

HOW DO WE KNOW THAT JEHOVAH IS STILL CALLING HIS ANOINTED SONS

Jesus taught many things by way of illustrations, which prompted his disciples to ask:

“‘Why is it you speak to them by use of illustrations?’ In reply he said: ‘To you it is granted to understand the sacred secrets of the kingdom of the heavens, but to those people it is not granted.’”
– *Matthew 13:10-11*

It is further said of Jesus:

“All these things Jesus spoke to the crowds by illustrations. Indeed, without an illustration he would not speak to them; that there might be fulfilled what was spoke through the prophet who said: ‘I will open my mouth with illustrations, I will publish things hidden since the founding.’” – *Matthew 13:34-35*

So, we learn that Jesus revealed sacred secrets of the Kingdom of the Heavens by means of illustrations. He could teach these complex issue in simple, uncomplicated language. The people in general would learn basic truths, but their real meaning remained hidden. However, to the sons of the kingdom, these sacred secrets would be revealed at Jehovah’s appointed time.

One such illustration is discussed at *Matthew 20:1-16*, referred to as the ‘Workers in the Vineyard.’ A careful review and study of this illustration can answer our question: Is Jehovah still calling anointed sons?

This parable is given in answer to an issue raised in *Matthew 19:23-27* where Jesus shows the difficulty of rich ones being saved. This caused the disciples to ask about their own salvation:

“Then Peter said to him in reply: ‘Look! We have left all things and followed you; **what actually will there be for us?**’ Jesus said to them: ‘Truly I say to you, in the re-creation, when the Son of Man sits down upon his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also yourselves sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone that has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands for the sake of my name will receive many times more and will inherit everlasting life. But many that are first will be last and the last first.’”
– *Matthew 19:27-30*

Jesus here told his disciples that as a reward for their sacrifices, that they would sit on thrones and judges the twelve tribes of Israel, and that they would get that reward in the “re-creation” when the Son of Man arrives and sits down on his throne. This reward would include

immortality (*1 Corinthians 15:51-53*), glory (*Romans 8:18; 9:23-24; 1 Peter 5:1,4*), kingdom, rulership and priestly authority. (*Daniel 7:22, 27; Revelation 20:6*) As a reward then, it belonged to the worker. It is not an entrusting of “talents” or “minas” as Jesus mentioned in other illustrations (*Matthew 25:14-19; Luke 19:12-15*) to be negotiated, increased and accounted for.

Jesus tells them how the reward would be paid, namely, last ones first and first ones last. To help them understand this method of payment, and to warn them in advance against developing a fleshly and even wicked attitude, Jesus offered the illustration in Chapter 20. We encourage you to read this account at *Matthew 20:1-16*.

Jesus introduces the illustration with the phrase “. . . the kingdom of the heavens is like. . .” Jesus used this introduction for several illustrations (*Matthew 13:24; 13:31, 13:33, 13:44, 13:45, 13:47, 18:23, 22:2, 25:1*) as he explained, not the kingdom itself, but different facets of it. The sacred secret revealed in this illustration is how the reward would be paid.

In this illustration, the workers would represent the anointed Christians since they are the ones who would receive the reward mentioned at *Matthew 19:28*. The man, the householder, would represent Jehovah since it is he who “calls” anointed Christians to his service. And the vineyard would represent the world. The work is the harvesting which includes sacrifice (*19:29* – leaving everything behind), the preaching work (*20:12* – the burden, or responsibility, of the day), and trials, persecutions and tribulations (*20:12* – the burning heat).

The householder goes out at regular intervals to call in his workers, at the first hour, the third, the sixth, the ninth, and finally the eleventh. (*20:1-7*) Perhaps at various times in the day, those called earlier may have thought that all workers were called in. But the householder continued to call in more, even up to the final hour.

While all workers no doubt appreciated the helping hands of the late workers, some may have felt that those late ones would not get the same wage. However, at the end of the day, the master came and instructed his ‘man in charge’ to pay the workers. (*20:8*) As *Revelation 11:18* phrases it, “to give their reward to your slaves the prophets and the holy ones.” And as Jesus states, the last ones would be paid first.

“When the eleventh-hour men came, they each received a denarius. So, when the first came, they concluded they would receive more; but they also received pay at the rate of a denarius. On receiving it they began to murmur against the householder and said, ‘These last put in one hour’s work; still you made them equal to us who bore the burden of the day and the burning heat!’ – *Matthew 20:9-12*

Those first-hour workers were envious of those called later in the day. They did not feel the eleventh-hour workers had earned pay equal to their own. But, the householder responded:

“Fellow, I do you no wrong. You agreed with me for a denarius, did you not? Take what is yours and go. I want to give to this last one the same as to you. Is it not lawful for me to do what I want with my own things? Or is your eye wicked because I am good? In

this way last ones will be first, and the first ones last.” – **Matthew 20:13-16**

Thus by means of this illustration, Jesus revealed that fleshly thinking would affect some of the older anointed Christians, even asking if their eye had become wicked. Because their attitude did not cause these disgruntled ones to loose their reward (**20:14**), the illustration seems to be more of a warning than a prophecy.

For those with an ear, the illustration reveals:

- (1) That Jehovah calls his anointed “workers” at intervals – the first hour, the third hour, the sixth hour, the ninth hour, and the eleventh hour. If the number were to become static, that did not mean that the calling was over, just that Jehovah was not calling at that time. Clearly, our worldwide reports show that Jehovah is continuing to call His true sons.
- (2) That Jehovah will call his sons up to the last hour.
- (3) That it is Jehovah, not men, who determines when He has called enough workers.

Recognizing then that Jehovah is still calling his anointed sons encourages those who have the witness of the spirit to make the calling and choosing of ourselves sure (**2 Peter 1:10**) by pursuing down toward the goal of the prize of the upward call. (**Philippians 3:14**)

“[F]rom the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of the heaven is the goal toward which men press, and those pressing forward are seizing it.” – **Matthew 11:12**

Do not let men deprive you of the prize. (**Colossians 2:18**) Let us continue with **Letter No. 5.**

“Elaia Luchnia”