

5.1.A(32).The **Son of Man** Suffers to
Serve. Mark 8:27-32.

Read Mark 8:27-32.

²⁹ And he asked them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered him, “You **are the Christ.**” ³⁰ And he strictly charged them to tell no one about him. ³¹ And he began to teach them **that the Son of Man** must **suffer** many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again. ³² And he said this plainly. Mark 8:29-32

Background:

Kingdom Values:

As a mature disciple who has grown into the *sacrificial service* of the Kingdom of God, you are now learning to thrive in the unseen reality of the coming rule of Mashiach on earth.

Every Kingdom is shaped by its founder, so the values and standards of “greatness” and “reward” in the Kingdom are opposite and directly opposing what the world values. Instead, they reflect the very heart and life of the Lord God and his Mashiach, who supply life to their people. This life of God is characterized by:

- **Sacrificial love:** Scripture teaches us that “God is love” (1 John 4:8), and this love is a love that is not Self-serving but a Sacrificial love that *gives even if it costs the giver everything*. This sacrificial love makes sense in the Family-nature of the Kingdom, where

one *sacrifices* for the good of his *friends, his own brothers and sisters*.

- **Subjection:** To be free from family responsibility and authority is to be outside the family, for there is no possibility of worshipping anyone or thing other than the Creator God, who is the Head and Creator forever of all things. So, we never follow any other *Lord*—except our One Lord, Jesus Mashiach as the Lord over all, including our own lives. We are always *under authority* but also represent this authority.
- **Serving:** Power and greatness are given with increasing responsibility to care and serve those who are younger. Because the people of God's kingdom are all his children, they are connected in a family relationship, with members a *part* of one another and all abiding in God. Due to this *unity of the Kingdom of God*, being selfish and self-

interested undermines this unity and selfishly carves out what benefits one but not all.

So, the priority and great value of the Kingdom, reflecting the very heart of the Kingdom's Kins-man Redeemer and Lord, is to serve all the family members. To those willing and able to care for increasingly broader areas of God's people, the Lord gives them more of his authority.

- **Self-Less:** in the Kingdom, there are two names that matter: the name of our Father, the Head and Creator of our *family* and of all things in heaven and earth, and our Lord Jesus Mashiach, the Father's Heir and the Head of his *family and kingdom*, who rules in the Father's name forever. Building up any other name, even under the auspices of advancing the name of God, detracts from the Lord's Kingdom purpose to establish a

compete kingdom, that is, a different system of authority which steal glory and efficacy from the Lord's Kingdom purpose and throne. In the same way that the *tradition of men*, as established by the Pharisaical line of "great" names of Judaism ended up "voiding" the Word of God, so these well-meaning but power-and riches- hungry kingdoms often marginalize, persecute, or silence those called to speak for the Kingdom of God.

Case Study: the great theological kingdoms.

Among Christian circles, there are no greater names than the great founders of the popular theologies—Luther, Calvin, and their successors and popularizers.

What these men did was to approach the Word of God as they would any other philosophical work, and to continue that *tradition* by extracting its selected teachings

and building these into *theological systems of thinking*, systems of philosophy or ethics.

The problem of such theologies is that the students of such systematic thinking had a very different relationship to this *body of knowledge* than the children of the Kingdom have to the Word of God.

Because the Word of God is the living command, the very “life” shared between people and their God—it is part of the abiding interconnection of the vine to his branches.

But, philosophers gather a *following* of unknown devotees, not a family. Their ideas and the advantage or leverage that it gives followers within the group is what counts, so they form schools of thought, learning lineages, to pass on successors the tools for success. But, when these great *schools of thought* carve out their space in what should have been *Kingdom territory*, the devotion purportedly directed to God and his

Mashiach, like the case of the Pharisees, is little more than an “honoring with their lips,” their hearts and loyalty already invested in their earthly memberships. And, to “serve” and propagate the *teachings*, the true power of the Kingdom’s Lord calling *disciples to* “deny themselves, take up your cross, and follow me” (Luke 9:23) is circumvented. Instead, approved forms of devotion—especially in the form of reciting correct doctrines and buying the approved resources, was sufficient.

