

EDITOR'S NOTE: *THE BIBLE IS LIKE NO OTHER BOOK, FOR IT HOLDS THE VERY WORDS OF GOD, WHICH HAVE POWER TO CHANGE THE LIVES OF ANY WHO READ IT AND PUT THEIR FAITH IN OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. PSALM 34:8 SAYS, "OH, TASTE AND SEE THAT THE LORD IS GOOD! BLESSED IS THE MAN WHO TAKES REFUGE IN HIM!" THROUGH THE NEBRASKA LIVING TIMES YOU MAY "TASTE" AND SEE THE GOODNESS OF GOD THROUGH HIS VERY OWN WORDS, EACH MONTH, RIGHT HERE. MAY GOD BLESS YOU WITH HIS WORD!*

The Book of Matthew

(CONTINUED FROM MARCH 2017)

CHAPTER 18

WHO IS THE GREATEST?

1 AT THAT TIME THE DISCIPLES CAME TO JESUS, SAYING, "WHO IS THE GREATEST IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN?" 2 AND CALLING TO HIM A CHILD, HE PUT HIM IN THE MIDST OF THEM 3 AND SAID, "TRULY, I SAY TO YOU, UNLESS YOU TURN AND BECOME LIKE CHILDREN, YOU WILL NEVER ENTER THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. 4 WHOEVER HUMBLING HIMSELF LIKE THIS CHILD IS THE GREATEST IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

5 "WHOEVER RECEIVES ONE SUCH CHILD IN MY NAME RECEIVES ME, 6 BUT WHOEVER CAUSES ONE OF THESE LITTLE ONES WHO BELIEVE IN ME TO SIN, [FN] IT WOULD BE BETTER FOR HIM TO HAVE A GREAT MILLSTONE FASTENED AROUND HIS NECK AND TO BE DROWNED IN THE DEPTH OF THE SEA.

TEMPTATIONS TO SIN

7 "WOE TO THE WORLD FOR TEMPTATIONS TO SIN! FOR IT IS NECESSARY THAT TEMPTATIONS COME, BUT WOE TO THE ONE BY WHOM THE TEMPTATION COMES! 8 AND IF YOUR HAND OR YOUR FOOT CAUSES YOU TO SIN, CUT IT OFF AND THROW IT AWAY. IT IS BETTER FOR YOU TO ENTER LIFE CRIPPLED OR LAME THAN WITH TWO HANDS OR TWO FEET TO BE THROWN INTO THE ETERNAL FIRE. 9 AND IF YOUR EYE CAUSES YOU TO SIN, TEAR IT OUT AND THROW IT AWAY. IT IS BETTER FOR YOU TO ENTER LIFE WITH ONE EYE THAN WITH TWO EYES TO BE THROWN INTO THE HELL OF FIRE.

THE PARABLE OF THE LOST SHEEP

10 "SEE THAT YOU DO NOT DESPISE ONE OF THESE LITTLE ONES. FOR I TELL YOU THAT IN HEAVEN THEIR ANGELS ALWAYS SEE THE FACE OF MY FATHER WHO IS IN HEAVEN. 12 WHAT DO YOU THINK? IF A MAN HAS A HUNDRED SHEEP, AND ONE OF THEM HAS GONE ASTRAY, DOES HE NOT LEAVE THE NINETY-NINE ON THE MOUNTAINS AND GO IN SEARCH OF THE ONE THAT WENT ASTRAY? 13 AND IF HE FINDS IT, TRULY, I SAY TO YOU, HE REJOICES OVER IT MORE THAN OVER THE NINETY-NINE THAT NEVER WENT ASTRAY. 14 SO IT IS NOT THE WILL OF MY FATHER WHO IS IN HEAVEN THAT ONE OF THESE LITTLE ONES SHOULD PERISH.

IF YOUR BROTHER SINS AGAINST YOU

15 "IF YOUR BROTHER SINS

AGAINST YOU, GO AND TELL HIM HIS FAULT, BETWEEN YOU AND HIM ALONE. IF HE LISTENS TO YOU, YOU HAVE GAINED YOUR BROTHER. 16 BUT IF HE DOES NOT LISTEN, TAKE ONE OR TWO OTHERS ALONG WITH YOU, THAT EVERY CHARGE MAY BE ESTABLISHED BY THE EVIDENCE OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES. 17 IF HE REFUSES TO LISTEN TO THEM, TELL IT TO THE CHURCH. AND IF HE REFUSES TO LISTEN EVEN TO THE CHURCH, LET HIM BE TO YOU AS A GENTILE AND A TAX COLLECTOR. 18 TRULY, I SAY TO YOU, WHATEVER YOU BIND ON EARTH SHALL BE BOUND IN HEAVEN, AND WHATEVER YOU LOOSE ON EARTH SHALL BE LOOSED IN HEAVEN. 19 AGAIN I SAY TO YOU, IF TWO OF YOU AGREE ON EARTH ABOUT ANYTHING THEY ASK, IT WILL BE DONE FOR THEM BY MY FATHER IN HEAVEN. 20 FOR WHERE TWO OR THREE ARE GATHERED IN MY NAME, THERE AM I AMONG THEM."

