

# Matthew 19:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.

## Analysis

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Jesus' statement 'a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven' challenges assumptions about wealth indicating divine favor. 'Hardly' means with difficulty—not impossible but extremely challenging. Wealth creates false security, self-sufficiency, and distraction from God. The disciples' astonishment (v. 25) reveals they assumed prosperity meant blessing. Jesus teaches that wealth often hinders rather than helps spiritual life.

## Historical Context

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First-century Judaism often viewed wealth as God's blessing for righteousness (Deuteronomy 28). Jesus' teaching shocked this assumption. Rich people struggle to recognize need for God because resources create illusion of self-sufficiency. The kingdom requires poverty of spirit (5:3)—hard when earthly riches provide false security.

## Related Passages

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**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

**Psalm 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

## Study Questions

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1. How does wealth (or pursuit of it) create spiritual obstacles in your life?
2. What false securities do you trust instead of complete dependence on God?

## Interlinear Text

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Ὥ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ Ἄμὴν λέγω  
G3588 Then Jesus said G3588 disciples G846 Verily I say  
G1161 G2424 G2036 G3101 G281 G3004

ὑμῖν ὅτι δυσκόλως πλούσιος εἰσελεύσεται εἰς τὴν  
unto you That shall hardly a rich man enter into G3588  
G5213 G3754 G1423 G4145 G1525 G1519 G3588

βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν  
the kingdom of heaven  
G932 G3588 G3772

## Additional Cross-References

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**Matthew 13:22** (Parallel theme): He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.

**Mark 10:23** (Kingdom): And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

**Luke 18:24** (Kingdom): And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

**Proverbs 11:28** (Parallel theme): He that trusteth in his riches shall fall: but the righteous shall flourish as a branch.

**1 Corinthians 1:26** (Parallel theme): For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:

**John 3:3** (Kingdom): Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

**Acts 14:22** (Kingdom): Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

**Matthew 5:20** (Kingdom): For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

**Matthew 18:3** (Kingdom): And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

**John 3:5** (Kingdom): Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

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