



## EXEGETICAL ANALYSIS OF MATTHEW 20:1–16 IN THE LIGHT OF WORKERS' WELFARE AND ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT IN THE AFRICAN CONTEXT

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### Cite this article:

Adesanya, B. A. A., Afolaranmi, A. O. (2024), Exegetical Analysis of Matthew 20:1–16 in the Light of Workers' Welfare and Economic Management in the African Context. African Journal of Culture, History, Religion and Traditions 7(3), 77-89. DOI: 10.52589/AJCHRT-LCRBTEAG

### Manuscript History

Received: 18 Sep 2024

Accepted: 27 Nov 2024

Published: 9 Dec 2024

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**ABSTRACT:** *This paper is an examination of how understanding and application of the text in Matthew 20:1-16 will facilitate Workers' Welfare and Economic Management in the African Context. This paper attempts to establish that the welfare of workers' need to be implemented as a priority for development of Economic Management in the African Context. It could be deduced from the ongoing dialogue about increase in minimum wage, nonpayment of salaries and allowances because some employers periodically struggle and wrestle with the task of paying their workers' as at when due for every cadre. The paper expounds the purpose of regular enlightenment and education for the growth of Economic Management in the African Context. The paper points out that an interview, agreement and orientation for workers should be conducted and be emphasized before the assumption to an office. The paper establishes further that money to be paid to every cadre of staff ought to be settled during the interview. The paper presents that job creation should be the priority of any tier of government and private organizations with a policy to guide economic management. Conversely, the paper elucidates in brief the exegetical work of Matthew 20:1-16 in the light of Workers' Welfare and Economic Management in the African Context. The paper also presents some procedures and processes of enlisting potential workers, which can help any sector in their recruitment strategies and processes. The work also examines the implications of the exegetical work of Matthew 20:1–16 to workers' welfare in the African Context. Therefore, the rationale of this paper is to examine the text in the light of Workers' Welfare and Economic Management in the African Context.*

**KEYWORDS:** Householder, Vineyard, Denarius (Latin) A. Penny, Recruitment, Management in Antiquity and Contemporary Period, Theology of Workers' Welfare from Biblical Reflections, and Exegesis of Matthew 20:1–1.



## INTRODUCTION

Writing on a subject as this is not out of place as wages and allowances are not sufficient vis-à-vis the economy and are also not being paid as at when due, which always causes regular workers' strike and affects economic management in the African Context, despite robust manpower and material resources. This affects employers-employees relationship, workers' welfare and economic management in this continent, which needs to be a priority and pursued to the utmost. Kennedy (1960) shared that work is a necessity for all mankind. It is a widely common saying that "the hand that does not work ought not to eat." It means it is a general phenomenon for every mankind to work or till the ground, to earn a salary to be able to care for their immediate family. More so, "an idle hand is a devil workshop." The notion of economic management has undergone several conceptual metamorphoses in the last decades. Enlightenment and education are critical components of economic management in the African context, although education is widely acknowledged as strategic for economic management and development in Africa. Enlightenment is not possible if humans are uneducated or remain underdeveloped and not regularly retrained. No matter how good a system is, it is useless without the appropriate human resources. The primary objective of this paper is to provide some context for addressing the emergent crisis of nonchalant attitude to the workers' welfare and economic management, as well as nonpayment of salaries in the African context.

### Definition of Operational Terms

**Householder:** Lykins (1997) expressed that this is the master of the house. Who owns the land that is designated for a particular business enterprise, be it for kingdom purpose or personal gain for his immediate environment. It could be for farming or household consumption materials.

**Vineyard:** Cox (1962) wrote that this is a common Old Testament metaphor for Israel (cf. Isaiah 5:7; Psalms 80:8–11). Then, a vineyard appeared as the symbol of the nation on coins of the Maccabeus period.

**Denarius (Latin) A. Penny:** A good day's wage, if individuals consider the purchasing power of money of those days, when an ox could be bought for 100 and a lamb for 5 "denarius" (Cox, 1962).