Take how well-meaning “theologies” actually void and reconceive entire sections of Scripture and adulterate the Kingdom:

- **Man-centered Calvinism.** All theologies on a central idea, and Calvin’s question was simply, “How can man be saved?” It was a man-centered system of thought that focused on salvation. However, this differs from the Kingdom’s message, which

centers on God's Heir, Mashiach, and the House, Throne, and Kingdom he is building for God. As a result of this man-center, its devotees became self-centered in their spiritual lives—"I am the central reason why Christ died, so I must be at the center of God's work!"

- **Anthro/Ethno-centric Lutheranism:**

Luther's theology was humanistic—he focused on the individuality of man as a free and autonomous agent. His misguided "Solas" propagated a faith different from the *Spirit-driven* reality of the Kingdom:

* *Sola fidelis*: Luther defined "faith" as a kind of hopeful, mental assent. To believe was to affirm as true a proposition. But, lest such assent was tainted by action, faith must be a purely mental act in its initial form. Such mental solipsism and passivity was unrecognizable to the Biblical definition of faith, which was *relational and*

surrendered. Abraham's faith was the *human-side* of the relationship between Lord and servant, in its working out, taking shape as he sacrificed Isaac on the altar. But, not only was Luther's theology set on defining its worshippers as "philosophic free agents," it also resented the Jewish distinction of being the "chosen people." So, since they would not bow to the Kingdom of God, he advocated for their genocide. And, because the Scriptures did not fit his *humanistic* form of faith, he recommended books of the Bible be cut out as well.

- **Kingdom-less Reform:** In the *later church* age of evangelicalism, the Reform movement popularized many of Calvin's points, developing Bible study methods which would engage disciples in endless introspection and speculation that the simple authority of Jesus was dissipated as

it was repackaged in less offensive forms. So, his simple command to “deny yourself, take up your cross and follow me” (Luke 9:23) was not simply obeyed, but the context, the socioeconomic conditions re-created, the original audience understanding re-imagined, so that original meaning could be “exposited.” One popular strand of this reform theology, started by R.C. Sproul, produced libraries of materials which packaged content for disciples who were *fastidious* about “the Gospel” and how the simple formula of salvation was a mantra to be repeated and meditated on, all without demanding any further devotion to “deny” one’s self, carry is “cross’ of personal loss, nor to “follow” him in ways that crossed one’s own “self-interests.” And, this movement was activity with no destination, for Sproul himself voided the entirety of Revelation,

teaching that it had all been fulfilled in the lives of its original audience—never conceiving that there existed a Lord who could “walk” among all his churches, from the first to the last. Rather, ruined by his own methodology, he locked the meaning and prophetic impacts to the first century audience, even having little fear of God’s final warning that those who detract from his book will suffer eternal loss.

During my pastoral work at my current church, I sought to encourage a revival of personal devotion in our people. So, I wrote a series of booklets to help people understand among other things the “family unity” of God himself. However, such wording was *unrecognizable* and invalid to these followers of Sproul, so I was severely chastened and warned not to make public my teachings on the imminent return of Jesus Mashiach in bodily form.

Case Study: the Hope of Judah:

At the heart of the Jewish Identity is a “family identity,” for you still honor the *avot*—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and you still venerate as the Head of your people the House of David. This identity allows each *household*, with its strong roots in its identity, to both rest on this foundation while still adapting as a stable unit. Right now, this Jewish identity is shaped by two forces: *tradition* and *practices* which direct its growth.

However, in the next age, when Israel returns to Jesus as its Mashiach—first the Jewish Remnant, then all Israel—these *guardrails* will be replaced by the Kingdom of God and the Spirit of Mashiach, working through each member and creating a true sanctuary of *shabbat* and *shalom*! How glorious that will be! As the Lord Jesus

himself stands at the Head of each family, and the family *mission* focuses entirely on glorifying Yahweh Elohim as Abba! To multiply disciples, to multiply households, and to *kumi ori before the whole world!* This is how the Kingdom will be built!

House of Israel and David, know that the Gentiles never had a chance to do this. Without a family foundation, the *default* force shaping each household was the God-denying *world*—and, when households were shaped by “Christianity,” what manifested was not the Kingdom but these *fleshly kingdoms* we see above, for Gentiles do not share a common culture. There are no *avot* except for each nations or each denomination’s founding fathers. The result are households formed as arbitrary and confusing mix of influences, forces, most of which undermine true Kingdom life.

But, when Jews realize that Jewish Life really stems from a restored *hai nefesh* by the *Ruach* of God, by the Redeeming work of Jesus Mashiach, then the power of the Family will transform the world!