THE PARABLE OF THE UNFORGIVING SERVANT

21 THEN PETER CAME UP AND SAID TO HIM, "LORD, HOW OFTEN WILL MY BROTHER SIN AGAINST ME, AND I FORGIVE HIM? AS MANY AS SEVEN TIMES?" 22 JESUS SAID TO HIM, "I DO NOT SAY TO YOU SEVEN TIMES, BUT SEVENTY-SEVEN TIMES.

23 "THEREFORE THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN MAY BE COMPARED TO A KING WHO WISHED TO SETTLE ACCOUNTS WITH HIS SERVANTS. 24 WHEN HE BEGAN TO SETTLE, ONE WAS BROUGHT TO HIM WHO OWED HIM TEN THOUSAND TALENTS. 25 AND SINCE HE COULD NOT PAY, HIS MASTER ORDERED HIM TO BE SOLD, WITH HIS WIFE AND CHILDREN AND ALL THAT HE HAD, AND PAYMENT TO BE MADE. 26 SO THE SERVANT FELL ON HIS KNEES, IMPLORING HIM, 'HAVE PATIENCE WITH ME, AND I WILL PAY YOU EVERYTHING.' 27 AND OUT OF PITY FOR HIM, THE MASTER OF THAT SERVANT RELEASED HIM AND FORGAVE HIM THE DEBT. 28 BUT WHEN THAT SAME SERVANT WENT OUT, HE FOUND ONE OF HIS FELLOW SERVANTS WHO OWED HIM A HUNDRED DENARII, AND SEIZING HIM, HE BEGAN TO CHOKE HIM, SAYING, 'PAY WHAT YOU OWE.' 29 SO HIS FELLOW SERVANT FELL DOWN AND PLEADED WITH HIM, 'HAVE PATIENCE WITH ME, AND I WILL PAY YOU.' 30 HE REFUSED AND WENT AND PUT HIM IN PRISON UNTIL HE SHOULD PAY THE DEBT. 31 WHEN HIS

FELLOW SERVANTS SAW WHAT HAD TAKEN PLACE, THEY WERE GREATLY DISTRESSED, AND THEY WENT AND REPORTED TO THEIR MASTER ALL THAT HAD TAKEN PLACE. 32 THEN HIS MASTER SUMMONED HIM AND SAID TO HIM, 'YOU WICKED SERVANT! I FORGAVE YOU ALL THAT DEBT BECAUSE YOU PLEADED WITH ME. 33 AND SHOULD NOT YOU HAVE HAD MERCY ON YOUR FELLOW SERVANT, AS I HAD MERCY ON YOU?' 34 AND IN ANGER HIS MASTER DELIVERED HIM TO THE JAILERS, UNTIL HE SHOULD PAY ALL HIS DEBT. 35 SO ALSO MY HEAVENLY FATHER WILL DO TO EVERY ONE OF YOU, IF YOU DO NOT FORGIVE YOUR BROTHER FROM YOUR HEART."

CHAPTER 19

TEACHING ABOUT DIVORCE

1 NOW WHEN JESUS HAD FINISHED THESE SAYINGS, HE WENT AWAY FROM GALILEE AND ENTERED THE REGION OF JUDEA BEYOND THE JORDAN. 2 AND LARGE CROWDS FOLLOWED HIM, AND HE HEALED THEM THERE. 3 AND PHARISEES CAME UP TO HIM AND TESTED HIM BY ASKING, "IS IT LAWFUL TO DIVORCE ONE'S WIFE FOR ANY CAUSE?" 4 HE ANSWERED, "HAVE YOU NOT READ THAT HE WHO CREATED THEM FROM THE BEGINNING MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE, 5 AND SAID, 'THEREFORE A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND HIS MOTHER AND HOLD FAST TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH'? 6 SO THEY ARE NO LONGER TWO BUT ONE FLESH. WHAT THEREFORE GOD HAS JOINED TOGETHER, LET NOT MAN SEPARATE." 7 THEY SAID TO HIM, "WHY THEN DID MOSES COMMAND ONE TO GIVE A CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE AND TO SEND HER AWAY?" 8 HE SAID TO THEM, "BECAUSE OF YOUR HARDNESS OF HEART MOSES ALLOWED YOU TO DIVORCE YOUR WIVES, BUT FROM THE BEGINNING IT WAS NOT SO. 9 AND I SAY TO YOU: WHOEVER DIVORCES HIS WIFE, EXCEPT FOR SEXUAL IMMORALITY, AND MARRIES ANOTHER, COMMITS ADULTERY." 10 THE DISCIPLES SAID TO HIM, "IF SUCH IS THE CASE OF A MAN WITH HIS WIFE, IT IS BETTER NOT TO MARRY." 11 BUT HE SAID TO THEM, "NOT EVERYONE CAN RECEIVE THIS SAYING, BUT ONLY THOSE TO WHOM IT IS GIVEN. 12 FOR THERE ARE EUNUCHS WHO HAVE BEEN SO FROM BIRTH, AND THERE ARE EUNUCHS WHO HAVE BEEN MADE EUNUCHS BY MEN, AND THERE ARE EUNUCHS WHO HAVE MADE