### Development of Human Resource in the African Context

A sub-theme of this nature is timely. An organization, which is the economic enterprise with a team of workers ought to be cared for and catered for, in order to carry out her mandate effectively for the workers' welfare for improving the economic management. Of course, human beings are complex but need to be tailored toward a major goal of the organization that employed them. Some of the objectives of an organization ought to have been known to the employees during the recruitment process so as to prepare their mind towards what the job applicants are proposing to engage with

**Recruitment:** This section surveys factors affecting the recruiting process for an organization. Getting the right people into positions in the organization is not easy. There is a need for an effective intake process, in which the skills and knowledge of individuals are matched with the demands of the jobs. Ideally, recruitment takes place within the context of an integrated personnel management system. The magnitude of the recruiting effort and the ways to be



employed will flow directly from the human resources planning process and the requirements of the specific jobs to be filled. The section shall examine some recruiting techniques, internal and external, as well as the benefits-costs associated with the various techniques. Nmadu (2013), a professor of Human Resource and Strategic Management, observed that recruitment practices have an impact on both the short- and long-run capability of a firm. On the short run, the selection of high caliber senior managers can have a rapid impact on corporate capability. However, Nmadu (2013) further succinctly put it, this is only possible if the workforce itself possesses the capabilities to rise to new challenges, and also, creating a complete and committed workforce is a long-run proposition. Thus, good recruitment and selection is an imperative for this to happen. Nmadu (2013) asserted that in an integrated personal management system, recruiting process relates to other personal functions in the following ways:

- It attracts the necessary workforce to further organizational objectives such as survival, growth, production or profit and economic management.
- Job analysis specification provides important inputs to the recruiting function by providing requirements deemed necessary and job description, this being done through a newspaper advertisement and other means of information in the contemporary African context.
- An organization must offer salaries and wages that are competitive and attractive with those of other organizations in the labour markets.
- Some organizations provide attractive benefit packages to help attract job applicants. The benefit packages are often included in the recruitment letter (message) which also often comprise opportunities for career planning development and economic growth and management benefit.
- Lastly, the recruitment function leads directly to the selection function, which is choosing the best-qualified applicants. Recruitment and selection are both part of the employment process. For the above points to be met in an organization, recruitment begins only after three conditions have been met.

Thus, the role of personnel recruiting is to build a supply of new employees that the organization can draw on if the need arises.

Some organizations have a philosophy of improving and developing their human resources and providing opportunities for growth and economic management, and thus favour internal recruiting, so as to create a new welfare package for workers at another level or cadre so as to foster economic management in the African context.

### **Cost and Time Constraints**

These pose obvious limitations on recruiting efforts and processes. An organization with comparatively little money may use less effective strategies. Such an organization may use employee referrals, job service and other cheap options. Cost constraints can cause problems for organizations, if less costly methods prove unsuccessful, because recruiting methods are claimed to be costly. Then time constraints limit individual choice of a recruiting method. Tight labour market takes a longer time recruiting vis-à-vis labour market (Nmadu, 2013).



## **Management in Antiquity and Contemporary Period**

The task of transforming the context of Africa for a better socio-political and economic management requires more than the hard factors of growth and development but cares for the workers' welfare in the immediate environment of the African context. Adesanya (2016) opined that also needed are the soft factors of management, responsibility, accountability and leadership skills. Thus, workers' welfare needs to be implemented as a priority for development of Economic Management in the African context from these biblical reflections expatiated.

### **Management Contribution in Antiquity**

Several ideas and records associated with management are traced from antiquity. Many among these are the records of the early Greeks, the ancient Romans and that of the Egyptians. Lepawsky (1948) noted that right from the interpretation of early Egyptian papyri, extending as far back as 1300 B.C., the importance of organization and administration for Economic Management was recognised. Although "the records of early Greek do not give much insight into the principles of management employed, the very existence of the Athenian commonwealth, with its councils and board of generals, indicates an appreciation of the managerial function, according to Koontz et al. (1980). Thus, workers' welfare should be a priority for an organization and the economic management of an organization should be tailored towards development in the African context with a good report. Thus, the managerial style and management is an antiquity function to suit their era for Economic Management Enterprise.

### **Management in Contemporary Time**

In a broad sense, the efforts of people should be managed and coordinated so that individual objectives become translated into social and economic management attainments. Development of management knowledge, by orientation, training and re-training, by increasing efficiency in the use of humans capacity as well as material resources, would unquestionably have a revolutionary impact on the economic management and growth in the African context. When management principles and techniques can be developed, proven, and used, marginal efficiency will inevitably improve.

