why have you been standing here idle all day?' <sup>7</sup> "They said to him, 'Because no one hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right you will receive.'

### Wages at the end of the day

<sup>8</sup> "So when evening had come, the owner of the vineyard said to his steward, 'Call the laborers and give them their wages, beginning with the last to the first.' <sup>9</sup> "And when those came who were hired about the eleventh hour, they each received a denarius. <sup>10</sup> But when the first came, they supposed that they would receive more; and they likewise received each a denarius. <sup>11</sup> And when they had received it, they complained against the landowner, <sup>12</sup> 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.'

### Equality of reward

<sup>13</sup> "But he answered one of them and said, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? <sup>14</sup> Take what is yours and go your way. I wish to give to this last man the same as to you. <sup>15</sup> Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own things? Or is your eye evil because I am good?'

### First and Last

<sup>16</sup> "So the last will be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few chosen." NKJV

### Facts Revealed:

- ✚ Another aspect that the **Kingdom of Heaven** is like.
  - ✧ Workers called into the work of the Kingdom of Heaven at whatever ministry they are entrusted according to the gifts and callings of the Holy Spirit.
  - ✧ The call went out periodically throughout the day to the eleventh hour.
  - ✧ People responded and went into the work of the vineyard with the expectation of receiving their wages as agreed.
  - ✧ At the end of the day they all received the same pay.
  - ✧ Those who worked the longest faithfully expected more as a reward for their greater effort, but were told, no, the pay was as agreed, the ones who came later received the same because of the generosity of the owner.
- ✚ The picture is that the ones who come to the Lord at the last minute will receive the same gift of Salvation as those who had proved faithful throughout their life time.
- ✚ A good example of this is the Thief on the cross who acknowledged they were receiving the just punishment for their actions, while Jesus had done no wrong and was suffering the same as they.
  - ✧ He said to Jesus, "Remember me when you come into your Kingdom." Jesus said to him, "Today you will be with Me in paradise." [\[Luke 23:39-43\]](#)

- ✧ He did not toil in the work of the kingdom, but because of his faith, he was welcomed into it.
- ✧ Salvation is not based on what we have done, but on the grace and mercy of God through faith. [\[Ephesians 2:8\]](#)
  - ✧ Some who appear by their works to deserve the Kingdom will not be found there because they trusted in their own efforts and did not have faith depending on the work of God.
  - ✧ Others who seem not to be worthy of the kingdom because of lack of effort, will be found in the Kingdom because they found faith to believe and depended entirely on the grace and mercy of God.
  - ✧ Salvation is based on believing faith, and not on works of personal effort.
  - ✧ Salvation is not a reward, but a gift of grace and mercy.
- ✧ So there will be some who should have been first who will end up last.
- ✧ Some who appear to be least worthy will end up among the first because of their faith.
- ✧ God has sent out the call to everyone to be saved, but only a few will find their way in. [\[Matthew 7:13-14, Luke 13:23-25\]](#)