So, to mature into Stage 5- *sacrificial service* as a disciple means that you learn the family secrets to better help your brothers and sisters: the true nature of the Kingdom and how to live in it; how to instruct others to live together in it; and, to help open the way for new generations of kingdom servants of Mashiach!

Kingdom Maturity:

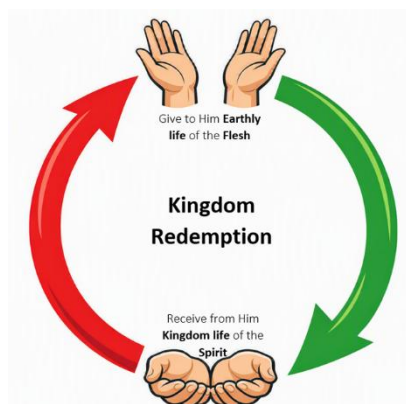
What does full maturity look like in your life as a disciple of Jesus Mashiach? Now that we have reached the Fifth Stage of discipleship, passing from a developing dependence on the Lord Jesus and intimate walk with him, to learning to be

responsible for others as a shepherd in the Kingdom family. Now, as you pass from these formative stages into full maturity in the Kingdom, you no longer just represent but now identify with Jesus Mashiach in a shared Kingdom-life maturity!

And, the key quality you share is a willingness to *surrender your life* to serve those inside and outside the family of God! In fact, in the unexpected Kingdom-thinking, the more you are willing to

give up to serve, the more responsibility and influence you are given in the Kingdom Family! For, the greatest among us is our Lord Mashiach, who lays down his life to serve and save us as his family!

So, the key dynamic and source of growth in the Kingdom is this very simple cycle of “Kingdom



Redemption.” When you give up, surrender to the Lord Jesus the things of this life, entrusting to him your family, your career, your resources. Giving these aspects of your life gains for you the Kingdom! The more you live sacrificially, as he lived, giving up to serve his people, the more powerfully you experience the spiritual power and reality of the Kingdom!

So, grow up and live as a mature adult disciple in his heavenly family and kingdom. Having given yourself as a “living sacrifice” to the Lord (Romans 12:1-2), you walk by the Spirit’s power and abundance in your life.

Fulfilling the Mission of the Mashiach:

As a mature disciple, identifying in the Lord’s sacrificial service of his people, you share with him the distinction of *building* his Kingdom. So, let’s recall the mission of Mashiach as he comes to redeem people into his Kingdom Family:



Redemption

Only by being willing to lay down your life, entrusting all of it to the safe-keeping of his Lordship, will you have the spiritual *power* of the Kingdom to join him in the task of *redeeming people* from the dark kingdom into the kingdom of light.

Building a House:

And, as the family grows with the rebirth of many spiritual children, it is the mature disciples whom the Lord God appoints in the family as the parental shepherds of home groups (1 Thessalonians 2:7-12)—not ruling abusively but

tenderly, as *servant leaders* to care for the many needs of the family on behalf of the Lord himself.

Establishing a House:

So, as you step into maturity as a disciple of the Lord Jesus Mashiach, you will become accustomed to the *power and impact* of the Kingdom, because you know full well and are subjected to the Lord's good authority. Not to extort but to serve, to heal, and to equip that many may join in his service. Knowing the Lord's power, you bring his peaceful rule both to those gathered disciples in his family and to those still living in the lawless chaos of the world!

Rule a Kingdom:

Thus, the more you loosen your desperate grip on this world and its passing life, the more you experience his Kingdom and even position yourself to *see and apprehend* the unseen Kingdom in its coming and hidden glory! It is this realization that

both the tangible suffering and loss you experience in this life and the hidden glory and abundant power that are yours in the Kingdom are both sides of the same *reality, though one is seen and the other unseen*.

Regarding this coming glory of the Kingdom of Heaven, those who sacrifice greatly to serve greatly will be honored with glory when the Kingdom comes. Those who *put themselves last* to serve the many will find themselves established in the Kingdom as it *resurrects* into its glorious rule! So, let us learn from our Lord Jesus Mashiach, who teaches us to sacrifice to serve!

Focus:

1. **Unknown/misunderstood in World:** no honor or recognition. 8:27-28
2. **Under Authority:** Honored by God as Anointed Redeemer. 8:29-30

3. **Unlikely Suffering/ Resurrection:** The Son of Man to suffer/ only to rise. 8:31-32

Consider:



As a Disciples Serving in the Kingdom of God,
remember that you have been reborn and should

know Jesus Mashiach and his Kingdom in all its fullness. You will always understand the Kingdom more clearly and personally than those in the world, for the crowds on the *outside* are still enslaved in their fleshly lives and kept from fully understanding the Kingdom of Heaven.

