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**THE SON OF MAN CAME TO SERVE AND TO GIVE HIS LIFE A RANSOM FOR MANY – Biblical  
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***Mark 10, 35-45***

***And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came up to him and said to him, “Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.” And he said to them, “What do you want me to do for you?” And they said to him, “Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory.”***

***Jesus said to them, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?” And they said to him, “We are able.” And Jesus said to them, “The cup that I drink you will drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized, but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared.”***

***And when the ten heard it, they began to be indignant at James and John. And Jesus called them to him and said to them, “You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”***

God’s enemy according to the gospel is not so much sin, for which the Lord can give liberation, but power. While God is love that is put at the service of humanity, while power dominates. That is what emerges in these verses from Mark’s Gospel 10, 35-45. There is the third and definite announcement of the death and passion of Jesus in Jerusalem.

But the disciples are blind and deaf. Animated by ambition and vanity do not understand the words of Jesus. The evangelist writes, “.. (they) came up to him..” coming to him means that they were distant, they accompany him but are not able to follow him.

*“James and John, the sons of Zebedee,..... said to him” “Teacher,....”* Teacher meaning one from whom we learn, but they do not listen to him because they do not follow him. *“Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.”* After the second announcement of the passion, Jesus had said: *“If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all.” (Mark 9,35)*

Here, these disciples want to be the first without being the last. *“What do you want me to do for you?”* And they said to him, *“Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left...”*

They think that Jesus is going to Jerusalem to conquest power and they want the seats of honour, the most important seats, one on the right and one on the left to govern with him. They have not understood anything of Jesus' third and last announcement. Here is Jesus' reply: , *“You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink...”* The cup is the image of fate, the death that Jesus will confront. *“..or to be baptized,,”* Here the verb 'to baptize' used many times, does not have the meaning of the sacrament that it will take later, but it means 'to be immersed', with this meaning it is easier to understand. *“...you are immersed in the immersion that I am immersed.”*

So, Jesus is overwhelmed by events, just as the total emersion completely involves one. And with much presumption, *“..they said to him, “We are able.”* In fact, the evangelist will write, that all the disciples at the time of the test, at the moment of the full immersion of the baptism, they will flee

And Jesus says too them: *“The cup that I drink you will drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized,..”*, so, they too will face persecution and death,.. but *“... to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared.”*

Who are those for whom it is prepared? Those that at the moment of the test will be able to follow him. And these disciples will not be amongst them. Those that are able to carry the cross and follow Jesus. The request of the two disciples provokes the indignation of the other ten. Mark writes: *“And when the ten heard it, they began to be indignant at James and John”* It is not that they are scandalized; it is because all of them have the same aspiration to be the first, the most important. So, they are angry with these two disciples, their companions, that have proceeded them.

The fact that the evangelist remembers the number ten refers to the great schism that brought the end of Israel. When. on the death of Solomon, his son Rehoboam, in front of the chiefs of the tribes that asked him to be better than his father, replied with insolence and arrogance and at that moment ten tribes abandoned the kingdom of Israel , therefore it was the division and ruin of the population.

Therefore, the evangelist refers to the fact that ambition and vanity cause the division in the Christian community and can bring it to ruin. . *“And Jesus called them to him ..”* called them because they were distant, *“, and said to them, “You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles..”* they were considered but were not necessarily rulers, *“..lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them.”* Jesus had a bad image of the leaders, they are tyrants. And three times Jesus will say, *“ But it shall not be so among you.”* No imitation of powerful groups will be possible inside the society the Christian community. On the inside, power does not exist, where one commands and obeys, but familiarity where all live for the good and happiness of others.

So, Jesus for three times underlines, *“But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant,..”* the servant is he who freely and voluntarily, for love, puts himself at the service of others. And Jesus does not exclude the possibility of being first. He says, *“..whoever*

*would be first among you must be slave of all.*” meaning the most humble of the society. Why is this? Because Jesus is the son of God, God himself, and God is love that puts itself at the service of mankind.

Jesus confirms this saying: *“For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”* with Jesus God does not ask to be served but to be at the service of mankind. Who wants to be in communion with this God must have as a distinct free service practiced for love