

0A. Stage 5. Adulthood. Sacrificial Servant Disciples.

5.1.A(32). Mashiach Suffers as Servant. Mark 8.27-31

5.2.B(32a). Servants Share Suffering of Kingdom. Mark 8.32-38

5.3.B(36). Kingdom Unity. Focus on Lord not Man. 9.38-41.

5.4. B. (38). Children Enter Kingdom. 10.13-31.

5.5.BP (34). Prayer for Cleansing. Warfare. 9.14-20.

5.6. C.(35). Kingdom Service. Last Serves. 9.30-37

5.7. C(40). Life-Saving Service. Ransom. 10.32-45

5.8. CR(33). Kingdom Hidden Glory Revealed. 9.1-13.

Master Chart.

Stage 5: Sacrificial Shepherd Disciples.

As you begin to *care* for needy people of the world or in the household of God, you will encounter resistance and difficulty, soon realizing that to meet the needs of your people, you will be required to give of yourself far more than you had planned. Your flesh will start to cry out selfishly, “This is too much! What about my interests?”

Thus, the critical step into *full adulthood*, to be perfected as a shepherd who is able to do the “great” and wide-ranging tasks, will likely exceed your human limits, and *your flesh* will seek to stop your service to *protect itself*. So, as a *sacrificial shepherd* disciple, you will be required not just to *consider* the interests of others but actually *deny and surrender up* your own Self-interests.

Becoming like Jesus:

Note the importance of this step. As Stage 4, adolescent disciples, you learned to *shepherd* through instruction, as Jesus teaches you what is on his heart as a *shepherd* gathering the “sheep without a shepherd” (Mark 6:34). Now, as you mature into a *sacrificial shepherd* (Stage 5), Jesus calls you to *identify* and to *share* in the quality which makes him fruitful as the *good shepherd* of the Sheep—the good shepherd “lays down his life for the sheep” (John 10:11).

Until you choose to *lay down your life* and to *take up your cross* to serve in the Kingdom, you will still fall short of the *maturity and fruitfulness* Jesus wants for you.

In fact, in the previous age of the church, there were likely very few who truly matured into *sacrificial shepherds* identifying with the Lord in his sacrifice and carrying their crosses with him. For, if one matures personally, interpersonally, and socially as a disciple, bearing some measure of *fruit*—of repentance, of giftings, and even of reproduction. But, if that person chooses at some point *not* to “deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow me” (Mark 8:34), at that point, his *discipleship* is stalled. Shifting from the *spiritual anointing* of following Jesus as Lord and Mashiach, he chooses to *walk in the flesh*, walking not as a disciple of Jesus but of man, of *self-ambition*, of religion, of human denominations, coalitions, or traditions.

Does this sound too harsh an indictment? Listen to the words of Jesus when Peter balked at *following Jesus in the path of Self-denial and the cross*. Jesus says, “Get behind me, Satan! For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man” (Mark 8:33). At the point when one chooses to be *perfected “in the flesh”* rather than by the “Spirit” (Galatians 3:3), Jesus says that the disciple no longer advances the agenda of God but the self-serving purposes of Satan and this world, for he is “setting his mind on the things of man” (Mark 8:33). Our *flesh* justifies Peter’s actions as “reasonable” and even “noble” in his desire to protect his life and the life of Jesus. But, we see how diametrically opposed the *world’s fleshly logic* voids the Kingdom’s power. For, by “saving” their lives, all would be lost. Jesus would not go to the cross, the generations to be redeemed would remain enslaved to death, and the Kingdom would never grow to displace this world’s darkness.

And, so it is when anyone chooses the *very reasonable way of* self-interest and ambition. At that point, their loyalties revert back to the world and its ways. And, the mighty empires built to advance a particular denomination, creed, theology, or even religion. All these visible and massive works testify to human achievement rather than the Kingdom. And, like Herod’s *impressive Temple*, these fleshly works as the “things of man” (8:33) will not last and stray from the path God plans for his Kingdom.

But, once you choose to *become like Jesus* by denying your “Self,” taking up the *cross*, the sacrificial mission the Lord has assigned to you which will cost you

everything, and follow “Jesus’ alone and not man. Then, He will open your eyes to see the coming Kingdom and your place of service in it.

Count the costs.

The act of *sacrifice* in the Kingdom needs a bit of clarification. For, in the purely worldly equation of “gaining” and “accumulating” worldly wealth and power, the idea of *sacrifice* normally means *irrevocable loss*, often with the connotation of squandering or wastage.

disciples choose



small all

The reason is that the *fleshly* self is accustomed to its *total rule* over a person’s life, and the *loss of control* means that the Self is limited and diminished. If the Self suffers the loss of control, its own *integrity suffers*.

But, the Kingdom of God is ruled not by a crowd of Self-interested strangers, but it is ruled by its rightful Lord, the Son of God, who cares for his family in love. But, this *kingdom sacrifice* is simply *unreasonable* for those outside the kingdom. When the man with “great possessions” refused to “sell all” he had to *position himself* and his heart to follow Jesus, he viewed what he had on earth as more valuable than anything the *kingdom* might provide. But, the disciples were willing to “leave everything” to follow Jesus—that is, to *leave everything in his hands*. Ultimately, our sacrifices, even the *sacrifice* of our own lives, is not the utter destruction and loss of those things, but sacrifice offer up to God what we have, even our own lives, to God for his care and purposes. Sacrifice is our rightful response to his Lordship, but doing so, Jesus gives us the Kingdom! Now, the totality of its power and progress, then, its rule over all in heaven and in earth. So, Kingdom needs to be understood as our proper response to his Lordship, and it also needs to be seen as *family sacrifice*—we sacrifice not needlessly nor futilely, but what we lay down is for the *benefit and life* of our dear family members. Thus, the *sacrifices of his saints* Jesus transforms into Kingdom growth and progress. So, to “give up” the eternally “small” things of this earthly life is the *fuel* driving the Kingdom’s growth and work!

To sacrifice, to give up our *fleshly lives and possessions* on earth, is never a loss but:

- **Redemption:** the idea of *redemption* is

simply to exchange, to take from one to enrich, ransom, or free another. In this way, Jesus Mashiach makes the Kingdom's *great redemption* to lay down his infinite life as the *Son of God* to ransom his people from their debt of sin and death to translate them into life and the riches of the Kingdom. However, our lives can be *given* to benefit others in the Kingdom, and we are called to *lay our lives down* for our brethren (1 John 3:16). Most obviously, selling your possessions to meet the needs of your *brothers and sisters* is to act redemptively. But, we also give up our time, our comfort, our well-being, and other aspects of ourselves to help others. Such sacrifices made for others we trust can serve *kingdom* and *redemptive* purposes to help others grow.

- **Supervision:** Also, to abandon or leave *the* things of this world for the Kingdom is actually to *leave them* in the hands of Jesus as Lord, so we make them available to Jesus for his use and the advance of his Kingdom. So, when Jesus instructed the man with great “possessions” to sell all and give to the poor, he was asking him to make his possessions available to the Lord and his Kingdom purposes. Perhaps this disciple could have supported the Twelve for a period of time, or advanced the Kingdom in some way. For, when Jesus says, “give to the poor,” he doesn’t say “give all” to the poor. But, the act of selling gives Jesus his rightful place over this man’s possessions if he is indeed to be this man’s Lord. As it turns out, this man treasured earthly wealth over the Lordship of Jesus.

- **Investments and shares:** While we are called as disciples to give freely and without expectation, Jesus informs his disciples that when they give up all they have for the sake of the Kingdom, there is a Kingdom reward that they should expect, in this life and the life to come. Thus, *sacrifice* for the Lord and his Kingdom should be seen as *kingdom investment or investing in a “stake” of the Kingdom*. Because the disciples “left” possessions for the Kingdom, Jesus said that the Kingdom’s growth in terms of households, people, and resources would be theirs to partake in. And, there would be an “eternal” reward when the Kingdom appears in glory.

Case Study: Kingdom Return

In my life, I have seen the Lord Jesus take the things of my life sacrificed for him and his Kingdom and to turn them into kingdom opportunities, growth, or fruit.

#1: Giving up job, home, and paradise for the riches of Kingdom calling.

When I was in my mid-twenties, my future was pretty much set. With a graduate degree in hand, my academic career in the university was set and with it a growing income, home, and family. But, called to leave Hawaii, I found the doors of my calling opening to me: *further training, growth in preaching and church-planting, and friends and open doors to the Jewish community*, all which came to fruition in the Kingdom in his service.

#2: Giving up a relationship for a new family, country, and ministry home.

In my 30's, I found myself in a perfectly compatible match. But, our callings were a degree off—I was called to serve in a diverse church, and she was called to stay and serve in Chicago. So, we gave up our relationship to the Lord. Now, I serve in the most diverse area (Scarborough) in the world's most diverse city (Toronto), at a church with more than 70 nations represented. Most recently, we saw more than a dozen Persians, former Muslims, get baptized.

#3: Sacrificing all I had for All in the Kingdom:

When my wife and two young children relocated to Toronto, she was suddenly struck with mental health problems. Over the course of around two years, I faced the loss of all I had. My wife was institutionalized, with her mind and soul slipping away. The state was threatening to take my children. I lost my nearly six-figure job. I had no friends in this new country. But, I gave everything to the Lord.

And, the Lord has brought every desire he has put on my heart into Kingdom reality. Breakthroughs into our testimony to the Jews. Breakthroughs and harvest in discipleship. Breakthroughs in leaders raised up, the lost freed, opposition put down. All the painful sacrifice which came before was directly tied to the Kingdom harvest I have seen and thanked God for!

Knowing Jesus.

In my life, I've seen that the sweetest fellowship is between partners, between colleagues, between brothers who have shared the Kingdom struggle and enjoy together the Kingdom fruit.

So, imagine the sweet fellowship of not just being shown by Jesus how to *shepherd his sheep*, but actually sharing with Jesus in the sweet fellowship of suffering together for his flock! As Paul says:

¹⁶ The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷ and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. Romans 8:16-17.

So, knowing Jesus in the *childhood* of your discipleship (stages 1-3) can be amazing. But, imagine the maturing and deep pleasure of sharing with him in his *suffering* for the Kingdom of God. This *fellowship* is sweet, but it is unknown to those who refuse to suffer loss in this world, valuing its possession higher than the glory of Jesus Mashiach and his Kingdom.

As a mature disciple in the Lord Jesus Mashiach's Kingdom, you distinguish yourself by the sacrifices and humiliations you are willing to endure for *his sake*. For, if you sacrifice, suffer, and endure, you prove yourself trustworthy to handle the most precious matters of the Kingdom, the health of its people and their reproducing of Kingdom disciples! As Paul says, "If we endure, we will also reign with him" (2 Timothy 2:12a).

Key Verse.

34 And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, "If anyone would come after me, let him **deny himself** and take up his **cross** and **follow** me. ³⁵ For whoever would save his life^[d] will lose it, but whoever **loses his life for my sake** and the gospel's will save it. ³⁶ For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his **soul**? ³⁷ For what can a man give in return for his **soul**? Mark 8:34-37

Developmental Disciple Stage:

It is an odd stage of human development that when people reach adulthood, likely attaining the height of their strengths and insights and acquiring a great amount of possessions, they also reach the maturity and the capacity for sacrifice. They may understand that their loved ones are worth sacrificing for. For this reason, we send *adults* into battle. And, veterans who share in such great struggles and total sacrifice enjoy no better company than with those they've suffered with.

