

Matthew Series

Lesson #102

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Dean Bible Ministries

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MATTHEW

JESUS: KING OF THE JEWS

Forgiveness – God's Grace Initiative

Matthew 18:5–10

Matt. 18:1, “At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, “Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?”

Matt. 18:2, “Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them,

Matt. 18:3, “and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.

Matt. 18:4, “ ‘Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.’ ”

Aspects to Humility

- 1. Humility is submission to authority**
- 2. Humility is not asserting your own rights, or seeking personal status or position for its own sake.**

Phil. 2:6, “who though he existed in the form of God did not regard equality with God as something to be asserted,”

Matt. 18:5, “Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me.

Matt. 18:6, “Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

Matt. 18:7, “Woe to the world because of offenses! For offenses must come, but woe to that man by whom the offense comes!”

Matt. 18:8, “If your hand or foot causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life lame or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the everlasting fire.

Matt. 18:9, “And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire.”

***Gehenna*, “The Valley of Hinnom”**

גֵּיהִנּוֹם (*ge' hinnom*), γέεννα (*geenna*)

11× in 10 verses

- 1. Where Judah sinned by committing child sacrifice and burning their sons and daughters in the fires of Molech. Thus *Gehenna* symbolized a place of idolatry, disobedience to God, and spiritual failure.
2 Chron. 28:3; Jer. 7:31**



***Gehenna*, “The Valley of Hinnom”**

גֵּיהִנּוֹם (ge' hinnom), γέεννα (geenna)

11× in 10 verses

2. For their sins of idolatry Judah was to be punished in *Gehenna* in 586 BC.

This was a historical punishment of divine discipline on the nation for their spiritual failure.

In Jeremiah 19:6 Jeremiah predicted that as punishment for the sins, the valley would be used as a mass burial site for those slaughtered in the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. Jer. 7:32

Gehenna, The Valley of Hinnom

גֵּיאַ הַחִנּוֹם (*ge' hinnom*), γέεννα (*geenna*)

OT: 11× in 10 verses

- 3. Conclusion: The Valley of Hinnom was not used in the Old Testament as a reference to eternal condemnation in the Lake of Fire, but as a place of divine discipline on the nation of Israel for their spiritual failure. *Gehenna* thus became a symbol for spiritual failure, condemnation and shame, and divine discipline in time, not in eternity.**

Gehenna, The Valley of Hinnom

גֵּיאַ הַיָּזְמִים (*ge' hinnom*), γέεννα (*geenna*)

NT: 12× in 12 verses

- 1. Most English translations translate this as hell, or hellfire, as in the Lake of Fire.**
- 2. Most Bible dictionary or encyclopedia articles understand the idiom to be a reference to the eternal fires of the Lake of Fire.**
- 3. It appears from passages such as Matt. 18:8 that *gehenna* is used in synonymous parallelism with “eternal fire” which indicates the Lake of Fire.**

Forever doesn't always mean forever.

Jer. 17:4, “And you, even yourself, Shall let go of your heritage which I gave you; And I will cause you to serve your enemies in the land which you do not know; For you have kindled a fire in My anger which shall burn forever.”

Deut. 15:17, “then you shall take an awl and thrust it through his ear to the door, and he shall be your servant forever. Also to your female servant you shall do likewise.”

What about Mark 9:47?

Mark 9:47, “And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire—

Mark 9:48, “where *‘Their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.’* ”

Isa. 66:24, “And they shall go forth and look upon the corpses of the men who have transgressed against Me. For their worm does not die, and their fire is not quenched. They shall be an abhorrence to all flesh.”

Mark 9:50, “Salt is good, but if the salt loses its flavor, how will you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace with one another.”

Mark 9:50, “Salt is good, but if the salt loses its flavor [becomes unsalty], how will you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace with one another.”

