

Matthew 19

ASVh with Comments

Summary. In this chapter, the Lord Jesus interacts with many people: Pharisees, little children, a rich young man, and the disciples. There is a gap of time and places between the events presented in Chapter 18 in Galilee and the events reported in this chapter that take place in the region of Judea beyond the Jordan. It is believed that the events in Chapter 19 took place in some unspecified locations within the region of Judea beyond Jordan, which is called Judea, even if geographically it was not within Judean borders. Many people living there were Jews, and many people in that region have been converted to Judaism. This chapter focuses on the Lord Jesus preaching and teaching the way to come to the Father to the lost sheep of Israel who were scattered among other nations in foreign lands. The Lord points to the way for all to come back to the Father to receive a chance to be called His children again. Then and now, the way is found by believing in the Lord Jesus and following His teaching. When the Lord Jesus started to minister in this region, crowds started to follow Him. Our Lord gives three main teachings in this chapter. 1) Teachings about divorce and marriage. The Lord created male and female, but humans do not want to accept that they are created for one another to become one flesh and not divorce. The two options presented in this chapter are that we should be together with someone in this way or be alone. 2) Teachings about entering the kingdom of heaven. The Lord Jesus uses the blessing of the children, the encounter with the young rich man, and the disciples to teach important things about the way to enter the kingdom of the heavens. The focus of these teachings is related to the heart and the actions of a person. In order, the Lord teaches the following: a) have an innocent heart in following the Lord's teaching; b) follow the commandments from your heart and practice them; c) the work has been done already by the Lord Jesus, so there is no more work to be done for salvation, we only need to believe and follow the Lord Jesus; d) abandon in your heart the inner attachment to riches and family and become free in hearing the purpose of the Lord for you; e) have your heart cleansed by the blood of the Lord Jesus; 3) Teachings about the new world to come. The new world (the regeneration) is the world that has the Lord Jesus sitting on His glorious throne, ruling His people, and it is beyond what the human mind can understand (See Comments Matthew 19:28).

19 ¹ And it came to pass when **Jesus** had finished these words, **He** departed from Galilee, and came to the region of Judaea beyond the Jordan;

Comments 19:1. The Lord went in beyond the Jordan River to gather the lost sheep of Israel, which were spread out and lived among the natives of the land. The Lord went there to gather them by calling them out to Him. The verse shows that the Lord came for all humans no matter how difficult the world is. He travels always to give all people the good news, which is part of showing His love for people and opening the way for people to come to God.

Q: What happened on the route between Galilee and Judea beyond the Jordan? **A:** There are many things that are not mentioned here. There is a gap of time and places between the events reported in Chapter 18 in Galilee and the events reported in this chapter that took place in Judea beyond the Jordan. The Lord stopped in many other places along the route between Galilee and Judea beyond the Jordan. His mission was to save the lost.

Q: Did Matthew 19:1 err regarding Judea as beyond the Jordan? **A:** No, “and came into the region of Judea beyond the Jordan” is correct; it is believed that the region referred to in this chapter was called “Judea beyond the Jordan” because of the people living there. There were many Jews from Judea that settled there, and many natives of the land had converted to Judaism.

² and great multitudes followed **Him**; and **He** healed them there.

Comments 19:2. The Lord shows His mercy by healing the people.

³ And the Pharisees came to **Him**, tempting **Him**, and saying, Is it lawful to divorce his wife for every cause?

Comments 19:3. “And the Pharisees came to Him.” These are Pharisees from Judea beyond Jordan who grew up there, were taught there, and were mixed with the people of that region.

Q: Why did these Pharisees come up with this question to tempt the Lord? **A:** The question came about because of the way of life. The people of God had different rules of life because they had to follow God's Law given through Moses, which was different from the people of that region. God's law makes them different and separate; they live in the same region but have a different law of life to follow. If a Jewish man divorces a Jewish woman and

takes the women of the region to replace the first wife, that man commits adultery unless the Jewish wife is unfaithful. Also, the right of the firstborn cannot be transferred to the child born through adultery; the right of the firstborn must be to the people of God (See Ezra 9:1-2; Ezra 10:10-11).

Q: Why is this viewed as a tempting question? **A:** Because of the answer the Lord gives, that is the temptation, they want to check the Lord Jesus' answer with the knowledge of the people taught in the land. The Lord has an answer, unlike the Pharisees, who claim to be taught but do not know the real meaning.

⁴ And answering, **He** said, Have you not read that **He** who made from the beginning made them male and female,

⁵ and said, On account of this will a man leave his father and mother, and will be united with his wife; and the two will become one flesh?

⁶ Therefore, they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has united together, let not man put apart.

⁷ They say to Him, Why then did Moses command to offer a bill of divorce, and to set her free?

Comments 19:4-7. In these verses, people come to be against the teaching “the two will become one flesh.” They could not accept man and woman becoming one flesh; because of the problem of authority and subordination, the woman was under the man. If they become one, they are equal. At that time, men could not accept to become one as equal with women. The pride of men plays a big role in their lives, and equality is unacceptable, but the men forget they were born through women (See 1 Corinthians 11:11-12).

