

Come to Understanding

**They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding,
and they that murmured shall learn doctrine. — Isaiah 29:24**

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Are Not My Ways Equal?

How many times have we tried to judge the fairness of God? This is exactly what happened in the parable that Yahshua (Jesus) offered concerning the workers in the vineyard, which He compared to the Kingdom of Heaven. At the beginning of the day, the householder hired workers and their wages were agreed upon:

- 1 For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man *that is* a householder, which went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard.
- 2 And when he had agreed with the laborers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard. -Matthew 20

Later, more workers were hired. They continued to be added throughout the day:

- 3 And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace,
- 4 And said to them; Go you also into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you. And they went their way.
- 5 Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. -Matthew 20

Finally, as the day was nearly over, others were also hired to work. The householder told them that they would receive “whatever is right” for their labors:

- 6 And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and said to them, Why stand you here all the day idle?
- 7 They said to him, Because no man has hired us. He said to them, Go you also into the vineyard; and whatever is right, *that* shall you receive. -Matthew 20

When the end of the day came, it was time to pay the workers their just earnings. Those who signed on last got paid first. Those latecomers received the amount that the householder had agreed to pay those who were first hired at the beginning of the day:

- 8 So when evening had come, the lord of the vineyard said to his steward, Call the laborers, and give them *their* hire, beginning from the last to the first.
- 9 And when they came that *were hired* about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. -Matthew 20

As those who had labored from the beginning of the day witnessed the payment of those who were hired last, they naturally assumed that they would be paid more. However, those who were hired first received no more pay than those who were hired last:

- 10 But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny. -Matthew 20

They protested against the master of the house, claiming that they had been treated unfairly. How could we, they murmured, who have worked all day, even through the heat of the day, receive the same pay as those who had barely worked?

- 11 And when they had received *it*, they murmured against the master of the house,
- 12 Saying, These last have worked *but* one hour, and you have made them equal to us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day. -Matthew 20

The master of the house responded, saying in effect, “I gave you what we agreed upon. How does it hurt you if I give them more than you think they have earned?”

- 13 But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do you no wrong: did not you agree with me for a penny?
- 14 Take *that* yours *is*, and go your way: I will give unto this last, even as unto you.
- 15 Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own? Is your eye evil, because I am good? -Matthew 20

Like these workers, many of us also struggle with the fairness of God. When we look at the rewards and/or blessings that others receive while we suffer, it doesn’t seem fair.

Peter was no exception. He had a similar struggle after the resurrected Yahshua had told him to “go feed my sheep.” “Why me?,” Peter may have thought, “What about John? Why doesn’t he have to do anything?”

- 21 Peter seeing him said to Yahshua, Lord, and what *shall* this man *do*? -John 21

Yahshua responded saying in effect, “You do what I have called you to do. I will have John do what I want him to do.” Besides, whatever John does, “What is that to you?”

- 22 Yahshua said to him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what *is that* to you? follow you me. -John 21

**So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense,
and caused them to understand the reading. — Nehemiah 8:8**

Come to Understanding

Like Peter, most of us are also still operating in the world's system. We are still looking to be rewarded for our faithful work, rather than accepting that our work counts as nothing when we try to match it up with the grace of God. We try to add up points for our good works and subtract them for our wickedness. We somehow imagine that the score will be tallied in the end and those who have done more good works will be rewarded whereas those who have not done them will be penalized. Yahweh, however, cautions us about such score keeping:

26 When a righteous *man* turns away from his righteousness, and commits iniquity, and dies in them; for his iniquity that he has done shall he die.

27 Again, when the wicked *man* turns away from his wickedness that he has committed, and does that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive.

28 Because he considers, and turns away from all his transgressions that he has committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die. -Ezekiel 18

Our response is like that of the house of Israel. This is not fair! We say that Yahweh is "not equal." But He says it is our ways that are "not equal."

29 Yet says the house of Israel, The way of the Lord is not equal. O house of Israel, are not my ways equal? are not your ways unequal? -Ezekiel 18

The unrighteous who turn toward Yahweh shall live and the righteous who turn away from Him shall die. What about the scoreboard?

The Kingdom of Heaven is not like a sprint. It is more like an endurance race. Yahshua says that many shall be deceived along the way by false prophets. However, He says, those who endure to the end shall be saved:

11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall grow cold.

13 But he that shall endure to the end, the same shall be saved. -Matthew 24

Knowing that it is the end of the race that counts, it is tempting for some to ask, "Why not just join the race at the end then?" However, like the workers in the

vineyard, we can only be "hired" when we are asked. We can only come when we are invited. His Spirit will not always plead with us to come to Him:

3a And Yahweh said, My spirit shall not always strive with man.... -Genesis 6

We must, therefore, seek Him while He may be found:

6 Seek you Yahweh while he may be found, call you upon him while he is near: -Isaiah 55

That is when we can turn to Him in true repentance and when He will "abundantly pardon" us and will have mercy upon us:

7 Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto Yahweh, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. -Isaiah 55

We cannot second guess Yahweh. Neither can we deceive Him. His thoughts and ways are beyond our comprehension:

8 For my thoughts *are* not your thoughts, neither *are* your ways my ways, says Yahweh.

9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. -Isaiah 55

However, Yahweh sends forth His Word, much like He sends forth the rain. He uses it to accomplish His purpose on His schedule, according to His plan:

10 For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, and returns not there, but waters the earth, and makes it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater:

11 So shall my word be that goes forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it. -Isaiah 55

Yahweh sends His Word in His timing, whereby He calls many unto salvation. However, of the many that are called, only those few who answer His call by steadfastly believing in the power of His name to save them from their sins, are chosen:

16 So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many are called, but few chosen. -Matthew 20

Out of the abundance of the belief in our hearts comes forth our confession of faith from our mouths as we call upon the name of Yahweh the Savior (Yahshua):

32 And it shall come to pass, *that* whoever shall call on the name of Yahweh shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as Yahweh has said, and in the remnant whom Yahweh shall call. -Joel 2

His ways are more than equal. His grace is greater than our works and His mercy is greater than our sin. Regardless of when He calls us into the Kingdom of Heaven and no matter how much work we have done, once we answer that call in faith, His reward is the same. It is everlasting life.

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