### **Theology of Workers' Welfare from Biblical Reflections**

#### ***Theology of Job Description and Distribution of Workload***

This ensures that effort and attention have to be focused on unique portions or specific departments of the work as economic management production can be increased if employees are specialized. From the beginning in the Garden of Eden, "The Lord God instructed the man, Adam, to work in it and take care of it" Gen. 2:15. Job description for every worker will allow individuals to use their skills and be efficient for the economic management of that organization.



### ***Theology of Encouragement and Promotion***

One of the ways to take care and show welfare for people is to have a good harmonious relationship with the human resource management and to acknowledge what individuals are doing for the economic management of the organization. This is by giving a “promotion” and by saying thank you (well done) for the good job done. Organizations could accompany this with a letter, necessary bonus and allowances as they deem fit for the employee. Gifts and open applause can be given to the staff because of what the individuals are doing or have done for the organization; such employees can be published in their publication at the end of the year as the staff of the year. Management should not choose to commend some individuals and leave others. It is good to commend everybody collectively or individually wherever individuals have done something good.

### ***Theology of Remuneration***

Justified and fair remuneration has to be given to employees. This ensures employee satisfaction and welfare. Well-being through remuneration includes both the financial and non-financial compensations. Jesus says that, “For the worker deserves his wages” (Luke 10:7). Even Paul the Apostle corroborated Jesus; he says that, “For the scripture says, ‘Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain’ (Deut. 25:4), and ‘The worker deserves his wages’” (1 Tim. 5: 18).

### **Economic Management in the African Context**

No matter how good a group of people might be or how active employees might be, there is always a time when the human aspect will reflect its true nature (Adesanya, 2015). Human resources management should bear it in mind that “both good and bad are working together, but such personal management should not allow the problems to overshadow individuals (Adesanya, 2015). All these theological and biblical reflections consolidate the workers’ welfare and growth of Economic Management of an organization in the African Context.

### **Exegesis Analysis of Matthew 20:1-16**

#### ***Background to the Book of Matthew***

Historically, one of the books canonized as a document that emerged within Jesus’ ministry while on earth is the Gospel of Jesus according to Matthew, which is under study. Robertson (1930) asserted that the passing years do not make it any plainer who actually wrote our Greek Matthew.

Contrary to the opinion of Robertson, Abogunrin (2008) asserted that the fact that Matthew wrote the Gospel that bears his name was not questioned in our earlier sources, until comparatively recent time. He further noted that the only exception was “Festus, the heretical African Manichean bishop at about AD 400” (Abogunrin, 2008). According to Abogunrin (2008), in the early church period, Matthew’s Gospel was more widely and extensively used than any of the other Gospels. It was the most widely quoted Gospel in the writings of the early church fathers and was generally believed to be written by Matthew, one of the twelve. Then, Matthew is “always first in all the early church’s list of the canon, according to (Abogunrin, 2008). However, a close examination of the Gospel reveals that right from the genealogical





list, “the evangelist shows that this aim is towards world mission and that his scope is wider than the Jewish world,” as observed by Abogunrin (2008).

Abogunrin (2008) further wrote that if the book is genuine, as Robertson believes, the date becomes a matter of interest. Here again, there is nothing absolutely decisive save that it is later than the Gospel according to Mark which it apparently uses. Then if Mark is given an early date, from AD 50–60, then Matthew’s book may be from AD 70–80. Robertson (1930) asserted in his own view that AD 60 is as good as any. Abogunrin (2008) further asserted that we may not easily be able to dismiss out rightly the claim by some scholars that Papias’ statement refers to the Gospel of Matthew and also Clement’s report that the Gospels with genealogies were written first. The possibility is there that some of the Synoptic Gospels were written before AD 70. The writer of this paper also submits to the opinion of early church fathers and contemporary erudite scholars like Abogunrin that Matthew wrote the Gospel around AD 60–70 before the Jerusalem temple was destroyed around AD 70. The Gospel also expands on the parables of our Lord Jesus Christ to depict or explain his teachings in their own context at the time. One of the parables shall be considered in this paper in the right of workers’ welfare and economic management in the African context.