In this way, the *fullness of God's work in his disciples* is to see them achieve full maturity as *adult disciples*, who are ready to serve in the Kingdom as *sacrificial shepherds*. In this way, true *Stage 5* disciples are known because their lives and experiences resemble their Lord's life. As the Lord Jesus approached Jerusalem to be revealed as Israel's rightful Heir and King, he predicted that he would "suffer,"

“be rejected,” and be “killed” only to “rise again” (Mark 8:31). So, if you are true *sacrificial shepherd*, known by God and entrusted with the “great” *work of the Kingdom*, be ready to sacrifice:

- **Position and Self-interest**: yes, you will be

Entrusted with the Kingdom’s authority to restore, to feed, and to shepherd God’s flock. But, expect to labor by “serving” All, giving them what they need to grow, even if this will often come at your own self-interest and recognition. For, in the Kingdom, its *God-anointed shepherds* are really only “servants of all” (Mark 9:35). On earth, Jesus did not acquire position or religious *power* for himself. In fact, the well-recognized religious leaders were the ones to *reject him*. In this way, “servants of all” will often not spend time garnering popular support, being about the Lord’s work rather than promoting themselves.

- **Power and Self-rule**. In the world, fleshly leaders exercise *power* over others, because their position has given them privileges and power at the expense of others. They rule because many others serve. They are enriched because many others are impoverished.

However, you must sacrifice all this *worldly influence* and power in order to serve well in the Kingdom. In fact, Jesus, the “Lord” and “Heir” of all humanity, was the first to give up his *Self-rule*. For the sake of his people, to advance the Kingdom, he chose to give up his right to *command others to protect himself*. Instead, he allowed himself to “be delivered” to his *fleshly enemies*, the powerful “priests” who sought to destroy him (Mark 9:33).

By giving up his rights, he was able to “save others” because he would not instead “save himself” by coming down off the “cross” (Mark 15:31). In this way, the Kingdom and your “cross” requires that you endure and suffer for doing good for your people, even if your help goes against your own “Self-interest.”

Your service as a *sacrificial-shepherd* requires that you serve by “carrying your own cross.” Your “cross” is your service to the King and his Kingdom that puts you in danger; that sets you back; that requires you *face loss, demeaning, and rejection*. For, you surely minister among fleshly, whose minds are focused on the “things of man” (Mark 8:33).

But, fear not. Your *sacrificial service* to those in the flesh will be costly, but when you pay the price of our own Self-comfort, the Lord brings his spiritual Kingdom power to bear, speaking and working through you. Because when you are “weak,”

then you are strong and his “power” is “perfected in your weakness” (2 Corinthians 12:9-10).

This working of God’s Kingdom power when you *choose to be weak and powerless* to serve the fleshly is especially true for you who are called to sacrificially serve the Jewish people! You must not come to your own people with *powerful words or human defenses*. Rather, take on the heart of a *sacrificial shepherd* speaking to the Lord’s people who have endured alienation from Jesus Mashiach that the Gentiles might come into the kingdom first. Consider the Lord’s compassion and serve them humbly.

- **Life and Self-preservation**: Of course, the greatest sacrifice you make is of your own life, even if *life-sacrifice* is often made in the small details of life. Giving up free time to counsel or comfort a new disciple. Missing a meal to bring food to the hungry. Missing a family outing to share the Gospel with the lost. Whether in small measures or great, following Jesus in his Kingdom service requires that you abandon your Self-preservation or protection. One thing is for sure. Whether little or great, the Lord God will accept the *offering up of* your life and will use this in the Kingdom’s dynamic to *redeem* the lives of those you serve!

So, share Jesus as Mashiach to your synagogue. You will lose your status, but Jesus is honored and the Kingdom achieves a victory.

Milestone/ Abilities:

As a mature, level five disciple, you will be able to *shepherd* the sheep entrusted to you even when it works against your own Self-interest, even when you must abandon Self-protection and Self-Rule in order to best serve your people.

So, serving as *a sacrificial shepherd starts* when you first “deny” yourself, understand from the Lord your “cross” of service you are meant to bear, and to “follow” Jesus Mashiach alone by faith.

A. Knowing/ Responding to Jesus:

F

B. Living in His Household:

F

C. Establishing His Throne and Kingdom:

F

Assessment Question:

Further Discovery:

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 nation 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.

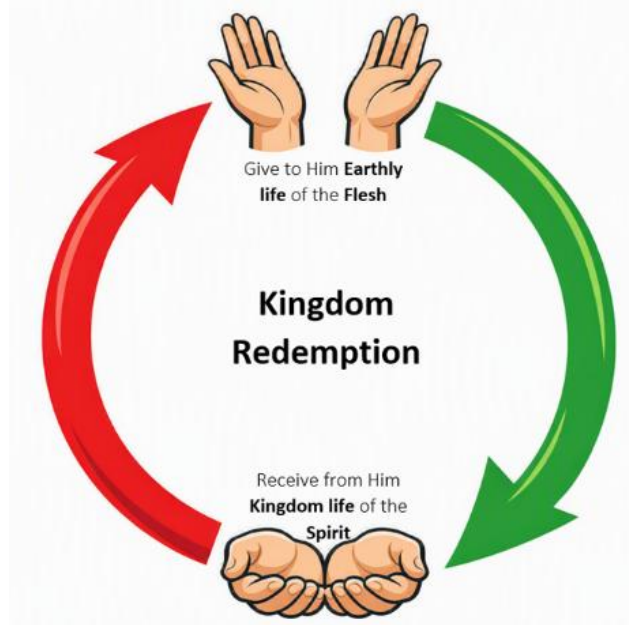
But, when Jews realize that Jewish Life really stems from a restored *hai nefesh* by the *Ruach* of God, by the Redeeming work of Jesus Mashiach, then the power of the Family will transform the world!

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 decay 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 fall 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:

5.2.B(32a).Servants Share Kingdom Suffering. Mark 8.32-38

As I'm sure you're learning by now as a Shepherd of the Kingdom, the Kingdom is *counter* to what comes naturally to us as human beings. For that reason, you must cultivate your inner life with the Lord. Spiritually, nothing has changed when, as an *infant disciple*, you clung hungrily to your Lord for new life, and he lifted you gently up. We still need our Lord for everything. Yet, as you bear fruit as a Shepherd, much has changed spiritually, for now you are accustomed to walking with the Lord Jesus face-to-face.

Press in to that kinship, for being a trustworthy servant in the Kingdom of God, especially one who is being given *unprecedented access to the Lord and his Throne Room*, as you now have, is your new reality. For, there are a select few who have served the Lord, seeking the "things of God" which are on the Lord's heart rather than the "things of man" which will advance careers, fund vacation homes, and popularize names and reputations in earthly kingdoms that will fade.

But you, a "shepherd after God's own heart" who knows the burden of "feeding" his people with "knowledge and understanding" (Jeremiah 3:15) are *proven bona fide* in the Kingdom, and the future, with Jesus Mashiach, is yours. For, the reality is that you are already "seated with him in the heavenly place" in Jesus Mashiach (Ephesians 2:6). Your reality simply awaits you.

So, embrace your servanthood with zeal, and give yourself lavishly—all this proves your place near his side, as the Lord goes with you to give you victory after victory until you see your Lord face-to-face!

Read Mark 8:32-38

³² And he said this plainly. And Peter took him aside and **began to rebuke him**. ³³ But turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, **Satan!** For you are not setting your mind on **the things of God**, but on the **things of man**."

³⁴ And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, "If anyone would come after me, let him **deny himself** and take up his **cross** and **follow** me. ³⁵ For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever **loses his life for my sake** and the gospel's will save it. ³⁶ For what does it profit a man to

gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? ³⁷ For what can a man give in return for his soul? Mark 8:32-37

Background:

While the unredeemed people of this world live exclusively in the *flesh*, disciples of Jesus Mashiach are alive in both body and Spirit—occupying both in the world and the spiritual reality of the Kingdom. But, which world do they truly *abide* in—that is, consider as their true *home* and foundation for their lives?

When these disciples give themselves fully to the affairs of this seen world, viewing this bodily existence as the only reality that matters, as their foundation of life, and their life’s priority and ambition, then they are living “in the flesh,” as if they belonged to the world and were still enslaved to its lusts, passions, and endless hunger. Those in the “flesh” serve only one lord, and that is their own “Self-interest.” But, as Jesus teaches his disciples that the Mashiach himself must suffer, be rejected, and then killed to serve his people, Peter immediately responds with a “rebuke” of Jesus and his messianic mission.

By this point in their growth as disciples, Jesus must sense that they are ready to learn this Kingdom mystery, that though the Kingdom of God is a more glorious, more powerful and never-ending Kingdom, its *greatness* is not in sheer scale and value but in this unexpected dynamic, that those who are truly *great* in the Kingdom are those who are guided not by ambition or Self-interest but by Sacrificial Love, fulfilling the Father’s Kingdom mandate that *all* of his family is redeemed and rescued from this world’s danger.

So, to serve his people with the greatest act of redemption they need to be redeemed into the Kingdom of Heaven, Jesus readies himself and his disciples to embrace the Kingdom’s “sacrificial service.” But, Peter rebukes him.

Focusing Mind on World or Kingdom:



Reaching spiritual maturity as a “stage 5” disciple is not just the ability to serve sacrificially. Because this ability to be willing to sacrifice to serve others depends on not just an awareness of the *spiritual reality* of the Kingdom, the disciple’s entire view must shift from a worldly view, focusing on Self-interest, to a Kingdom view, focusing on sacrificial service. Because Peter views reality from a Worldly View, through a focus on Self-interest, then Jesus’s words of suffering, loss, and death are not right and worthy of rebuke. They threaten not only the self-interests of Jesus but his own as well.

Thus, Jesus exhorts his disciples to shift their view entirely from a worldly to a Kingdom view. In the eyes of the Kingdom, sacrifice is wholly acceptable because one lays down his life that his family may live. Thus, to shift from the worldly focus of Self-interest to the Kingdom View of family salvation prepares disciples who are sacrificial servants to experience and glimpse the glory of the Kingdom, known only to those who are willing to forsake earth for the Spirit’s life and work!

Mindset: Abiding in Flesh or Spirit.

³¹ So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, ³² and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” ³³ They answered him, “We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, ‘You will become free’?” John 8:31-33

Note:

We have already established that reborn *disciples of Jesus Mashiach* inhabit two realms simultaneously. Of course, they inhabit this material realm in fleshly bodies. And, they inhabit the spiritual realm as reborn children of God who are in Mashiach and his life. However, your choices and decisions as a disciple will determine the *realm* in which you actually *dwell*. For, the biblical word “abide” means that you must choose to *dwell*, to **settle** in one of these two realms—the realm of the flesh or the realm of the Spirit.

As the Lord Jesus said, it all starts with your “heart” and what you treasure. If you truly *treasure this life of earth*, the sum total of your choices, the sacrifices that you make, and your life direction will indicate a treasure stored up in this world of *human approval*.

Instead, if you truly value the Lord and His Kingdom, your heart will be known by the valuable things of your life. *The sum of your choices* will testify of the Lord’s

Work and pleasure in your life, as your way will be affirmed at every step with spiritual and lasting fruit. Lives changed. Disciples reproduced and bearing fruit. Households strengthened. Your sacrifices will be *overlooked by men*, but precious in the sight of God. And, your life will be valuable to the Kingdom from Heaven's final View.

Setting your Mind on the things of this world:



Set mind on
Things of **man**



Save Life and
Self-interest.