The Living Word

THEMSELVES EUNUCHS FOR THE SAKE OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. LET THE ONE WHO IS ABLE TO RECEIVE THIS RECEIVE IT."

LET THE CHILDREN COME TO ME

13 THEN CHILDREN WERE BROUGHT TO HIM THAT HE MIGHT LAY HIS HANDS ON THEM AND PRAY. THE DISCIPLES REBUKED THE PEOPLE, 14 BUT JESUS SAID, "LET THE LITTLE CHILDREN COME TO ME AND DO NOT HINDER THEM, FOR TO SUCH BELONGS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN." 15 AND HE LAID HIS HANDS ON THEM AND WENT AWAY.

THE RICH YOUNG MAN

16 AND BEHOLD, A MAN CAME UP TO HIM, SAYING, "TEACHER, WHAT GOOD DEED MUST I DO TO HAVE ETERNAL LIFE?" 17 AND HE SAID TO HIM, "WHY DO YOU ASK ME ABOUT WHAT IS GOOD? THERE IS ONLY ONE WHO IS GOOD. IF YOU WOULD ENTER LIFE, KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS." 18 HE SAID TO HIM, "WHICH ONES?" AND JESUS SAID, "YOU SHALL NOT MURDER, YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY, YOU SHALL NOT STEAL, YOU SHALL NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS, 19 HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER, AND, YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF." 20 THE YOUNG MAN SAID TO HIM, "ALL THESE I HAVE KEPT. WHAT DO I STILL LACK?" 21 JESUS SAID TO HIM, "IF YOU WOULD BE PERFECT, GO, SELL WHAT YOU POSSESS AND GIVE TO THE POOR, AND YOU WILL HAVE TREASURE

IN HEAVEN; AND COME, FOLLOW ME." 22 WHEN THE YOUNG MAN HEARD THIS HE WENT AWAY SORROWFUL, FOR HE HAD GREAT POSSESSIONS. 23 AND JESUS SAID TO HIS DISCIPLES, "TRULY, I SAY TO YOU, ONLY WITH DIFFICULTY WILL A RICH PERSON ENTER THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. 24 AGAIN I TELL YOU, IT IS EASIER FOR A CAMEL TO GO THROUGH THE EYE OF A NEEDLE THAN FOR A RICH PERSON TO ENTER THE KINGDOM OF GOD." 25 WHEN THE DISCIPLES HEARD THIS, THEY WERE GREATLY ASTONISHED, SAYING, "WHO THEN CAN BE SAVED?" 26 BUT JESUS LOOKED AT THEM AND SAID, "WITH MAN THIS IS IMPOSSIBLE, BUT WITH GOD ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE." 27 THEN PETER SAID IN REPLY, "SEE, WE HAVE LEFT EVERYTHING AND FOLLOWED YOU. WHAT THEN WILL WE HAVE?" 28 JESUS SAID TO THEM, "TRULY, I SAY TO YOU, IN THE NEW WORLD, WHEN THE SON OF MAN WILL SIT ON HIS GLORIOUS THRONE, YOU WHO HAVE FOLLOWED ME WILL ALSO SIT ON TWELVE THRONES, JUDGING THE TWELVE TRIBES OF ISRAEL. 29 AND EVERYONE WHO 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. 30 BUT MANY WHO ARE FIRST WILL BE LAST, AND THE LAST FIRST.

SOURCE: THE HOLY BIBLE, ENGLISH STANDARD VERSION COPYRIGHT © 2001, 2007, 2011 BY CROSSWAY BIBLES, A PUBLISHING MINISTRY OF GOOD NEWS PUBLISHERS. USED BY PERMISSION. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Would you like your own Bible?

Contact the The United States Bible Society, Inc., 5544 Forest Drive, Loganville Ga. 30052. Visit their website at <http://www.usbiblesociety.com/> or call them at (855)524-2537