Abogunrin (2008) corroborated Robertson that the earliest information that is available on the origin of Matthew came from Papias, bishop of Hierapolis, in about AD 130. He says, “then Matthew recorded the oracles (Logia) in Hebrew tongue, and each interpreted them to the best of his ability.” The second earliest testimony is by Irenaeus, bishop of Lyons which says: “Matthew published his Gospel among the Hebrews in their own tongue, while Peter and Paul were preaching the Gospel in Rome and founding the church there” (Abogunrin, 2008).

### **The Meaning, Purpose and Hermeneutical Points of Parables**

So many of the teachings of Jesus are said to be in parables. Virkler (1981) asserted that the word parable is most likely derived from the Greek word *paraballo*, which means “place alongside or to throw” (Virkler, 1981). It could be said that a parable is thus from the viewpoint of its etymology, that is, “something placed alongside something else for the purpose of comparison” (Virkler, 1981). Then this can also be put in a more technical definition as “an extended simile or metaphor, which compares a truth with religious perception with a common experience or circumstance in life” (Nihinlola, 2007). Nihinlola (2007) observed that similes and metaphors are brief figures of speech that communicate by comparing two things. The use of parables by Jesus shows the rabbinical background. Almost every religious and ethical concept in the Talmud “is illustrated by a parable” (Summer, 1969, 1988). In the opinion of Akinwale (1994), “the parables of Jesus have two apparently (not real) contradictory purposes. The first purpose is to reveal, emphasize or clarify a spiritual truth to believers. Then the second person is to hide the truth from those whose hearts are hardened. This means that whereas those with faith receive an insight from parables, they have no meaning to those with hardened hearts. In addition to these basic purposes, parables could be used for evangelistic, discipleship and ethical reasons.

One other fundamental issue to be considered that is very pertinent for the purpose of hermeneutics is the nature of parables. Nihinlola (2007) wrote that parables can be interpreted generally either allegorically or literally (historically and grammatically). To conclude this section, two inferences can be drawn from Jesus’ parables and the hermeneutics “He gave them, there is a central focal point; the details also have a significance as they relate to the focal



teaching” (Virkler, 1981). Thus, the method of approach of this paper is historical-grammatical. The parable of the workers in the vineyard will be exegeted. Akpa (2009) observed a parable in another way as this in the Gospel: a parable is a narrative “placed alongside” a certain spiritual truth for the purpose of “compensation.” The parables of our Lord Jesus were usually seeds on common experiences of everyday life familiar to Him, and on specific incidents of being recently accused or what He could see at that time.

### ***Hermeneutical Explorations of the Parable of Workers in the Vineyard***

How varied are the pictures Jesus gives of Himself in those parables! He pictures Himself in one parable as a king ruling over His subjects and also as a judge sitting upon his throne of judgment; in another, as a host entertaining His guests; in another as a good Samaritan helping His needy fellow traveler. Here, He is an employer of labour setting out to hire workers in the marketplace of this world. There are those who will confess that before they knew Him as king or judge or host or Saviour, individuals were at least conscious that He was seeking to employ them. Buttrick (1928) noted that this parable is not an economic tract; Jesus did not attempt to lay the rails on which the trains of organization should run. He could never have told this story if He had not been moved with pity as He saw men idle in the marketplace. The parable suggests the standards of divine judgment. It is a judgment according to motive (Buttrick, 1928). Jesus told them (disciples) another parable: “For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to his workers for his vineyard. . .” (Matthew 20:1–16).

### **Analysis of Matthew 20:1-16**

The story is very Jewish. From time immemorial, the vineyard had been an image of Israel. A moving passage in Isaiah 5 likens God to a vineyard owner who was distressed after all the trouble He had gone through because of Israel His vineyard. It is not hard to see Israel as this vineyard in His parable (Green, 2000). In an insightful article published by Akpa (2009), in a biblical study scholars asserted that the interpretation of the parable of the landowner and his workers in the vineyard in Matthew 20:1–6 continues to intrigue biblical scholars. The point of intrigue ranges from the variety of interpretations given to the parable. Akpa stated the apparent unfairness exhibited by the landowner, as perceived by the workers who were hired early in the morning of the day, and especially the contemporary relevance of the concept of the *αγορά* in the parable. Of course, the ambiguity over the relevance of the concept of the *agora* in the parable becomes pertinent in view of the disparity between the setting in the first century AD and the context in life in the current digital cyberspace, and hi-tech dispensation, which threatens to reduce the “*αγορά*” concept to oblivion (Akpa, 2009). This paper seeks to expound the exegesis and interpretation of the parable of the workers in the vineyard for the economic development in the African Context.

### **Verse 1**

The landowner called the workers to work for him in his vineyard 20:1–4.

The Greek word *ομοια* from *ομοιας* is dative of persons or things compared, meaning of the same nature, like, similar. This often occurs in parables (Bauer, 2000). Also, *γαρ* from *γαρ* is a conjunction used to express cause, clarification, or inference. It never comes first in its clause; it is usually second. In the context of this parable, it is a reason or explanation, meaning “for”. The word *γαρ* ‘for’ in the parable of the house illustrates the *aphorism* in Matthew 19:30. The Greek term *οικοδεσποτη* literally meaning “master of a house” is translated graciously as



“householder” in (KJV, RSV) or “landowner” in (NEB, NIV, NRSV). The man actually owns the whole estate and pays out of his own pocket (20:11), so the word “landowner” is suitable for the text. At Matthew 20:8, He is called “owner” (Greek κυριος) of the vineyard” in most of the translations mentioned; only KJV has lord of the vineyard. The term οικοδεσποτη is from οικοδεσποτης meaning ‘the master of a house,’ ‘a householder’—a man that is a ανθρωπω οικοδεσποτει householder just like ανθρωπω βασιλει in Matthew 18:23” (Robertson, 1930).

The Gospel of Matthew is known for its prime emphasis on the βασιλεια “kingdom” motif (Akpa, 2009). Furthermore, the word βασιλεια from βασιλεια is a term relating to royal administration, the act of ruling-kingship, royal power, royal rule or reign (Bauer, 2000). It also means “dominion”, “sovereignty or kingdom” (Lykins, 1997). Then the word πρωι from πρωι is an adverb of time meaning early in the morning; for this text it is very “early in the morning,” which indicates time. It shows that time is essential before God. The householder went out early in the morning for the purpose of hiring. The landowner went out early in the morning αμα πρωι. In the opinion of Robertson (1930), it is a classic idiom. Then αμα as an “improper” preposition is common in the papyri. Robertson (1930) asserted that αμα πρωι meaning “early in the morning” is a classic idiom. Hama as an “improper” preposition is common in the papyri while πρωι is just an adverb in the locative.

The Greek word μισθωσασθαι is from μισθω, first aorist infinite middle. It has the meaning “to hire” (Lykins, 1997). Robertson (1930) stated that μισθωσασθαι is the middle voice aorist tense, meaning ‘to hire for oneself.’

## Verse 2

The Greek word συμφωνησας from συμφωνεω is nominative masculine singular first aorist active participle, meaning ‘fit together,’ ‘match in sound,’ ‘agree with,’ ‘to have come to an agreement about something,’ ‘be of one mind,’ or ‘he settled with,’ the workers for a denarius (Bauer, 2000). The term εργατων is from εργατηει meaning one who is engaged in work, worker, labourer. Also, the Greek word δηναριου is from δηναριον which is a Roman coin, nearly equal to the δηναριου την ημεραν. It is a Roman coin worth normally about 18 cents; the basement of the coinage under Nero reduced it in value to about eight cents; it was a workman’s average daily wage.<sup>80</sup> Blomberg (1992) asserted that the denarius was a standard minimum day’s wage, so the landowner promising it is entirely fair.

The Greek phrase, εκ δηναριου την ημεραν means “for a penny a day” (Blomberg, 1992). Then in the view of Lykins (1997) asserted that it is “on a denarius a day.” Robertson (1930) asserted that the εκ with the ablative represents the agreement συμφωνησας with the workmen εργατων. “The day,” the Greek has it, as an accusative of the extent of time.