Serve World
and **Satan**

If you choose to *abide*, to *settle* in the world of the “flesh,” your mind will be *entirely preoccupied and focused* on the words, the thinking, and the concerns of this world. That is, by setting your gaze and focus entirely on this world, so that its values, thinking, and pleasures, your mind and life *is set*—it *settles* down to “abide”—to dwell in this earthly world as if it was its home. **Setting your mind** on earth blinds you to any life beyond this world, so you will seek to “save” and protect this life on earth as if it is *your only life*. What is the result of *abiding in the World*? If your **mind is set** on this world alone and your efforts are spent **preserving** and advancing your life on this earth, then you will end up **serving** Satan and his purposes. When Simon sought to protect his own and Jesus's life on earth, Peter was unwittingly advancing Satan's purpose to prevent Jesus Mashiach from *laying down his life* to redeem His people, thus robbing the Kingdom of its children.

Setting your Mind on the things of God:



Set mind on
Things of **God**



Sacrifice and
lose life and
self-interest.



Serve God and
His Kingdom.

Now, you may be asking yourself, why should I be willing to sacrifice myself for others, for the sake of the Kingdom? In short, “Why die?”

The simple answer is, “Love.” Love is the only reason you should consider pressing on to this fifth stage of discipleship, “sacrificial service.” You should respond to the one who said that He would “suffer, be rejected, be killed” for the sake of serving his family to redeem them, with the only response and love *worthy* of his love—with an equal willingness to *lose all* for his sake.

Ultimately, there is a radical fellowship to which Jesus invites you! He himself has said, “I no longer call you servants... but I call you friends” and “tell my brothers... I go to my God and your God, my Father and your Father.” To be called “brother” of the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Mashiach himself, is unfathomably impossible.

We cannot achieve this impossibility, so the Lord Jesus himself rebirths us into a new spiritual nature as the sons of God.

But, there is something within our reach we can do as those called to draw near to him. We can give up what we have been given on earth, we can forsake what is fleshly and ensnared to this world and Satan’s evil plans. We can give him our hearts, our loyalty, our love.

So, dear friend, I would encourage you to count the costs. First, consider all that you could gain in this dark world by the flesh. All that you can enjoy through your short life-span on earth. Imagine you gained it ALL—Jesus still says to you, “What good is it if you gain the whole world but lose your very soul?” Secondly, consider your soul. You have the opportunity to be that soul who serves as he served, to share with him this one intimately rare detail to be like-minded in your sacrificial service to the Father. Be counted in this rare fellowship of those who have *suffered greatly to serve the Lord*.

Consider the great names in the world who did not sacrifice self-interest for the Kingdom but who clung to cultural self-interest, fame, and even unbelief throughout their careers. Those notable men who, at the end of their lives, were shown to still be self-indulgent in the secret things. So, if you truly wish to “set your minds on the things of God,” then be prepared to be *whole-hearted* in your devotion and sanctification. For, this *sacrificial service* which Jesus calls you is given only to those who offer their whole lives to the Lord (Romans 12:1-2) without reserving any defilement for one’s Self-interest or self-indulgence. There are no Achens among those who *serve sacrificially*. And, even though it took Peter

a few steps to give up his protective Self-interest, he became known as one of those who served the Lord with a whole-hearted sacrifice!

So, when you turn to “set your mind” on the “things of God,” come before him as one fully available to be touched and changed by his glory. For, the Word of Jesus which will fill your mind will leave no dark space of your life untouched. So, first, “set your mind” fully on the things of God.



Set mind on
Things of **God**



Sacrifice and
lose life and
self-interest.



Serve God and
His Kingdom.

Shifting Mind Set from Man to God: Deny Self, Take up Cross, Follow Jesus



Deny Self



Take up Cross



Follow Jesus

As a growing disciple, I hope you are seeing that setting your mind on this earth will limit your devotion to the Lord. There will be lines you will not cross, times when you say, “This is unacceptable” when the Lord ask of you your service.

The reality is that the enemy will always have a hold on your life as long as your *flesh* remains enslaved to this world and the *fear* of loss holds you hostage to Satan and his purposes. So, the Lord has a very clear solution to *free you* from this worldly enslavement: “Deny your Self, take up your Cross, and Follow Him” (Mark 8:34).

- Deny your **Self**:

Your *flesh* is designed to consume to survive. But, when our first parents chose to live apart from God, to freely sin, their (and our) flesh died of its spiritual life and now is forever unsatisfied, *starved of God's presence*. So, the flesh is the ideal *slave* to Satan and his world, for the devil entices our flesh with the hope of a fullness that never comes. The world gorges the flesh with sin, but this sin *kills and steals life*. So, Jesus says, you can *gain the whole world* by letting your *flesh consume* all it wants, but in the end, you will “lose your soul” (8:37).

Instead, the first step to shift your mind's “setting” from the world to the kingdom is to choose to deny your *flesh*—to wake up and realize that your unrestrained Self-indulgence in this world only brings your death.

So, present your “soul”—all of who you are, what you desire, all your needs—present your Self to God as an “offering” to please him and to do His will. By giving yourself to God first, rather than hoarding your life for yourself, you free yourself from the *flesh's enslavement* and “deny” yourself. You *deny* that your Self is all that matters. You *deny* that consuming will make you full and satisfied. You deny that this world and its master, Satan, are your home. By denying yourself, you shift your gaze from this earth-bound horizon to look up to see the Kingdom of God!

- Take up your cross:

Normally, we think of the cross as mainly *suffering*. But, Jesus did not go to the cross only to suffer. Rather, the cross speaks to us of both “death” but also “life”—giving himself to *death*, he brings *life* to his people! So, the cross is the engine of *redemption*—it is activated by the sacrifice of the cross-bearer in order to *give life* to the poor!

So, when Jesus Mashiach tells you to “take up your cross,” he does not simply mean “be willing to suffer.” Just as the Father assigned Jesus his cross as the means of “redeeming,” so, too, your “cross” is the “redemptive responsibility” which the Lord has assigned to you, your costly ministry to bring life to those to whom the Lord has called you!

Of course, only our Mashiach and his Cross are the true and complete means of redemption. But, to bring this “new life” to others, you will need to “take up your cross” as well.

For, there are people you know who need the *redemption of Jesus*. They are still hostage to the Kingdom of Satan. Dead in their sins. Enchained in their flesh to this defiling world of darkness. And, they will *stay this way*, unless you help

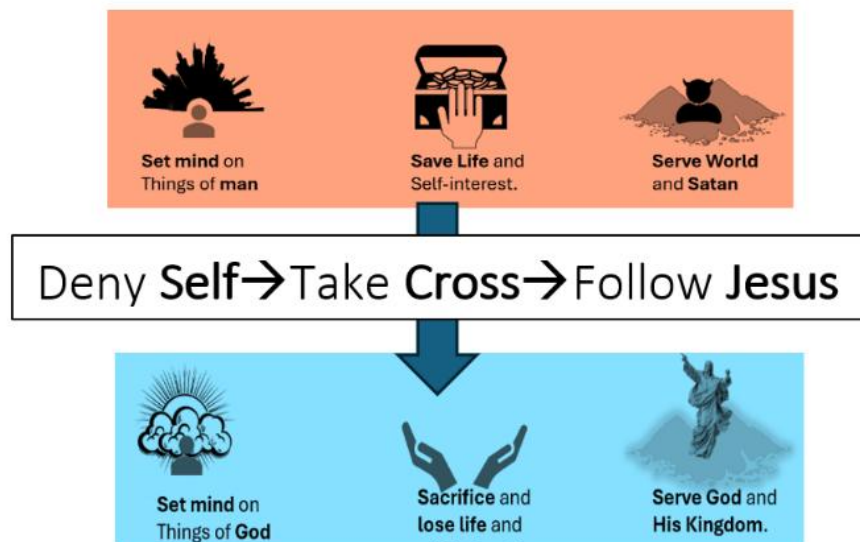
them find *redemption* in Jesus Mashiach! To bring them to Jesus and his cross of redemption, you will need to bear your cross, to:

- Give up your rights to serve them humbly;
- Deny your Self-interests to hear what they need and to share with them God's Word;
- Let go of your freedom to be available to talk, listen, and explain to them the promise of Jesus!
- Give up your isolation to give of yourself to them, to comfort, to pray, to free, to instruct.
- Give up your comfort to take time, effort, and resources to help them find new life!

Thus, to “take up your cross” is to be willing to sacrifice for the sake of others! In bringing “new life” into the Kingdom, you will have to *give up* the selfishness and isolation of your old life. But, as parents can attest, the “cross” of sacrificing to bring new life into the world is exceedingly worth the price of *a lonely life of isolation*.

- Follow Me.

Finally, you do not enter the *new life* of the Kingdom as the *absolute ruler* of all you survey. So, when Peter seeks to prevent Jesus from his Kingdom Mission of suffering and being crucified at Jerusalem, he was unwittingly seeking to sneak Satan's agenda into the Kingdom to *disrupt* the Lordship of God. Such rebellion is impossible. For, to live in the Kingdom is to live *under* the authority of Jesus as Lord. The disciple must *follow* Jesus, not presume to lead him.



Thus, as a mature servant of the Kingdom, look for signs that indicate that a disciple is still *at the service of the world*. Help them to “deny self,”

Take up your Cross: your Redemptive Responsibility.



C: **Called** to adopt a people as your own.

You will know your *redemptive responsibility* when you spend time before the Lord, waiting on him and sitting in his presence. Who are the people he is putting on your heart, the people you feel a “burden” for? Who are the people who need the Lord’s redemption?

R: **Responsible** for their Redemption

While we are called to pray for the *salvation* of all people, for whom will you take responsibility? The process of Redemption means that the Lord will take their “old lives” and will give them a new and “abundant life” in the Lord Jesus Mashiach. Will you be responsible to *take action*, as the Lord leads, that these people find redemption in Jesus?

O: **Offering Self** to the Lord.

Most importantly, taking up your cross is to step up for Kingdom Service, so it is not something you can accomplish by your own fleshly abilities. Instead, “offer” up all of your Self to the Lord (Romans 12:1-2) to please him and to do His will. When you offer yourself fully to the Lord, you entrust yourself to him completely, letting him act and speak through you by his divine power. You rely on his righteous life to take hold and bear fruit in your life.

S: **Sacrificial** living gives up what is precious. If your whole life is offered to the Lord, then you will be willing to *sacrifice*—make specific areas of life available to the Lord to do his will. You will give him time that would have otherwise been spent on your own Self-interest and purposes. Instead, this *sacrificial* use of your

time allows God to “redeem” the time, to make it his own, and to work through you to accomplish his kingdom purposes. In this way, all areas of your life can be useful and redeemed for the Lord’s purposes in his plan and time.

S: **Serves** to build House and Kingdom. Finally, to take up your cross, you will serve the people whom the Lord is putting on your heart. Service is to help them find the New Life of the Kingdom Family, challenging them to be reborn into a life of faith. In the Kingdom, serving is to help them grow up as disciples, ensuring their proper feeding and care.