ἄναλος *analos*
Adjective nom
neut sing lose
saltiness

ἅλας *halas*
nom neut sing
salt

ἄρτύω
artuō fut
act indic 2
plur to
season

Matt. 5:13, “You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.” NKJV

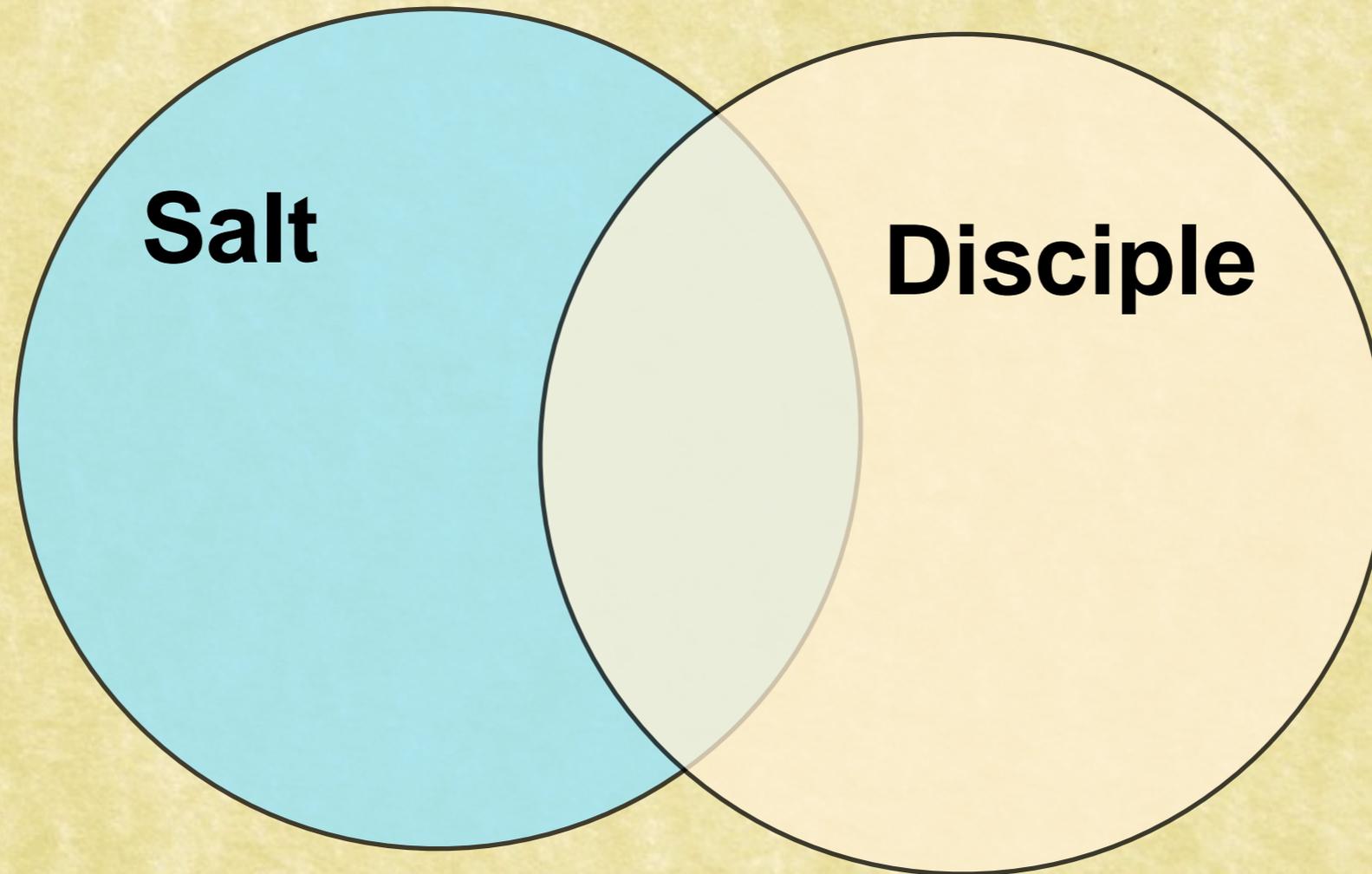
Matt. 5:13, “You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.” NKJV

Matt. 5:13, “You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men.” NASB95

Matt. 5:13, “Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have become insipid, wherewith shall it be salted? It is no longer fit for anything but to be cast out and to be trodden under foot by men.” Darby

Matt. 5:13, “You are the salt of the earth. But if salt loses its flavor, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled on by people.” NET

Metaphor = an implied comparison



Interpretations of Salt

- 1. To create thirst**
- 2. To season food (kitchen metaphor)**
- 3. To preserve food (kitchen metaphor)**
- 4. To fertilize (agricultural metaphor)**
- 5. Rabbis: wisdom**
- 6. Purification**
- 7. On a lamp's wick to increase brightness**

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**γῆ *gē*
gen fem sing
earth, land**

Option 1:

Earth [γῆ *gē*] = inhabitants of the earth, synonym with “world” (basic to the seasoning, thirst, and preservative interpretations)

Problem: Used 39× in Matt; 92× in the gospels with synonymous usage with “world.”

Option 2:

Earth [γῆ *gē*] = land, soil, ground, earth (as a planet in contrast to the heavens) “salt of the earth” = salt for the land, soil, i.e., fertilizer.

Salt *of the earth* is understood by most positions to be salt *for the earth*.

The issue: Is Jesus using a *kitchen* metaphor or an *agricultural* metaphor?

Luke 14:34, “Salt is good; but if the salt has lost its flavor, how shall it be seasoned?”

Luke 14:35, “It is neither fit for the land [γῆ *gē*] nor for the dunghill, but men throw it out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”

**Matt. 5:13, “You are the salt of the earth;
but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it
be seasoned? It is then good for nothing
but to be thrown out and trampled
underfoot by men.” NKJV**

**μωραίνω (*mōrainō*), aor pass
subj make foolish, pass. be
foolish; become useless.**

**1 Cor. 1:20; pass., *to
become foolish*: Rom. 1:22;
of salt that has lost its
flavor, *become tasteless*:
Matt. 5:13, Luke 14:34.**

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**ἁλίζω *halizō*
fut pass indic 3
sing
to salt, be salty**

Problem: Salt, NaCl, is incredibly stable, and doesn't decay.

Solution: The salt used in agriculture was a mix of many other elements. The salt could leach away from water over time, and what was left was useless.

By using an agricultural metaphor, Jesus emphasizes that a disciple should be productive, rather than non-productive.

This fits the context of rewards (vs. 12) and good works (vs. 16).

John 13:34, “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

John 13:35, “By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

Heb. 13:1, “Let brotherly love continue.

Heb. 13:2, “Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels.”

Heb. 12:14, “Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord:

Heb. 12:15, “looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled;”

Matt. 18:5, “Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me.

Matt. 18:6, “Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin [σκανδαλίζω, *skandalizō*], it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

Matt. 18:7, “Woe to the world because of offenses [*skandalon*]! For offenses [*skandalon*] must come, but woe to that man by whom the offense [*skandalon*] comes!”

Matt. 18:8, “If your hand or foot causes you to sin [σκανδαλίζω, *skandalizō*], cut it off and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life lame or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the everlasting fire.”

Matt. 18:9, “And if your eye causes you to sin [σκανδαλίζω, *skandalizō*], pluck it out and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire.”

Matt. 18:10, “See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven continually see the face of My Father who is in heaven.”

Matt. 18:10, “See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven continually see the face of My Father who is in heaven.”

Heb. 1:14, “Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?”