

# The Rich Young Man

**Key Verse:** *“Again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.”*  
—*Matthew 19:24*

**Selected Scripture:**  
*Matthew 19:16-30*

When the young man heard this, “he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.”—Matt. 19:21,22; Mark 10:21,22

Then Jesus said to his disciples: “A rich man shall hardly [Greek: with difficulty] enter into the kingdom of heaven.” He then added the words found in our Key Verse: “It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.” The disciples “were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved?” Jesus replied: “With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.”—Matt. 19:23-26

Previously Jesus had admonished: “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth,” but instead “lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven,” because “where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” (Matt.

**A YOUNG MAN WITH GREAT** possessions had come to Jesus, kneeled before him, and asked: “What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?” (Mark 10:17; Matt. 19:20; Luke 18:18) After a brief discussion between them, Jesus said, “If thou wilt be perfect [Greek: complete], go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven,” and “take up the cross, and follow me.”

6:19-21) Also, in the parable of the sower Jesus had explained that the seed which fell among thorns, which then sprang up and choked the seed, represents those who hear the Word of God, “but the cares of the present age and the delusions of riches quite stifle the Message, and it becomes unfruitful.”—Matt. 13:22, *Weymouth New Testament*

The Apostle Paul admonishes that “people who are determined to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many unwise and pernicious ways which sink mankind in destruction and ruin. For from love of money all sorts of evils arise,” causing some “to be led astray from the faith and be pierced through with countless sorrows.”—I Tim. 6:9,10, *WNT*

A rich person, however, fully surrendering their heart to the Lord and earnestly seeking after God, can with great humility and submission, respond to the heavenly calling and develop a character which will be pleasing to the Heavenly Father. The Scriptures record several individuals who did just that. Zacchaeus, although chief among the publicans, “sought to see Jesus,” and is described as being “rich.” (Luke 19:2-9) Joseph of Arimathea, who is described as “a rich man,” begged Pilate for the dead body of Jesus and laid it “in his own new tomb.” (Matt. 27:57-60) Nicodemus joined Joseph, and brought a very large quantity of spices to anoint the body of Jesus; therefore, he too must have been rich.—John 19:39-42

However, the greatest example of someone who was rich and fully submitted to our Heavenly Father is Jesus. “Though he was rich,” the first and chiefest of all God’s creation, yet for the sake of the poor groaning creation, “he became poor” and “came down from heaven.” He willingly became a perfect man, and gave his life “a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.”—II Cor. 8:9; John 3:13; 6:38,51; I Tim. 2:5-6