Preference:

- Leadership: Serve not Rule
- Greatness: Last not First
-



Focus:

1. Self-Protection: fleshly mind set on world/Satan not God. 8:32-33
2. Serving Jesus in Kingdom: deny/crucify self to Follow. 8:34
3. Saving Soul: lose life for Jesus/ Lose all the world. 8:35-37
4. Side with Son of Man: belong to him in glory. 8:38-

Consider:

1. Self-Protection: fleshly mind set on world/Satan not God. 8:32-33

Jesus Mashiach started to instruct his disciples of the nature of his mission as “the Son of Man.” However, even Simon Peter was unwilling to know Jesus as Mashiach by faith, speaking entirely in the flesh to “rebuke” Jesus, thinking he was watching out for the “Self-interests” of Jesus. Strikingly, Peter learns that to give in to the *fleshly impulse* of Self-interest. By lapsing into fleshly unbelief, Peter unintentionally put him against the Kingdom and God’s purposes for it. Not only does fleshly self-interest put you at odds with the Kingdom and the very purposes of God, it entrenches you in this passing world and its entrapment to blind people of God’s glory and purpose. And worse, fleshly people led by Self-interest can be used by Satan to thwart, undermine, or resist the progress of the Kingdom. When Self-interest is seen in the world, it is expected. When it is seen in the Kingdom, it should be rebuked, as Jesus does. For, left unchecked, fleshly Self-interest would have prevented the cross from ever happening, leaving God’s people entrapped in Satan’s Kingdom and unredeemed.

2. Serving Jesus in Kingdom: deny/crucify self to Follow. 8:34



3. Saving Soul: lose life for Jesus/ Lose all the world. 8:35-37
4. Side with Son of Man: belong to him in glory. 8:38-

Question:

Further Discovery:

5.3.B(36).Kingdom Unity: Focusing on Lord and not Man. Mark 9:38- 50.

Read Mark 8:38-50.

38 John said to him, “**Teacher**, we saw someone casting out demons **in your name**,^[1] and we tried to stop him, because he was **not following us.**”³⁹ But Jesus said, “Do not stop him, for no one who does a mighty work **in my name** will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me.”⁴⁰ For the one who is **not against us is for us.**⁴¹ For truly, I say to you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because^[2] you **belong to Christ** will by no means lose his reward.

Mark 8:38-41

Background:



Belonging: Us vs. Them.

The Kingdom of God grows in the unseen realm of the Spirit, as human hearts *bow* and turn to the Lord Jesus Mashiach by faith, coming under the Lordship of his Kingdom and forsaking the Kingdom of Darkness. In the same way that the Kingdom’s true *glory* is hidden to fleshly eyes, the Kingdom’s *growth* is also hidden.

As this story shows, the Kingdom reached many who were acting “in the name” of Jesus Mashiach but were not *following* this group of disciples. So, the Lord Jesus

commands his disciples who want to stop them, “Do not stop them” (9:38). What can we learn from this exchange about the Kingdom?

Unifying Name of Jesus Mashiach:

If these *workers of mighty signs* were only using the name of Jesus as a talisman, they would not have been successful at performing these “mighty works” (9:40). For, even when the seven sons of Sceva attempted to use the name of Jesus to cast out the evil spirits, their lack of any real connection to Jesus led to their defeat (Acts 19:11).

In this way, the Kingdom and its Gospel will reach many people who may not “follow” any set group of disciples or any proven *traditions*. Jesus implies that the Kingdom and its work is *too great* to control, for many will be included and do works “in my name” (40) which may or may not be known.

However, the disciples’ need to track, to regulate, and to define who is with “us” and who are “those” different from us may be a *fleshly* need to control and to manage growth. But, the “name” of Jesus and affiliation with him is the real Kingdom distinctive.

Kingdoms at War.

The reason Jesus seems comfortable letting the Kingdom grow naturally and without having a need to oversee all aspects of its growth is the stark difference between those “against us” and those who are not.

For, the greater spiritual reality is that the Kingdom of God, marked by those who live and speak “in my (Jesus’s) name,” faces fierce opposition from the Kingdom of Darkness and those who *are against* the name of Jesus as Mashiach.

In times of war, it becomes very clear which force one is supporting or opposing. This clarity due to the heat of battle will increase, until in the last days when open warfare breaks out between the two kingdoms, those who belong to Jesus and those who seek to persecute, imprison, or kill them will become unmistakable.

The dividing line of sin:

When the clash of the Kingdoms breaks out into open conflict, even small but risky acts of kindness shown to the children of the Kingdom will cover people in the Kingdom’s shelter and eventual reward.

For, in the Last Days when the Antichrist imposes his global rule of tyranny on all people, those who belong to Jesus Mashiach will indeed be openly hunted, persecuted, and eventually, martyred. With their property and possessions

confiscated and having no access to the *world's financial system*, these “little children” who belong to Jesus and represent him in the world will wander and seek shelter and food from the people of the earth.

Those people who show mercy to the followers of Jesus Mashiach in that last day's tribulation, who give them food, drink, or shelter, will be spared from the Lord's judgment and rewarded, as if they had shown mercy to the Lord Himself! (Matthew 25:35-40).

As a disciple of Jesus Mashiach, *be satisfied with the Kingdom grows around you.*
There will come a day when the name of Jesus will be proclaimed, invoked, and called on. Rejoice as the Kingdom grows, without having to manage or control all this growth. For, in the coming days, the Kingdom will spread exponentially to permeate all nations, peoples, and languages. With the *rule of darkness* embodied in the wicked tyranny of the Antichrist, there will be many who are not “against” you—consider them for you.

Final Kingdom Distinction: Sin and Sacrifice.

The Lord Jesus realizes that until the Kingdom comes in its true power and glory, his disciples are weak and powerless in a hostile world. He calls them “these little ones who believe in me” (9:41).

As a disciple of Jesus Mashiach, especially as you find yourself taking responsibility in the Kingdom as a *Sacrificial Servant* given charge over the flock, realize what the real dangers of this Kingdom conflict.

Worldly hardship: Opportunities for Grace. Jesus realizes that the hardships, persecutions, and losses which his disciples face in this world are really an opportunity for the Kingdom to expand its territory. Yes, his people will be tested, but the Lord of the Kingdom is able to provide for them through times of testing on the Earth, and these times of test will bring God's Kingdom to those who receive and help them.

The Sin Trap: Tempting the Little Ones:

The real attack leveled against the children of God threatens not body but soul, for the people of this world can “cause” these disciples to “sin” and so threaten them with hell itself (42). Those in the world who *seek to ensnare* the disciples in sin are the deadliest of foes. As a sacrificial servant, be vigilant and on guard for these *great enemies*. Remember the Enemy's original strategy to entice the people of God:

- Promoting Unbelief:

- **Cast doubt** or **undermine** God's Word (Genesis 3:1)
- **Contradict** or **void** God's Word (4);
- **Cease/ Usurp God's Place:** with Self-Rule/ Self-Understanding/ Will etc. "be like God"
- **Claim Self-Rights: Unbelief & Self-Righteousness:** Rely on Self-Understanding to reason *apart from God*.
- **Create Self-justifying rationale** (good reasons) to sin: "I have the right to sin and reasons to do so."
 - Benefit in this life;
 - Pleasurable
 - Wisdom apart from God.

As a *sacrificial servant* of the Lord, the enemy will find no foothold to lure you away from the Lord your God. However, for those disciples under your watch and care, as you see above, there are many insidious ways that fleshly people entice the unsuspecting and *lure them away into sin*. The Enemy's first and most effective strategy is to propagate the lie that *we are "free moral agents"* with the "free will" to decide morality for ourselves. More dangerously, to decide "what the Bible means" for ourselves.

Maintaining the Word of God's Efficacy:

As the notes above indicate, the enemy assaults the faith of disciples by attacking the Word of God itself, the very life-blood of the disciple.

Mainly, the enemy will create "dead zones" in the Word of God in which unbelief renders many of the claims of the Word unfruitful. Here is a quick review of how the Word of God should be read and how it has been largely rendered ineffective in the Last Days.

Bible Reading Tips: Proverbs 3:5-6; Job 1:8

1. **Revelatory:** receive by faith. Beginning with the account of creation in Genesis 1:1, God-*Elohim* reveals to us truths and realities which far exceed our capacity to know. For, the *fleshly mind* is *empirical*, gathering experiences and reasoning from the details. But, humans have no experience with much of the Bible's talk about God, about heaven, and about the unseen realities that exist but are beyond our experience.

So, the human mind has two choices. First, to humbly receive what is revealed to it without question. Or, it can filter, alter, and diminish the infinite revelation

into manageable ideas that will fit into very human ways of thinking, assumptions, and traditions.

Case Study: the Folly of Theology.

As a form of *religious capital*, theology does not simply seek to uncover the original Biblical thought and purposes. Rather, it uses the Biblical material conveniently and profitably—sifting the revelation of God through filters of tradition, lifestyle, and agendas.

Man-centered Salvation: In response to the arguments of his adversary, Arminius, John Calvin formulated a man-centered, salvation theology which has evolved into the Reform theology we see today. Unfortunately, focusing on “the salvation of man” as its central focus misses entirely what the actual Word of God focuses on, the Son of God as the Heir of all things and his coming Kingdom Rule.

Europe-centered Future: Because Luther could not conceive a future in which God indeed chooses and *honors* Israel over the nations, Luther and other *replacement* theologians altered the message of Scripture to replace Israel with the Church in God’s plan for the future. The Church, especially as it took root in Europe through its major phases, was seen by the theologians as eternal and at the center of God’s plan. Rather than submitting to the revealed truth of God’s Word, theologians re-wrote it to match their existing biases and assumptions of European supremacy.

Kingdom-less future: Amillennialism: When Pilate heard of Jesus’s claims of another Kingdom, he was struck by fear. How hardened by unbelief must modern interpreters be to have less *fear* of Mashiach’s words of the Kingdom than agnostic Pilate himself! For, entire committees and traditions proudly embrace their unbelief that there will be no earthly rule of Mashiach in the Last Days, though both testaments are replete with promises of the nations streaming to Jerusalem and the earth being filled with the knowledge of God as waters cover the seas.

Yet, those who hold such blatant unbelief are not shunned nor chastened but rewarded in this age of blindness. When I was serving as a pastor in the years approaching the great *taking of the Church*, I was disciplined for talking to congregants about the imminent coming of the Lord. The two higher-ranking pastors who threatened me both took *amillennial positions with* shameless impunity.

In fact, a champion of such theological unbelief hid behind a Reformed Theology to claim that the entire book of Revelation was fulfilled in the first

century. Such bold unbelief, which even Revelation cautions against, did not deter this man's multi-million dollar empire. In the Last Days, *preaching* the revelatory truth was sanctioned and propagating unbelief was greatly rewarded! But, what will R.C. Sproul say to the One whose coming Kingdom he proudly denied?

2. **Relational:** the Lord speaks to us by his Word.

Also, we must never forget that the Bible does not present to us *abstractions or mere ideas* of deified ideals or holy ideas. Rather, the Bible refers to, talks about, and introduces you to the real people of the Godhead, and when you invoke the name "Jesus" or "God" or "Spirit," you are referring to people who hear you and will hold you accountable for what you say about them or to them.

3. **Sanctifying:** offering to Lord/ surrendered. Because anchored to this world and its depravity through our *fleshly selves*, it is the Word that convicts, frees, and sanctifies us. So, we must come before the Lord as we read his Word, offering our full Selve to him and surrendering our lives that he might sanctify the areas of our lives still broken or enslaved by the flesh.

Any other "defensive" reading will create "dead zones" of hardness and unbelief in our hearts, impervious to the Word and its life-giving touch.

4. **Spiritual:** bi-reality. As we have been seeing in this Discipleship pathway, the Word of God prepares us as disciples to inherit the realities of both "earth" and "heaven" (Genesis 2:4). We have also seen that the *flesh* seeks to "set its mind" entirely on this world, for the flesh cannot control what is unseen and in the realm of the Spirit. The Bible calls us to live with our minds set in the Kingdom realities that will lead us to sacrifice, persevere, and lose in this world that the *unseen Kingdom* may advance.

5. **Accountable:** requires action. Because the Word of God conveys the life and commanding authority of God, it requires that those who read and talk about it be held responsible, to be brought to account for how it is responded to. If it is ignored or transgressed, it has the power to bring those into judgment those who treat it carelessly or ignore it.

So, as a *sacrificial servant* of the Lord Jesus, know that your ministry involving the Word of God will be judged. So, always sanctify yourself as you *seek to handle* the Word of God, speaking and administering it faithfully. Crucify your self-

interests and fleshly advantages you may gain in bringing the Word. Instead, seek to accomplish the purposes for which the Lord himself has spoken and sent it out.

Fleshly Bible Cautions:

1. **Objectified:** interpreted by Self-understanding.

The humanistic ideal seeks itself to take the “objective,” all-seeing and knowing perspective of God himself. So, exalting human-understanding as pre-eminent, the fleshly mind detaches the Word from the original anchor of God’s authority that it might be “objectively handled.” Yet, it is this same “objective” position which Satan himself took at the *tree of temptation*, assuming as if there is no God *biasing* the outcomes of interpretation. Thus, to take an “objective” stance to read the scriptures is necessarily unbelieving, for it assumes “as if God is not relevant” to bias the interpretive outcome. To allow God *into* the interpretive process is to “bias” reading as “devotional” and to abandon one’s “objective” and fair stance.

Of course, in the spiritual reality of this dark world, true “objectivity” is not possible, for the whole world is under the control of the evil one. To claim to be “impartial” in one’s reading is already an admission of betrayal and denying the Lord.

2. **Moral Ideas:** The *flesh recoils* at the Lordship of God but loves religious morality, for it can control the latter but must be subjugated by the former. For this reason, those guided by the *flesh* will always be offended by true “discipleship” and its call to grow up spiritually as servants of the Lord Jesus Mashiach. For, disciples serving the Lord Jesus are free from the *service* and control of fleshly religion and traditions, being devoted to the Kingdom of God rather than human institutions.

3. **Rules for living:** Take how the words of Jesus to his disciples: “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow me” (Luke 9:23-25) are unacceptable to the flesh, which would rather be given “rules” which I can choose to obey or neglect, such as, “Be sure to live responsibly in this life.”

4. **Practical Living:** Because the flesh cannot “see” the Kingdom nor derives very few benefits from a realm which is unseen, there are few incentives to focus on the Kingdom. Instead, the fleshly man would rather use the Word to extract whatever might apply to his practical life to improve it.

5. **Proprietary** and **Commodified:** traditions/ community interpretations. Again, to build their vast and profitable communities and traditions, the teachings of the

Word must be back by human-recognized authority rather than seen as *teachers speaking with the Lord's authority*. Creating differences in “authorities” allows people to choose teachers who suit them, avoiding any uncomfortable situations where their own lives or practices are challenged.

Case Study: Fruitful Discipleship Banned.

As I already mentioned, Biblical, Jesus-centered discipleship was never fully accepted by the late-stage church. Individual pastors would agree to the *idea* of discipleship, but the demands and life-challenges of the Lord's *calling* made the content too *disruptive* for the churches.

Still, as generations of disciples progressed through the Gospel of Mark, as you are right now, we began to see some *fruit* as people were called to follow Jesus and learn to minister in the Kingdom's reality. Leaders were raised up, and groups formed. The captives were freed, the lame restored to mobility, and the addicted liberated. More than a dozen Persians were baptized in a year, with several bearing multi-generational fruit. Yet, the Church proved to be an inhospitable place for growth.

For, in this late-stage of the Church, the deadening effects of technology and social media were already smothering the faith of the younger generations and of entire households. Group leaders and I agreed that we needed to take the “fight” into each household, with parents and families discipling their own generations. This could be done if we developed Jesus-centered *devotional* materials.

But, before the project could be launched, the senior pastors of the church stopped it. It did not conform to our church's traditions. In restoring the Gospel of the Kingdom to its original and “active” form, I had used the language of “family unity” to describe the Trinity as Father, Son, and Spirit. However, this dangerous difference, along with the goal of promoting a non-sectarian disciple *free* of sectarian and religious bondages, was just too disruptive for these leaders, and I was chastened. Who knows, at that point, if it was too late for the church. But, my hope is that these materials, which help *sacrificial disciples learn to minister in the Kingdom Reality*, will bear the fruit that was stifled in the Church Age.

Thus, the main fight of the Kingdoms is the fight for devotion and obedience to the Lord Jesus on the one hand against forces to undermine faith and capture with sin on the other. Those in the Kingdom must gather in the Lord's name, as a unified people, to fight together to remain obedient and devoted to the Lord.

In the next age, when open warfare breaks out between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Darkness, there will be no place for *divisions* within the ranks of the Kingdom, for it will take all the resources of the Kingdom to remain faithful in this time of great testing.

In some ways, the clarity of the battle lines will make the fight against sin much more concerted. The people of the world will know that there are only two sides in this conflict. On the one side, the unified forces of the Kingdom of God, with Israel and all those who have come to Jesus Mashiach because of the nation's witness. On the other side, the global resources of the Antichrist marshalled to terrorize the body and defile the soul. These clear battle lines, but especially the unity of the people of the Kingdom, will expand the territory of Mashiach's rule over the whole earth. But, this test will also be a time of sacrifice and sanctification.

Sacrifice and Sanctification:

Finally, in times of open Kingdom warfare, the Unity of the Kingdom will be forged because "everyone will be salted with fire" (9:49). Recalling that "salt" was added to the sacrifices burned up on the altar with "fire," we can rephrase what the Lord is saying as: "Everyone will be "sanctified" as the choice parts of their lives are "sacrificed" in the "fire" of testing" when Kingdom warfare breaks out into the open.

So, the normal life of a disciple, especially you who are called into *sacrificial service* of the Lord Jesus Mashiach, should be characterized by *sacrifice*—as the "fire" of trials expose the precious areas of your life which must be "sacrificed" — offered up and given to the Lord for his Kingdom purposes under duress.

Normally, the "sacrifices" (49) of the saints are "good"—they are sanctifying and strengthening opportunities. However, the "sacrifices" of the disciples will "lose its saltiness" when its underlying purpose—to *offer to God what is pleasing*--when this purpose is lost and sacrifice just becomes a survival necessity or a simple response to adversity.

So, let disciples, even before the "fire" of tribulation falls upon the Kingdom, learn to "salt" their lives as pleasing offerings to the Lord.

Focus:

1. Kingdom Unity: Name of Mashiach Unites, no other name. 8:38-40
2. Kingdom Children: Pure witness needs to be protected. 8:41-48
3. Kingdom Sacrifice Tested: fire tests offering. 8:49-50

Consider:

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1. Kingdom Unity: Name of Mashiach Unites, no other name. 8:38-40

f

2. Kingdom Children: Pure witness needs to be protected. 8:41-48

f

3. Kingdom Sacrifice Tested: fire tests offering. 8:49-50

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Question:

Further Discovery:

5.4.B(38).Children Enter the Kingdom. Mark 10:13-31

Read Mark 10:13-31.

¹³ And they were bringing children to him that he might touch them, and the disciples rebuked them. ¹⁴ But when Jesus saw it, he was indignant and said to them, “Let the **children come to me**; do not hinder them, for to such **belongs the kingdom of God**. ¹⁵ Truly, I say to you, whoever does not **receive the kingdom of God** like a child shall not enter it.” ¹⁶ And he took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands on them: Mark 10:13-16.

Background:

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Children: Kingdom Disciples:

Jesus instructs that when entering the Kingdom of God, we must all become like *children* to enter. This statement has been traditionally misunderstood because readers normally *underestimate* the Kingdom and *bristle* at the thought of regressing. So, let’s clarify, for yes, the Kingdom is exceedingly more than we can “ask or think” and children are fitting, not demeaning role models.

First, let’s consider the gap between children and fully formed adults. Although the difference is considerable, it is not infinite. In terms of height, the differences are perceivable—perhaps a meter or two difference in height, and at most, several dozens multiples of weight rather than infinitely vast amounts. In other words, the differences are within the range of human perception, and these changes can be noticed over relatively small increments of time—years separate children and adults, multiple decades, rather than vast stretches of time—millennia, or eons.

But, when we consider this world of matter and physics into which we are born compared to the Kingdom reality inhabited and ruled by God-*Elohim*, the scales and values are vastly incomparable. For, the Kingdom of God is the *heavenly kingdom*, and its units are eternal and infinite measures. To start as a fleshly being to achieve spiritual maturity, in human terms, are certainly impossible and

unattainable. Lifetimes of star systems, much less human spans, would prove insufficient. In fact, even the greatest and strongest of humans has no power to do the slightest work of the Spirit. Consider that a single angel, with no apparent effort, overthrew an entire Assyrian army of 185,000 elite soldiers. In fact, God's denunciation took longer to recite than the reckoning to take place. Yet no human has access nor even the power to overturn the smallest item of the Kingdom.

So, we should approach the Kingdom and its Almighty Ruler as overmatched children, a fitting if not barely adequate way to depict our powerlessness in the face of total power.

Imagine how unsuited even the best of us people of mortal flesh would be if we did not approach the Kingdom as children. We will encounter a man with "great possessions" (10:22) on earth but who refuses to approach the Kingdom as a needy *child*. In moving from the land of death and darkness to the Kingdom of life and light, he is vastly ill-suited if he is not reborn. Clothed in earthly finery, he would appear in the kingdom as if dressed in rotting flesh—his body a dead corpse itself. Carrying bags of treasure, he finds them less than worthless in a place where the least stone lining a wall would buy a vast fortune on earth, his gold not even fit to walk on. In his inert, dead condition, a little child and heir of the Kingdom runs past him—enjoying, playing in, experiencing, and rejoicing in the treasures that are all actually his! How wretched the *earthly rich* would be if they were transported intact to the Kingdom!

So, let's consider four ways that children give us the perfect model for approaching Jesus and the Kingdom:

- **Receptive** to Blessing: Grace.

Faith, being receptive to the things given freely, begins with a felt need. And, children are very needy and know it! Healthy children have great **appetites**, and so should we be for the *new life* of the Kingdom. And, children know that they have nothing and need much, so they **receive** what they are given **freely**. In this way, the children of the Kingdom are hungry for the things of God, the new life that satisfies the new growth in them. And, they **receive freely** and without complaint, absent entitled demands.

- **Helpless:** Little children know that they are helpless, that they have no ability to secure what they need to provide for themselves. So, this helplessness focuses their faith in total dependence on their care-giver. In the spiritual realm, even the wisest and most capable mortal has no

innate ability to secure anything by his own hand—he must ask and receive in the same way that a child asks and receives. It is no insult to approach the Kingdom helplessly, for even “Abraham” helplessly “believed in God, and it was credited to him as righteousness” (Genesis 15:6) To be “child-like” in humble dependence is not the same as being “childish” in silly folly. For, even when our elders reached a millennium in age, they were still *infants* in light of the infinite spans of the Kingdom.

- **Heirs:** A child at home possesses more in that House than the wealthiest of outsiders. If the king were to enter a household, he would still need to ask for water, while a child could drink freely from his own faucet. In this way, children know that they belong at Home and home is “their home.” They live as natural owners and future managers of their household. So it is with the Kingdom. As children, we should naturally embrace, make ourselves home in, and enjoy the House that is ours, for we will inherit it fully one day!

Lordship:



When we meet the rich man of this passage, he presents a mirror opposite picture of the child-like faith needed to enter the Kingdom. Because he has “great possessions” (10:22), he rejects following Jesus as his “Lord” but instead prefers to call him “Good Teacher.” Let’s consider why seeing Jesus as merely a “Good Teacher” prevents one from coming to Jesus as a “child” to his “Lord.”

As we have already considered, the distance between earth and the heavens is impassable, for the *righteousness* and “good life” of God are infinite. As we saw,

Jesus embodies the surpassing glorious life of the Kingdom because he is the Son of God, sharing the very nature of God-*Elohim*. Such life can only be passed on from life-to-life, never constructed from the defiled and dark materials of earth, much less by those *dead in the spirit* due to their sin.

Yet, this rich man supposes that whatever “good” Jesus has, he can be *taught* to possess this too through human works. So, this man’s first folly is to see Jesus as a teacher passing on the *procedural knowledge to attain life*.

The man does not want Jesus, only the knowledge which Jesus can pass on to him. So, approaching Jesus simply as a “Teacher,” the man retains the control and rule of his own life. In the Kingdom, there is no place for competing Lords, for there is one Lord of the Kingdom, and we are all servants who lay all at his feet.

For this man to come to Jesus Mashiach as his Lord, he cannot compete with Jesus for Lordship, in the same way that a child cannot compete with a *parent* for the household rule. To become a child of the Kingdom who “inherits” eternal life, these changes must take place:

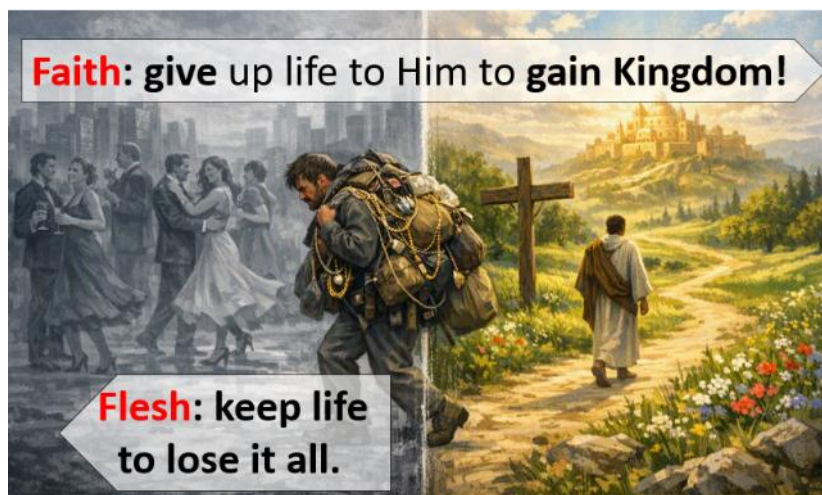
- **Surrender Rule:** Clearly, this man has lived his life as his own sole Ruler. Under his *Self-Rule*, he has enjoyed the unrivalled right to all his possessions, or so he thought. The reality is that his life and possessions were under the control of the *dark ruler* of this world. So, there are no real riches when one is enslaved by this world, for the *rich slave* is still a slave who owns nothing in his slavery. But, the freed Son is Heir of all and truly rich. As Jesus says, “The slave (to sin) does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. So if the Son sets you free, you are free indeed.” (John 8:35-36). So, to become a Son of the Kingdom, one must abandon all other rulers—Self Rule and even the Evil One’s enslaving Rule. For, only freed sons inherit life.
- **Offer life to the Lord:** The Lord Jesus does not save strangers to remain strangers. That is, there is no salvation for those who refuse to draw near to Jesus to be known, choosing to remain anonymous in the nameless crowd. Instead, to draw near to the Lord is to *honor* him as the *rightful Lord*, giving him the *gifts* befitting his title and place. Of course, to come near to Jesus is to give him your old life—defiled, dead, broken. Giving yourself over to his Care means to give yourself to his Lordship.

But, fear not. When you give yourself and all that you have to the Lord, giving him the Lordship and rights over you, you give yourself to the

Liberator, the Redeemer. When you give him all that you have held sway in the flesh, using your life for your own Self-purposes, now give him your life that he may give back to you new life, Redeemed! Before Mephibosheth knew David, he was the *ruler* of desolation, outcast in a wilderness, broken, and impoverished. But, when he gave his *worthless life* as a “dead dog” to be covered under the righteous rule of David, he received his renewed life as royalty, as the King’s friend. Eating at the King’s table, near to his presence, and honored as his friend. So, Jesus calls this man to *give him what he has*—to put his possessions under his Lordship, to be used for **his purposes**.

As we think further on “Kingdom Sacrifice,” we will see that it is never a complete loss but either the *redeeming* of what we have for Kingdom purposes or an *investment* in a greater return in the Kingdom. Either way, sacrifice actually enriches us as Heirs of the Kingdom.

Again, considering this man with “great possessions,” notice that while Jesus urges him to sell “all” that he has, he does not command him to give “all” that he has. I imagine that once the man’s holdings were “liquid” and accessible to the Lord, the man would have the freedom of traveling with the disciples and having the distinction of being one to *support* this Kingdom ministry. Instead, he keeps all his possessions and is forgotten.



Kingdom Sacrifices:

When you think of the *sacrifices* which the Kingdom calls for, you may naturally think of what you give up in terms of “irrecoverable loss.” But, *sacrifice* in the

Kingdom is better thought of as *investment*. When you give up what is yours, you give the Lord the place to use it for the Kingdom's and your good!

For, when we "let go" of what we once clung to—our possessions, our time, our resources—we are not simply throwing it to the wind but entrusting these things into the Lord's hands. We "let go" of what was once entirely ours to "leave" in his good hands. In this way, think of the sacrifices you make for Jesus and the Kingdom as:

- Offered up for **the Lord's Use**: so, the Lord commands that some might be "given to the poor" (10:21).
- Such sacrifices are an **investment in the Kingdom**: such investments will reap a future reward far outpacing what was sown. So, Jesus says, "you will have treasure in heaven."
- **Redemption**: we give up the old to gain new life. So, the man had focused his old life on gathering and gaining "great possessions." Instead, as he *would give up this old focus* on gaining "possessions," he would gain the treasure of "following" Jesus! He would give up what he gathered by his fleshly works, and gain him who created all that is valuable in heaven and earth as a confidant and a companion!
- **Family Sacrifice**: As Jesus assured his disciples, suffering "loss" in this world and enduring "persecutions" was the distinction given to the Family's stakeholders, those counted worthy to suffer for the family. For we are "heirs" if we "suffer" with him, Paul instructs (Romans 8:17).

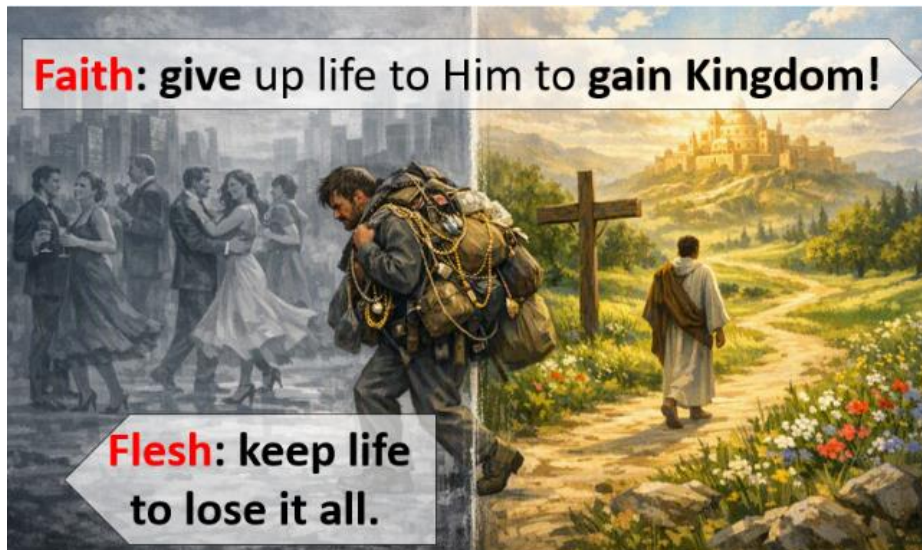
Focus:

1. Entering Kingdom: Humble Heirs. 10:13-16.
2. Entrenched Self-Sufficiency: minimizes Lord/ entitled alienation. 10:17-21.
3. Earthly Loyalty: Unwilling to give up possessions to Gain Lord. 10:22-27
4. Entrust All Life to Jesus: Gain eternal Inheritance. 10:28-31

Consider:

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4. Entrust All Life to Jesus: Gain eternal Inheritance. 10:28-31



Question:

Further Discovery:

5.5.BP(34). Prayer for Spiritual Cleansing- Kingdom Warfare. Mark 9:14-29

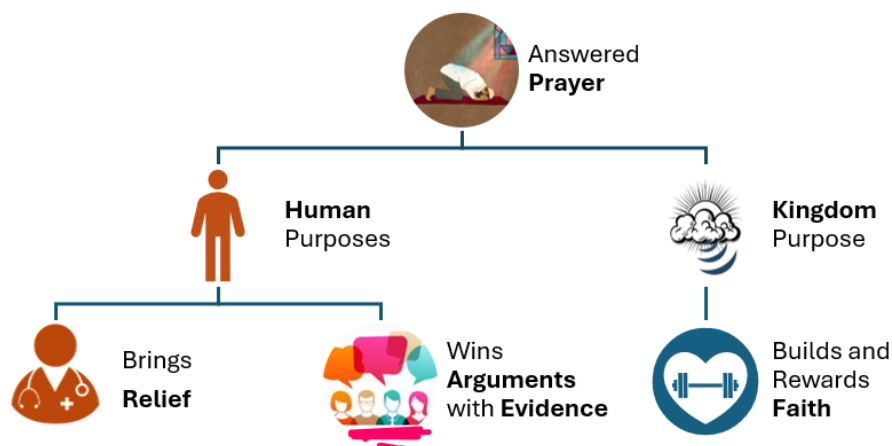
Mark 9:14-28

²¹ And Jesus asked his father, “How long has this been happening to him?” And he said, “From childhood. ²² And it has often cast him into fire and into water, to destroy him. But **if you can** do anything, have compassion on us and help us.” ²³ And Jesus said to him, “‘If you can’! All things are **possible** for one who **believes**.” ²⁴ Immediately the father of the child cried out and said, “**I believe; help my unbelief!**” Mark 9:21-24

Background:

As you reach full maturity as a stage 5 disciple, a sacrificial servant, your view of prayer will mature as well. After Jesus and his close disciples return from experiencing the full glory of the Kingdom, they descend into the typical unrest and chaos of human society. At the center of this cacophony are the disciples, surround by the crowds and pitted against the scribes. Their argument centers around a *spirit-oppressed* young boy whom the disciples were unable to help.

From this story, we see implied several approaches to prayer. Is prayer and God’s answer to prayer mainly a tool at the service of human needs, especially the direst needs as we see here as a desperate seeks relief for his son? Or, is God’s answer to prayer the evidence needed to end disputes, to prove wrong the critics of the Kingdom?



In the early days of your discipleship, often answers to prayer come quickly. But, as you mature, you will see that you must add *perseverance* to your *prayers*. And, you must realize that prayers are not simply your personal service to satisfy your needs. Prayer has a Kingdom purpose and is a primary way to *build or restore faith* when the dark Kingdom seeks to undo the progress of the Kingdom in the lives of its people. Or, prayer is the power that confronts the unbelief which keeps the crowd from coming into the Kingdom.

The purpose of Kingdom Prayer:

- Build Faith- even if it is incremental

In this story, you will see the initial *unbelief* of the father who brings his son for relief from this evil spirit. Although his motives are not clear, he surely does not come with the faith that we have seen in others, such as the woman who pressed through the crowd to confidently make contact with Jesus. He seems to have little regard for Jesus nor his disciples. But, pushed forward by his desperation and confronted with his own unbelief, he is forced to change.

- Not necessarily reverse all suffering in world.

Importantly, if it was the Kingdom's mission simply to eradicate all demonic oppression on the earth, Jesus would have wasted little time engaging with this father and would instead simply free the boy from his oppression. In fact, what the father believed or did not believe would not matter, if the Kingdom's mission was simply to undo the damage of the dark Kingdom. But, what good would such reversals do if people were still enslaved in their unbelief?

Thus, the Lord's higher purpose for prayer is always as a sign of the Kingdom's reality and of his power that it might anchor the faith of those who come to him.

- Not as evidence for human arguments. The

Disciples were embroiled in an argument with scribes over their inability to do anything for this demonized boy. Presumably, these disciples had a heightened need to see this boy freed from demonic oppression.

If the boy were freed, it would likely give weight to the words they were levelling against the scribes. We don't know what they were specifically debating, but to have the weight of the miraculous backing their words would have been to their advantage.

And, perhaps why they were unable to cast out this demon. Perhaps this illustrates that "prayer" is needed for such stubborn spiritual bondage because it

is up to the Lord God to decide the outcomes, weigh motives, and never make the priceless treasures of the Kingdom to be put at the service of mere human bickering. Is God as interested as these disciples in *winning* an argument?

The more pressing question is, would winning an argument, even one backed with irrevocable proofs, lead any opponent to repent and to embrace the Lordship of Jesus by faith? That is, does the Kingdom come when all argumentation has convinced opponents of their own folly?

Clearly, the truth of Jesus as Mashiach is the foundation for redeeming faith. And, as we see in this story, the revealing of His Lordship is instrumental in drawing forth true faith.

Powerful Prayer/ Personal Authority:

- Personal Authority to cast out:

Regarding the *evil spirits*, Jesus gives his disciples authority to “cast out” evil spirits (Mark 3:15). And, because disciples are “in Christ” and under his authority, they have the right as children of God to *cast out the dark spirits* troubling them.

However, the disciples encounter a different type of spiritual resistance. As you mature as a disciple, you also should have experience rebuking testing spirits that harass you, of casting out deception that prevents people from discovering the truth, or freeing the enslaved to join the Kingdom. But, you will also encounter stubborn spiritual resistance. Here, you will need to learn to pray against persistent resistance.

- Persistent Spiritual Oppression.

This father describes this demonic oppression, which completely dominated this boy, as a life-long bondage. Whereas Jesus could engage other demonized individuals, this boy is completely inarticulate as this destructive spirit seeks to harm him. We have no idea what dark force could have such a grip. But, as *servants* of the Kingdom, we must be prepared to oppose even strong spirits that require our Father’s judgment for expulsion.

Suffice to say, these stubborn spiritual opponents:

- Dark Power: has a kind of authority that resists the *rebuke* of the disciples.
- Domination: they aren’t just harassing or in the background but have complete control over speech (mute) (17) and mobility (18).

- Destructive: this spiritual power seeks to harm the person, “throwing him down” (18), convulsing and foaming, and casting into “fire” and “water” (21).
- Duration of time. This spirit is not just a recurrence, it has abided and afflicted for a long duration.
- Powerful Answer to Prayer.

At the throne of Power, only our Father God and the Lord Jesus have the authority to cast out these persistent spirits. Sometimes, these stubborn afflictions may have taken root in a person, a group, an area, or over a population for a long period of time. For example, the spirit *blinding* the Jews from seeing the truth of their Mashiach is an enduring spiritual power. Only intercession and the Father’s answer, according to the judgment of his throne, can overthrow such stubborn opposition.

Progressing Faith in Kingdom.



When the boy’s father first addresses Jesus, he calls him “Teacher.” Notice that this is also how the disciples addressed him early in their relationship with Jesus. Viewing him only as “Teacher,” they were astonished and fearful when he displayed his power over the seas and nature, asking, “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?” (Mark 4:40). Jesus rebuked their narrow and limited view of himself, saying it indicated a lack of faith (40). So, this father also exhibits a lack of faith. Notice how one’s view of Jesus and response to him reveals the kind of faith one has:

- **Teacher:** limited view of Jesus as a mere fleshly man. There is no expectation that he has any power beyond the natural. This shows a lack of faith.
- **Master:** (Luke 5:1-5). Simon Peter called Jesus “Master,” viewing him as one having a narrow field of authority over religious details, but Simon then viewed himself as having “mastery” over the sea, being a fisherman.
- **Lord:** (Luke 5:1-5). When the true power of Jesus is revealed, people view him as “Lord” and fall down in full submission to him, realizing their abject poverty and helpless need for him. This is true faith.

As a *mature disciple*, learn to pray strategically that your people may experience for themselves the power of God, that their view of Jesus may be recalibrated to know the fullness of his power and authority as Lord over all the forces of darkness. Such Lordship requires a *fully surrendered faith*.

Focus:

1. Demonic Enslavement: complete control over helpless) 8:14-17
2. Doubting Generation: don't recognize Jesus nor followers) 8:18-20
3. Repent of Unbelief: Repent of limiting Jesus) 8:21-24
4. Release Spiritual Bondage: Only by Prayer.) 8:25-29

Consider:

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1. Demonic Enslavement: complete control over helpless) 8:14-17
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3. Repent of Unbelief: Repent of limiting Jesus) 8:21-24
4. Release Spiritual Bondage: Only by Prayer.) 8:25-29

Question:

Further Discovery:

5.6.C(35).Kingdom Service: Great to Last. Mark 9:30-37.

Read Mark 9:30-37.

³⁴ But they kept silent, for on the way they had argued with one another about who was **the greatest**. ³⁵ And he sat down and called the twelve. And he said to them, “If anyone would be **first**, he **must be last** of all and **servant of all**.” ³⁶ And he **took a child** and put him in the midst of them, and taking him in his arms, he said to them, ³⁷ “Whoever receives one such **child in my name receives me**, and whoever receives me, receives not me but him who sent me.” Mark 9:34-37

Background:

As a disciple, you are an Heir of the Kingdom of God. The entirety, the rule, and the wealth of the Kingdom is to be yours when Mashiach possesses it all on his day. So, if the Kingdom and its fullness is yours, then you must take hold of the Kingdom even now, though it is still hidden.

So, as you reach maturity as a disciple, you are also called to live fully and responsibly in the kingdom. But, here is the complication. The Kingdom of God, established by the radiating *glorious life* of its Lord and King, Jesus Mashiach, runs counter to the fleshly kingdoms of earth. For, each earthly kingdom derives power through the flesh, and it maintains its power by fleshly domination.

In contrast, the Kingdom is first the House of the King, a household of reborn children of God, who live with one another in the Spirit of unity and love. As members of one family, the family of God, these Heir-disciples embody and relate to one another by the shared and glorious life of the King, who is the source of a sanctifying righteousness which runs counter to the *flesh*. If the flesh is driven by Self-interest, the Spirit moves the family, and especially its mature and *great ones*, in sacrificial service.

So, let’s consider how the *natural judgments* and assumptions of the flesh run counter to the Spirit’s Kingdom dynamics.

Human Distinctions:

Status: True Greatness= Extensive Service.

Because the *flesh* is idolatrous, it usurps God's place of *Headship* and exalts itself as Self-important and Self-honoring in this life. So, this *fleshly ambition* and *self-interest* conceives of status as being "greater" than others. Greatness is to acquire wealth and power at the expense of others, for the purpose of Self-honor and self-indulgence.

However, mature disciples distinguish themselves as having more authority by having more responsibility to serve. Greatness in the Kingdom means *greater responsibility and authority to serve*.

So, the distinction of being "first" or prominent in the kingdom is not for one's own self-gratification, but rather, the complete opposite. To be first means to be the first in responsibility to serve, to sacrifice, and to help the others.

Case Study: Israel's burden of being Firstborn.

There is a misconception that Israel has been withheld from its Mashiach due to its own failings, transgressions, or hardness. The idea of Israel's unworthiness has been virulently propagated during the Church-age by misguided but ignorant sophists.

It is true that Israel bears responsibility for its choice to reject Jesus as its Mashiach. But, this rejection, in God's plan, is not due to a failure but for courageous sacrifice. For, as the Lord's Firstborn family of all the families of the earth (Exodus 4:22), Israel has the burden, the right, and the responsibility to bring *redemption* to all the other families of the earth *first* before Israel itself is redeemed.

That is the greater Kingdom purpose of Israel's wandering apart from Mashiach these two long days (two thousand years) after Mashiach was cut off on the cross (33 CE). As Paul predicts, once the "fullness" of the Gentiles comes in, then "All Israel will be saved" (Romans 11:25-26).

In this way, Jesus, the Heir and Firstborn of Humanity as "the Son of Man" and of the heavenly family as "the Son of God" has the sole right and responsibility to *redeem* his family from Satan's dark enslavement. So, in the Kingdom, the foremost of Us bears the burden of suffering, sacrificing, and foregoing redemption until all the family is redeemed first. That is what Mashiach bears, and that is the burden Israel bears as the people of Abraham and David.

Consider how the Kingdom re-defines the ways that we must relate to one another in this *common life of Mashiach*, as Jesus teaches in the book of Matthew:

⁶ and they love the place of **honor** at feasts and the best seats in the synagogues ⁷ and greetings in the marketplaces and being called rabbi^[b] by others. ⁸ But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have **one teacher**, and you are all **brothers**.^[c] ⁹ And call no man your father on earth, for you have one **Father**, who is in heaven. ¹⁰ Neither be called **instructors**, for you have one **instructor**, the Christ. ¹¹ The greatest among you shall be your **servant**. ¹² Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted. Matthew 23:6-11.

Role: Attributing Teaching- Self-ambition or Selfless Sharing.

In the world, there are certain “roles” that are more honorable and noteworthy than others. Because “standing” in the world depends on one’s accumulated accolades, recognition, and support, teachers distinguish themselves with their *proprietary teachings*—each teacher claims for the honor and sway of his “name.” So, in rabbinic Judaism, there are teachers, but recognized teachers are called “rabbis”—great ones. And, the greatest of these have their names memorialized because their teachings are embraced as doctrines by their traditions.

But, Jesus warns that such distinctions within the Kingdom are unacceptable. In a worldly system like Judaism, each teacher stakes out a self-proclaimed authority of expertise, with different *spheres* of authority carving up the community into separate factions, like the *leaven* creating pockets of emptiness within the loaf.

Instead, Jesus instructs that there is only *one* who has the authority to be the source of all the teachings of the Kingdom, and that instructor is the Mashiach himself. All other teachers depend on, enforce, and clarify his authority through their teachings. Their teachings are always *dependent*, explanatory rather than inventive, and *faithful* rather than independent. Thus, only the Mashiach’s authority is recognized and all other teachers share this authority as *brothers* sharing the common bread given to them by the Mashiach.

Position: Proximity to Power: great or little?

In any social structures, it is inevitable that *power aggregates* and organizes. In worldly settings, the powerful who have dominated and extracted resources from others by their Self-promotion work together to maintain their control and their dominance.