⁸ He says to them, Moses for your hardness of heart allowed you to set free your wives; but from the beginning it has not been so.

Comments 19:8. The reason why Moses commanded one to give a certificate of divorce was to eliminate slave wives. As much as men have wealth in life, they collect more wives, and man's pride will ignite. When a man has more than one wife, one will be more favored and becomes above the others, and the lower ones are no better than slaves. If the unwanted wife does not get a certificate of divorce, there is nothing left for the life of that woman but to be a slave, but the Lord does not want any of His children to become slaves. This law is to be used only for God's children. (See Exodus 21:7-11).

⁹ And I say to you, that, Whoever may put away his wife, except for fornication, and may marry another, commits adultery; and he who marries her that is put away commits adultery.

¹⁰ The disciples say to Him, If the case of the man is so with the wife, it is better not to marry.

Comments 19:10. The disciples see marriage as trouble; they imply that it would be better not to marry a Jewish woman to avoid complications.

¹¹ And He said to them, Not all hold this word, but only those to whom it is given.

¹² For there are eunuchs, who were so born from their mother's womb, and there are eunuchs, who were made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs, who made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of the heavens. The one who is able to receive it, let him receive it.

Comments 19:11-12. “The one who is able to receive it, let him receive it.” Some have received the gift of being born without the lust of the flesh. If they do not have that feeling, it is a gift not to suffer; if they do have the feeling, let them marry.

¹³ Then were brought to Him little children, that He may lay the hands on them, and may pray; however, the disciples admonished them.

Comments 19:13. **Q:** Why did the disciples admonish the people? **A:** The disciples admonished the people because they all felt the same way towards children, that they were not important for promoting the ministry. They all want the Lord Jesus to rest, but by bringing children, the Lord Jesus had no rest. The disciples did this out of love for the Lord.

¹⁴ And Jesus said, Permit the little children, and do not forbid them to come to Me; for of such belongs the kingdom of the heavens.

Comments 19:14. The Lord teaches that to enter the kingdom of the heavens, adults should have the same way of heart as little children; the Lord is pointing out that we should accept the teaching and believe as little children do.

¹⁵ And He laid the hands on them. He departed from there,

¹⁶ and behold, one **having come** to **Him**, said, **Teacher**, what good shall I do, that I may have eternal life?

Comments 19:16. This passage tells us how some people think they can do some good deed that is worth being counted as deserving to be in heaven. The perfect deed has been done already; the innocent Lamb of God has already shed His blood to cover the world of sin. For us, only one thing needs to be done: trust, believe, and accept the deed the Lord Jesus has done. Then, come at the foot of the cross under the blood of the Lord Jesus and repent, be baptized, and follow His teaching.

¹⁷ And **He** said to him, Why **do you ask Me** about what is good? **One** is good; but if **you desire** to enter into life, keep the commandments.

Comments 19:17. This teaching shows us the Trinity of God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). The verse also proves that time has no meaning for the Lord because the Lord already knows what will happen to him (the young man). The Lord's answers will always point out to who He is.

¹⁸ He **says to Him**, Which? And **Jesus** said, **You shall not murder, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness,**

¹⁹ Honor **the father and the mother and love your neighbor as yourself.**

Comments 19:16-19. Notice how the conversation starts in these verses. The man did not come first to glorify God; his inner heart was shown in the question. He asked, "What good shall I do?" not what God can do. This question was very self-centered. Besides, in those times, all the commandments of God were taught from childhood. He learned the commandments but did not practice them and then came to ask the question, "What good shall I do?" Many of us today do not learn the commandments; we have the Bible, but we do not read and meditate on the teachings of the Bible, and we end up making simple or big mistakes against the teachings of the Bible.

²⁰ The young man **says to Him**, All these I have **kept**. What **still do** I lack?

Comments 19:20. "What still do I lack?" The man's answer to the Lord shows that he, himself, has doubts about his salvation. If he had kept all the commandments, he would not doubt to enter eternal life. We, all believers, should ask ourselves if we keep all the teachings of the Bible and compare the answers.

²¹ **Jesus** said to him, If **you desire** to be perfect, go, sell **what you possess**, and give to the poor, and **you will** have treasure in **the heavens**; and come, follow **Me**.

Comments 19:21. This person, because of the riches of this world, has a hardened heart to follow the Lord completely. This verse is close to all of us because when we ourselves think we have things, our hearts do not completely rely on the Lord. If we cannot let go of the things of this world, the riches become a chain on our legs, and we can't walk far in faith as that chain gets heavier and heavier. We must see with our inner eyes (the eyes of the soul) and heart that the riches of this world mean nothing in the world to come.

²² **Now** the young man **having** heard the **word**, he went away **grieving**; for he was one **having many** possessions.

Comments 19:22. This verse shows what this man is about; the earthly riches captured his heart. Great sorrow takes hold of a person when the person must give up the riches of this world. This young man is an example for all to see; to follow the Lord Jesus and leave the riches is not easy for anyone to do.