Jesus and his disciples have been preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, but it has been steadily unfolding as he has been freeing people from their bondages to reveal the *nearness* of the Kingdom. But, those on the outside still don't understand fully who Jesus is.

But, as Jesus reveals the full mission of the Mashiach—not only to do the *signs* of the Kingdom but to bring the Kingdom's full redemption by dying then rising to ransom people, even the disciples *resist* this Kingdom message at first.

As a fully mature disciple of Jesus Mashiach, it is incumbent that you know Jesus in His fullness

as the promised Mashiach. This requires you to know the *mystery hidden* but which also unlocks the fullness and glory of the Kingdom of God. This mystery must only be received and applied to your life by faith, because it makes no sense to the *fleshly mind*, the natural drive in us to survive by being selfish.

For, at the heart of the Kingdom is the need for *sacrificial service*. At the heart of the Kingdom is to not protect but give of yourself sacrificially that others might be served and even saved. This Kingdom mystery is expressed when Jesus reveal, “The Son of Man must **suffer** many things and be **rejected** by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and **be killed**, and after three days **rise** again” (Mark 8:31).

The Kingdom way does not make sense to the world and the fleshly mind because the flesh is passing away in a world that is in “darkness,” in a constant state of *decay* and *death*. So, when the

fleshly mind hears that this process ends in “death,” it is the ultimate loss, for nothing on this earth recovers from death. However, the process of suffering, rejection, and loss in the Kingdom ends with *resurrection—he “rises after three days!”*

In a passing world, the flesh only knows to be Self-interested—to seek the survival of self by being Self-protective, avoiding suffering; Self-righteous among others to avoid rejection; and self-enriching to acquire resources to live.

But, the people were not ready to hear that the “Mashiach” was able to deliver from this death and death. For, to redeem them, “the Son of Man” would have to suffer and die for all people, then “rise” after three days to prove himself the Lord of life.

Thus, the people were not ready to hear of the Kingdom’s victory and Mashiach’s ability to defeat death for them. They had not yet witnessed “the

son of Man” killed on the cross to bear sins, nor heard the testimony that “the Son of Man” was *raised from the grave* after three days.

Case Study: Fleshly kingdoms of Self-interest.

The rebuke Jesus levels at Peter shock us for what seems to be well-meaning and *reasonable concern* which Peter shows Jesus. Our reaction reveals two things: it shows how *natural* self-interest comes to all of us, because the need to protect ourselves is at the very heart of our fleshly lives on earth. But, it also shows how directly opposed to the Lord’s Kingdom purposes is the flesh and its desires—desires suited to survive in a dead-ending earth, but desires which short-circuit the necessary sacrifices needed to establish the Kingdom’s *divine life* of the Spirit on earth.

And, it is into an exaggeration to view these Self-interested acts of the flesh being used by Satan himself to dismantle the Kingdom. Again,

if Peter had his way, the Kingdom would have been swallowed by the darkness, for humanity would be ever enslaved to their infinite sin-debt. Simply because Peter cared for the life of his friend, Jesus.

In this way, the Kingdom was derailed and its flame of witness eventually snuffed out by the world as the Churches slid into a terminal stage of spiritual “lukewarmness” (Revelation 3:16). How did this happen? Were no *stage 5-sacrificial servants* being raised up?

Actually, Jesus was clearly the first of the Sacrificial Servants to advance the Kingdom. But, notice the opposition which fleshly people can muster to resist the Kingdom. If even friendly Peter, lapsing into *fleshly self-interest* could have thwarted the Kingdom’s redemption, what will happen when *fleshly*, self-interested disciples accumulate the power to usurp the Kingdom’s leadership from the Headship of the Mashiach?

This is what happened through the successive ages of the Church. Not only were the *sacrificial servants* of the Lord outnumbered through the church's history, but they were also directly opposed by the religious disciples who were driven by Self-interest and personal ambition. Sadly, self-interest drove these *fleshly disciples* to gather religious power to build their own *kingdoms* rather than Mashiach's Kingdom of peace. These *religious empires* eventually defined the church and prevented the Lord's Kingdom from ever taking root.

