

April 29

Jesus is Our Ransom, but James and John Want Rewards

I will ransom them from the power of Sheol, I will redeem them from death!
Death, where are your plagues? Sheol, where is your destruction? – Hosea 13:14

[Matthew 20:17-28, Perea] As Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside, and they were amazed; and those who followed were afraid. And on the way he said to them, “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all the things that are written through the prophets concerning the Son of Man will be completed and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death, and will hand him over to the Gentiles to mock, to scourge, and to crucify; he will be treated shamefully, and spit on and the third day he will be raised up.” They understood none of these things. This saying was hidden from them, and they didn’t understand the things that were said.

Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee, James and John, came to him with her sons, kneeling and asking a certain thing of him (“Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we will ask.”) He said to her, “What do you want me to do for you?”

She said to him, “Command that these, my two sons, may sit, one on your right hand, and one on your left hand, in your Kingdom glory.”

But Jesus answered, “You don’t know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?”

The Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve

They said to him, “We are able.” He said to them, “You will indeed drink my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with, but to sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give; but it is for whom it has been prepared by my Father.”

When the ten heard it, they were indignant with the two brothers, James and John.

But Jesus summoned them, and said, “You know that the rulers of the nations lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. It shall not be so among you, but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. Whoever desires to be first among you shall be bondservant of all, even as the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” [Mark 10:32-45*, Luke 18:31-34] *Mark has the brothers addressing Jesus, but Matthew has their mother speaking. Mark names the source of these words; Matthew names the speaker. Thus, both narratives are correct.

1. How does today’s lesson compare to the previous three? How must your mind change?
2. What are your ambitions? What should they be? How does Jesus’ example help you?
3. Jesus, thank you for embracing crucifixion and shame, ransoming me from death; I will...