²³ And **Jesus** said to **His** disciples, **Truly I say to you**, A rich **person will** enter into the kingdom of the heavens **with difficulty**.

²⁴ And again **I say to you**, It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich **person** to enter into the kingdom of **God**.

Comments 19:23-24. Note that the Lord says that it is difficult for a rich person to enter into the kingdom of heaven, but not impossible. The root of difficulty is shown in the previous verses, and it relates to obedience. Greed and obedience go in parallel; when a person is greedy, it is hard to be obedient and follow the Lord Jesus.

²⁵ **Now having** heard, the disciples were **amazed greatly**, saying, Who then can be saved?

Comments 19:25. Q: Why were the disciples amazed? **A:** It is the same nowadays, when you see a rich person, you believe that they are blessed by God. So, if those that you believe are blessed by God cannot enter the kingdom of God, then who can enter; this is their amazement.

²⁶ And **Jesus** looking on them said to them, With **people** this is impossible; **however**, with **God** all are possible.

²⁷ Then **answering** Peter said to **Him**, **Behold**, we have left all, and followed **Thee**; what then **will be to us**?

Comments 19:27. All of the disciples had left everything and followed the Lord Jesus, and all had this question in them: by following the Lord Jesus now, what do they get in return? This is a common question then and now. Peter's question comes from worry; for the disciples then, it was harder to understand what they would get in return by following the Lord Jesus. They did not know yet about the resurrection, but those coming after know about it from the Bible. The resurrection, which is the reason to follow the Lord Jesus for people nowadays, is different from the disciples' reason. We follow after the Lord Jesus because we expect life after death, but the disciples at that time followed by faith of teaching.

²⁸ And **Jesus** said to them, **Truly I say to you**, that **you** who have followed **Me**, in the regeneration when the **Son of Man** will sit upon the throne of **His** glory, **you also will sit on** twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Comments 19:28. The new world (the regeneration) is the world that has the Lord Jesus sitting upon His glorious throne, ruling His people, and it is beyond what the human mind can understand. The new world refers to a physical world that will appear to all people to see at the same time at the second coming of the Lord (See John 14:1-4; Matthew 25:31; Luke 22:28-30; 2 Peter 3:10-13; Revelation 20:4-6). God the Father will literally open the sky so that all people living on earth at that time will see this new world where the Lord Jesus sits upon His glorious throne. The Father Himself does this action of opening the sky; the Father puts His hand through the sky and separates the sky to open it like a tunnel. The Holy Spirit, which dwells on the earth, will open the eyes of the chosen ones all at the same time to see the Lord Jesus sitting on His glorious throne (See Acts 7:55-56). All eyes will see this new world and the Lord Jesus' throne (See Revelation 19:11-16). "... you also will sit on twelve thrones" refers to the final twelve apostles that will sit on twelve thrones, ruling in the new world with the Lord Jesus.

²⁹ And **everyone** that **has** left houses, or **brothers**, or **sisters**, or **father**, or **mother**, or children, or lands, for **My** name's sake, **will** receive a hundredfold, and **will** inherit eternal life.

Comments 19:29. You could use this verse to justify salvation by works, but this verse actually refers to the heart. The Lord Jesus has already done the work, so there is no more work to be done for salvation; we only need to believe and follow Him. In this verse, the Lord does not mean that you abandon your family but that you abandon the inner attachment of the heart to your family to become free in hearing the purpose of the Lord for you. The person who does this will have a special call or purpose to do for the Lord, but this will not mean abandoning the family. The family is one in the Lord; you can separate for a while for work purposes, but you do not abandon the family; it is never the Lord's will to separate completely (See 1 Timothy 5:8).

³⁰ **However**, many first **will** be last, and last first.

Comments 19:30. The meaning of this verse can be linked to verse 29, and it refers to the cleanness of the heart. This verse refers to people who have a heart that is as clean as a newborn baby and think of no wicked things inside of them; this kind of heart can be counted as following the teaching of the Bible. These people look as to be the first to go to heaven, but there is one problem with their hearts: they have yet to open it to accept the Lord Jesus. On the other hand, you have the hearts of mature persons that do not look clean, yet they have opened their hearts to the Lord, and their heart is cleansed by the blood of the Lord Jesus; these look as last, but in fact, are the first to go in the kingdom of the heavens (See Matthew 21:31). The heart of the mature person that is cleansed by the blood of the Lord Jesus that is the one to be first (See Luke 18:9-14).

Life and Faith Applications. 1) Christians should not divorce; the only cause of divorce allowed by the Lord is when adultery is involved. 2) As in this chapter, if it is for a man who cannot be alone, he should marry. 3) We, as parents, should pray for our children and lay hands on them regularly. 4) There is no work we can do to be saved; the Lord Jesus has already done the work; we only need to believe in Him and follow His teachings. 5) Abandon your inner attachments to riches and family to become free in hearing the purpose of the Lord for you. 6) The family is one in the Lord, and you can separate for a while for work purposes. However, you must not abandon the family completely, for it is never the Lord's will to ask anyone to separate from the family.