So, in this new age of the Kingdom, be sure to raise up *Sacrificial Servants* of Jesus Mashiach and rebuke any signs of self-interest or fleshly ambition. Rebuke rather reward such behavior, as the church did fell into the trap of worldliness.

1. **Unknown/misunderstood in World:** no honor or recognition. 8:27-28

During this ministry season through the villages of Caesarea Philippi, the name of Jesus was being proclaimed throughout the region. However, he was yet to be revealed to Israel as the Mashiach.

So, it is not surprising that the people had many different views of him, all stemming from either their direct experiences, such as those imagining he was “John the Baptist,” or from their knowledge of history and the Scriptures, as those thinking he was “Elijah” or another “one of the prophets” (28).

There is another pattern emerging as well. In the world, Jesus and his heavenly glory are hidden from the people of the world. He is *often ignored, dishonored, or even attacked* because they are blind to the fullness of his glory. As we have seen, the people of this world are constrained by their fleshly understanding, which shapes how people see Jesus by:

- **Limited by Experience:** Again, those who saw him as John the Baptist/ Townspeople.
- **Rejecting** due to **Self-Interest:** Pharisees looking for a sign.
- **Defined by Tradition/ Social Group:** Elijah or one of the prophets.

2. **Understood by Faith:** Honored by God as Anointed Redeemer. 8:29-30

Notice that when Peter shares his understanding Jesus is indeed the “Mashiach,” (29), Jesus “charged” him to tell “no one” about him.

Peter understands that Jesus is the Mashiach entirely by “faith.” How do we know this? Jesus is able to “charge” Peter to refrain from sharing his knowledge that Jesus is the Mashiach. That is, that Peter received John the Baptist’s testimony, that he is the coming “Lord” (Mark 1:3), that he is the Son of God by the Father’s testimony (Mark 1:11) because he was “under authority.” He

humbled himself and accepted what God and his prophets had to say about the Kingdom.

So, the full understanding of the Kingdom, which includes the full identity of Jesus Mashiach as “the Son of God” and “the Son of Man or David,” was the possession of the disciples because they were already *under* the authority of the Father as members of his family.

Those outside the Kingdom would not have the capacity, at this point, to conceive of Jesus as both the “Son of Man” who was anything more than a mere human being, and “the Son of God” who came with the power of God.

Presumably, Jesus waited until he proved that he was truly the Mashiach, as promised to David, “the Seed of David” (2 Samuel 7:12) and the “Son” of God (2 Samuel 7:14). How would Jesus prove his messianic identity? By completing his messianic mission, to be “disciplined for iniquity” (7:14) that he might “atone for iniquity” and

“bring in everlasting righteousness” (Daniel 9:24) that he might truly be “Yahweh Tzedekenu,” the Lord our Righteousness (Jeremiah 23:6), for only when “the Son of Man” suffers, is rejected, and is killed and “rises again” after three days will He be seen as the suffering Son of Man and the victorious Son of God, Lord of all in heaven and earth! (Matthew 28:18-20). Only then will the disciples of Jesus Mashiach be sent out to proclaim the fullness of their Lord as the Mashiach, the One who died and rose after three days!

3. Unlikely Suffering/ Resurrection: The Son of Man to suffer/ only to rise. 8:31-32

Thus, the very nature of “Mashiach” and his mission to be disciplined for iniquity (2 Samuel 7:14) to redeem a house (2 Samuel 7:11, 13), establish a Throne, and Rule a Kingdom (7:16), is itself a mystery which only unfolded as Jesus revealed his name to Israel through his disciples,

now at Caesarea Philippi, soon in the very heart of Jerusalem.

But, intrinsically, there is a great contradiction that resists the fleshly mind. For, in this world and the logic of the flesh, one's higher status and aggregated power also means *privilege*, that the greater one is, the less exposed to suffering he becomes. Greatness and suffering are incompatibilities in the eyes of the flesh, but having the Lord God's own character to "suffer" to rescue the helpless ones in the family is true greatness in the Kingdom.

As a true test of the maturity of a disciple, this suffering leads to the harvest of faith which the Lord has wanted all along. And, to be willing to suffer—first, bodily harm, then, the loss of social support and relationships, until all is taken away in death. To face this suffering is to prove in the Lord's eyes that one resembles the Lord himself as *good fruit* ready to bear a crop of faith.

Question:

Further Discovery: