

Matthew 20:1-16

New Revised Standard Version

The Laborers in the Vineyard

20 “For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ² After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage, ^[a] he sent them into his vineyard. ³ When he went out about nine o’clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; ⁴ and he said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.’ So they went. ⁵ When he went out again about noon and about three o’clock, he did the same. ⁶ And about five o’clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, ‘Why are you standing here idle all day?’ ⁷ They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard.’ ⁸ When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, ‘Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.’ ⁹ When those hired about five o’clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. ^[b] ¹⁰ Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. ^[c] ¹¹ And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, ¹² saying, ‘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.’ ¹³ But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage?’ ^[d] ¹⁴ Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. ¹⁵ Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?’ ^[e] ¹⁶ So the last will be first, and the first will be last.’ ^[f]

Footnotes

1. [Matthew 20:2](#) Gk *a denarius*
2. [Matthew 20:9](#) Gk *a denarius*
3. [Matthew 20:10](#) Gk *a denarius*
4. [Matthew 20:13](#) Gk *a denarius*
5. [Matthew 20:15](#) Gk *is your eye evil because I am good?*
6. [Matthew 20:16](#) Other ancient authorities add *for many are called but few are chosen*