## Verse 3

The Greek term 3 εστωτας is from ισθ accusative masculine plural perfect active participle, meaning ‘to stand,’ ‘to be at a place’ (Robertson, 1930). Bauer (2000) opined that εν is dative of place with the preposition indicated. Then the term αγορα is from αγορα meaning ‘a marketplace for children to play,’ ‘also a place for people seeking work’ and ‘for idlers’ (Arndt, 1973). Lykins (1997) expounded that it is an assembly or place of assembly, or a public place or forum. In the opinion of Thayer (1953), it is the most frequented part of a city or village. Jeffers noted that in the New Testament, αγορα generally refers to the “market place” and “village square” and this is the center of civic life (Jeffer, 1999). Then Robertson (1930) wrote





that “marketplace was the place where men and masters met for bargaining. In the New Testament, ‘marketplace’ or ‘public place’ (αγορά) was used to depict the socio-economic needs of people. Akpa asserted that the use of αγορά in the New Testament totalling eleven (11) times is equally distributed in the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew 11:16, 23:7). The Greek term αγορά was used only once in the parable of the workers in the vineyard” (Matt. 20:3) in the light of Jesus’ system of reckoning.

The Greek term αργους is from αργους meaning “to being without anything to do,” “unemployed,” “idle” (Bauer 2000). It is inactive, “idle” (Lykins, 1997). Thayer (1953) opined that it is an act of being free from labour, at leisure. The landowner asks why they are “idle” (RSV NRSV). The Greek term is αργους (literally “without work” or “unemployed”). Hultgren noted that there is no negative judgment placed upon “idlers” as though they are lazy. Their response that no one has hired them bears what Jeremias says and that theirs’ response “conceals the characteristic oriental indifference.”

Akpa (2009) noted that, interestingly, most English translations of the Bible render αργους as “idle.” This concept of idleness may have given rise to the unhired workers being described as idlers or loafers. He further noted that, however, the context of the parable indicates that αργους in the parable literally means “without work” (Matthew 20:3, 6), “not hire” (Matthew 20:7), and hence, unemployed. Being unemployed does not indicate unwillingness to work or a desire to be idle and loaf around. It could be deduced that as soon as the landowner hired the workers who were αργου “without work,” the hired workers went from the αγορά to the vineyard to work willingly, without delay, thus confirming their readiness, eagerness to work. These idlers even say unto him, “because no man has hired us.” Wenham (1964) noted that the implication may possibly be that they are the most promising workers; the land owner took in these workers out of compassion rather than because they could do much for him in the remaining hours of the day.

#### Verse 4

The Greek term αμπελωνα is from αμπελων meaning ‘vineyard’ (Bauer, 2000). The workers that were hired and that went to work in the vineyard were promised a denarius (a daily wage for a daily paid worker during Jesus’ time) and each of the workers (Matt. 20:2), or even whatever is right was promised by the landowner (Matt. 20:4–5). The daily paid workers in the parable were called to work to earn a living, a wage that could be used for their livelihood; hence, individuals live one day at a time. Also, the daily paid workers depended solely on the landowner of the vineyard for substance. The hours of the day were mentioned in the light of Jesus’ system of reckoning, in the parable that the landowner went to the marketplace and hired workers five (5) times: early in the morning at daylight (6 am) (Matthew 20:1), at the third hour (9 am) (Matthew 20:3), at the 6th hour (12 noon), at the 9th hour (3 pm), and at the eleventh hour (5 pm). This depicts that the time of the various hours in the parable have been identified respectively. It shows that time is crucial in any workplace, both private and government employment.

In Matthew 20:8, the Greek term επιτροπω is translated as “steward” (KJV, RSV, and NEB), “manager” (NRSV), or “former” (NIV). The landowner addresses one of the workers with the term “friend” (Matthew 20:13), a vocative in Greek εταιρε. The term is used in the same form in this Gospel also in Matthew 22:12 (where the king addresses the man without a wedding garment) and Matthew 26:50 (where Jesus addresses Judas in Gethsemane). In the opinion of



Herzog (1994), the term is therefore not a positive one. It is used in cases where the person being addressed is insolent or deceitful and is being confronted and exposed. The response of the landowner is what has been called an instance of “reframing.” The workers complain about unfairness, but the landowner does not give them a direct response. He does not respond on their terms (Capps, 1990).

Verse 15 in NIV reads *πονηρος εστιν οτι εγω αγαθος ειμι*, meaning “Or are you envious because I am generous?” According to Metzger (1971), that literal translation of the Greek word is: “Or is your eye evil because I am good? The “evil eye” is the eye of envy (cf. Sir 14:9–10); the eye of the greedy person is not satisfied with share . . . An evil eye *οφθαλμος πονηρος* is envious over bread, and it is lacking on his table. The term appears also at Sirach 31:13; Matt. 6:23; God is no man’s debtor (Wallace, 1963). Thus, God is providential to every mankind.

## **Implications of the Parable for Workers’ Welfare and Economic Management in the African Context**

### **Theological Implications**

#### ***Implication about the Call of Man and his Reward***

The caller of a man determines the messages and responsibilities that are being carried out by the called. In this story/parable, it could be deduced that only God can call a man for kingdom responsibilities. The called by God must obey the instructions of the master that is the caller so as to be able to receive a reward, “Well done, servant,” and put in charge of bigger work of the ministry in the kingdom. Only the man called by God will receive God’s applause and reward due for such individuals, because He knows His own workers to be celebrated.

#### ***Implication about God’s Impartiality***

The landowner is God, which is never impartial about His reward and judgment. He rewards everybody accordingly. God is never unjust in His judgment to every mankind. He knows more intently the heart of a man. God will judge the world someday. An important eschatological implication of the parable is the hope of ultimate victory for those who diligently work for God in the vineyard responsibilities. For those who come in time and wait till the end of day before getting their daily wages from the Landowner (God), this God’s “yes” is “yes” and His “No” is “No”. He does not change in His judgment to human beings. “Friend, I am not being unfair to you . . .” (Matthew 20:13).

### **Socio-Economic Implications**

Societal demand varies according to dispensation and trend of development in the economy of the nations due to increase in awareness, cyberspace and high technology in the global world, and African is not excluded.

#### ***Implication for Creation of Jobs***

There are unemployed workers in the continent of Africa, searching daily for a place to work, as to keep life sustenance. But is a pity that many companies or organizations fold up or are sold into privatization from governments of nations in Africa. Thus, it is the duty and responsibility of three (3) tiers of government to provide a workplace for every citizen as to be able to sustain their lives and other dependents and individuals.



### ***Implication for Wages Being Paid***

Thus, it is an eyesore for some employers who fail in their agreement and responsibility in paying their immediate workers. The payment of wages will create a leverage of a good welfare package for workers, to that of other counterparts in the other continents of the world; wages of the workers should be paramount in the agenda of an organization so as to be able to sustain economic management in the African context. Payment of half salary and owing of many months' salaries and allowances should be stopped, so as to provide workers' welfare and economic management in this continent.

### ***Implication for Security of Job***

While security of a job is often seen as a basic right, it is important to recognize that some argue for a more flexible labor market, suggesting that increased job mobility can lead to better opportunities for workers. This perspective highlights the complexity of job security in modern economies. Security of Job is a critical aspect of employment that significantly impacts workers' well-being and economic stability. It encompasses the assurance of continued employment and income, which is particularly valued among lower-income workers. This is a crucial matter before any employee.

## **CONCLUSION**

Thus, the parable of the workers in the vineyard in Matthew 20:1–16, being narrative and parenthetical in nature, expounds and amplifies the condition for receiving everlasting life from God as a gift for obeying and working for and with Christ Jesus. God is available and willing to fulfill His promise to only those who depend on Him for daily sustenance in their walk with Him day after day for eternal life. Employers should give room for their employees to contribute their skills for economic management and development in the African context. Therefore, the context and plight of daily paid workers in African, for sustenance, allows the exegete from Africa an ample privilege to expound the basis for obtaining everlasting life and available leverage to work through government and private organizations to improve the economic management in the African context. To work for and with God provides a gift and reward for every obedient worker in God's vineyard. This should spur an ultimate emulation for every employer to pay their workers as at when due, as to provide sustenance for their immediate dependents. Wages to be paid to workers should meet up the current trend of challenges of livelihood regarding workers' welfare and economic management in the African context.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Priority and pursuit should be given to the employers' and employees' relationship, in relation to workers' welfare towards the development of economic management in Africa, which needs to be the utmost.
2. Training and retraining should be adhered to in principle as a means of developing a manpower to be at par with the current trends in a global world.
3. Increment of wages and allowances of the workers should be done as at when due, and which must be paid at the right time.
4. Promotional exercises should be encouraged among workers and given the opportunity for productivity and sincerity at the duty post, and it must be done regularly for every deserving worker.

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