But, who is truly powerful in the Kingdom of God, where there is only one seat of power, the throne of Jesus Mashiach and His Father. Who is positioned in places of *power and distinction* in the Kingdom?

We have already seen that “greatness” in the Kingdom means a greater responsibility to serve, to care for, and even to suffer and sacrifice. So, the *greatest* in the Kingdom suffers the most, for he sacrifices for All in the Kingdom. Similarly, his supremacy and authoritative Word requires that his people share it equally, for the common good. So, selfish and *independent* teaching contrary to the Lord’s purposes are not acceptable in the Kingdom, for that would create pockets of rebellion and division within the coherent family unity of the House.

But, how are the sons of the Kingdom **positioned**, relative to one another? Because there is only one source of power, the King of the Kingdom, who does the King choose to position?

In the world, the “Great Ones” come together because they have earned and accumulated “power” by their own hands. So, they come together, each in his own “right.”

But, remember that the Kingdom has one source of power and glory. Not wealth, military might, or political influence. In the Kingdom, the King is its sole source of glorious life. So, the distinguishing quality for those most highly valued, the ones distinguished among the brothers, are actually the ones most like “children” (9:36).

In the Kingdom’s unexpected thinking, the child who is most dependent, most needy, and the simplest in their devotion to the King, is the best *one to represent* the King in all his glory.

If the King gathered to himself a collection of Self-Rulers, accustomed to commanding and acting in their own authority, these would always resist and resent any intrusive power that would curb their own will.

But, a **child** simply follows his Lord to do his will. Scorned in the world by his simplicity, his impudent need for the King and his lack of Tradition-appealing thought, such a simpleton would be worthy of derision. But, in the King’s eyes, such a child is highly valued and of great use to the Kingdom. For, in the Kingdom, knowing the King in his glory is the highest position, for he says: “my grace is sufficient for you. For, my power is made perfect in weakness.” (2 Corinthians 12:9).

In the Kingdom, children who are weak, who are helpless in themselves, but who draw near to the Lord unashamedly and know that they are dearly loved, such children perfectly reflect the Lord's Kingdom glory!

And, in the spiritual realm, our inherent weakness and powerlessness is the actual reality. So, living with Jesus with the simple faith of a child positions you *closest* to Jesus and in a place of *Kingdom usefulness*!



However, remember this. Those close and highly useful in the Kingdom are overlooked on earth, for their value, though seen by the King, is hidden from those who assume great places of significance on earth. Kingdom usefulness and position appear on earth to be inconsequential and foolish, having no impressive weight in the affairs of man.

As a *sacrificial shepherd*, be sure that your value and position in the simplicity of your childlike devotion and availability to the Lord is fed only by the *heavenly approval* of your Lord and God! For, even though you are overlooked on earth, your impact for the Kingdom will be one day recognized!

Case Study: Unknown in the Church.

One night, I was sitting before the Lord in my room in Hawaii, with the breeze reminding me of the Spirit's touch. As was my habit, I waited on the Lord and asked him what was on his mind and heart.

He let me know that there was a burden on his heart. There was a blockage keeping his Jewish people from coming to him. He wanted me to do something about it.

So, unrecognized by the church, I left to do field work for a graduate degree among the Jews of Chicago: reform, conservative, modern orthodox, ultra-orthodox. After around a decade in the field, a Jewish friend asked me:

“Who are the parents of Jesus?” “Mary and the Holy Spirit.” “We will give you that he may be the Son of God. But he can never be the Son of David.” “Is inheritance by Mary? No, not through maternal line. Through Joseph? No, not through adoption.” After years, I responded: “When God promises to “raise up seed” for David, he acts according to duty (yibbum) and redemptive right (geullah). Similar to the actions of Judah and Boaz, the Seed raised up is the son of two fathers: God and David.”

The findings that both Jewish traditional interpretations and modern Jewish readings naturally lead Jewish readers down this trail of *toledot-zera* to 2 Samuel 7:12’s promise was published in a journal, circulated, and published on this website. But, not only was this ignored by the Church, but even the Messianic Jewish community, which takes its theology from the church rather from a Torah-derived pathway.

Through this long process, I never expected any type of worldly recognition. But, the Lord has assured me that when Israel finally turns to Mashiach, they will know that He is the Seed raised up for David!

Focus:

1. Kingdom Service: Greatest suffers Most—future justice of resurrection) 8:30-31
2. Kingdom Greatness: Last and servant of all. 8:32-35
3. Kingdom Representative: Humble Child reveals Glorious Lord). 8:36-37

Consider:

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1. Kingdom Service: Greatest suffers Most—future justice of resurrection) 8:30-31
2. Kingdom Greatness: Last and servant of all. 8:32-35
3. Kingdom Representative: Humble Child reveals Glorious Lord). 8:36-37

Question:

Further Discovery:

5.7.C(40).Life-Giving Service. Mark 10:32-45

As a Shepherd of the flock, and one called to bear your people and to *lay down your life* for them as Jesus does as the Good Shepherd (John 10:10-11), know that God will forge an unseen bond linking you and your people. You have the *distinct privilege* of suffering for them, laying your life for them, even suffering loss for them, that they might thrive and bear fruit.

This picture of “life-giving” is the hallmark of parenthood, and that is what you are as a shepherd, a parent. So, the picture of a parent foregoing a meal to feed a hungry child is essentially what it means to shepherd. And, you will be asked to make these choices, *for the sake of Mashiach*, as you tend his flock. So, every moment of rest,



opportunity for gain, or small indulgence you give up for the Sake of the Lord and his flock will be *life-giving*, for the Lord God sees your sacrifice and will multiply into Kingdom life! For, the Lord says:

Truly, truly, I say **to** you, unless a grain of wheat **falls** into **the** earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. John 12:24

Give your life freely for your people to enjoy fruitful life in the Kingdom! But, resolve to expect no gain for yourself. The Lord holds your reward for you in the real life of your Kingdom future!

Case Study: Fruitful Kingdom

The clearest manifesting of the Kingdom and its fruitfulness was the organic and natural growth that sprung up during our monthly “free dinners” we hosted for our graduate and international student friends in Hawaii. We invited the Lord to join us for every dinner and to reveal his Kingdom’s goodness, and the stories abounded of atheists and seekers being healed, sensing the hand of God in their lives, and people testifying of the true God in the midst of their unbelief. We recording around sixty people moving from atheism to a belief in God, a dozen disciples baptized, and one pastor rise up out of his agnosticism!

But, behind the scenes, we had a wonderful team of like-minded laborers who sacrifice to welcome, feed, and pray for and meet the needs of these dear ones for years. I remember praying every Saturday with the team for each of the people on our guest list, that grew into the hundreds.

The Kingdom comes when your team of shepherds are ready to lay down your lives for the sheep entrusted to you by the Lord!

Read Mark 10:32-45.

⁴² 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. ⁴³ But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be **great** among you must be your **servant**, ⁴⁴ and whoever would be **first** among you must be **slave** of all. ⁴⁵ For even **the Son of Man** came not to be served but to **serve**, and to give his **life as a ransom** for many.” (Mark 10:42-45)

Background:

Greatness in the Kingdom:

Rank and Privilege:

As a fully mature disciple, you will of course recognize that there are many who are not mature. You do not need to live in denial, telling yourself that “I am no different than others.” That is not true. As a fully mature disciple, you are the culmination of the Lord’s long process of “working” in your life to make you capable of the kingdom “works” that last (Ephesians 2:8-9)—rescuing the lost sheep, building the Lord’s House, and establishing the “throne” of his rule in human hearts! When you reach maturity, you become a treasure in the Kingdom, for now there is another one to take up the same *mantle*, to drink the same cup of the Lord Jesus.

And, the first disciples were right. To share in this distinction is *rare* in the Kingdom. But, with achievement comes privilege—what are the privileges for those who reach maturity in the Kingdom? How will they be recognized and rewarded with power?

From the outset, let’s agree to focus on the labor on this earth in our discussion. At this point in the story, the Lord Jesus was “going up to Jerusalem” (10:32) and

his imminent condemnation to “death” and his resurrection (33-34). But, the disciples were bickering over the days of “glory” when the Lord takes hold of all that is his. He responds simply by saying: 1) the Father is the one who “prepares” positions in the Kingdom (40); and, “greatness” in the Kingdom (43) is very different in the Kingdom, both in this current earthly world of labor, hardship, and sacrifice, and in the “glory” to come when Jesus Mashiach will sit on his eternal throne in “righteousness and uprightness” (Psalm 45:6), even “fighting” for the cause of “meekness.” (4). There are no rightful tyrants in the Kingdom, not in this world or the next. Power never *justifies* abuse, lawless indulgence, or oppression. Rather, those anointed with great power are given a greater responsibility to serve “all” (Mark 10:44).

For, at the very basis of worldly power is anonymity, of separation and alienation, so at the very heart of the earthly ruler is Self-interest and ambition—gaining at the expense of the sacrifices of others. Such vampire-rulers feed off of the life of their subjects, consuming and depleting resources to enrich themselves. They live selfishly, because they live among strangers.

But, the Kingdom is first a House of Sons—brothers and sisters who share in the King’s interests and purposes. The Oneness of our House means that what is good for one is good for all, but the suffering of the one affects us all.

Profile of Kingdom Greatness:

Let’s agree that “greatness” in the Kingdom, then, is not a matter of *self-promotion* or *reward*, although the Father assures us that there is a *reward* for Kingdom sacrifice, especially for those who serve “all.” But, let’s focus on the “greatness” that matters to our Lord Jesus, the greatness which the Father sees and of which he alone approves. On earth, this *greatness* is a greatness whose *glory* is hidden, for what is seen is simply hard and humble service with no recognition, no political power gained, no advantage seized.

1) Great Vision:

The first difference distinguishing those disciples given a *great responsibility to sacrificially serve* is that they are given a *greater vision*.

As Jesus approached Mashiach and his impending sacrifice and resurrection, his disciples and the crowds accompanied him. For those without or with little faith, their vision was clouded with fear—they were “afraid” (10:32). As we have already seen, *faith* dissipates and *fear* overshadows when one takes his eyes off of the

Lord Jesus and focuses on what is seen on earth. So, those accompanying Jesus who only saw the impending conflicts were afraid.

But, his disciples, who by now have been hearing about the King's expectation to "die and rise" (34), are starting to see things differently. Rather than the clouds of fearful threat, the disciples were "amazed" (32-33).

Now, to these "twelve," with whom the Lord Jesus was not only sharing the Kingdom's way of "suffering and resurrection" but also the very "cup" of martyrdom which they would one day partake with him, the Lord shows *amazing things*, things of the Kingdom which are known by the Spirit, that "no eye has seen nor ear heard" but are known only by *revealing* (1 Corinthians 2:9-10).

As you mature as a disciple living *sacrificially to serve the Lord in his Kingdom*, you will also see "amazing" things. Not only will these *revealed* mysteries be hidden to fleshly eyes, but expect:

- Revealed Will and Plan.

To those given *great responsibility* in Kingdom, the Lord will often reveal the amazing work he plans to do, requiring them to *walk by faith*. These disciples following Jesus were informed of the crucifixion and resurrection beforehand so they might eventually understand God's work of salvation.

Remember, those *shown great things* often are given a greater measure of *faith* as well, so that those without their calling will often disbelieve or even attempt to silence them. If you have been shown a great thing, keep it between you and God unless he tells you to disclose it.

- Biblical prophecy becoming reality:

Before their very eyes, the words of Daniel that the Mashiach would be "cut off" in making "atonement" for sins and bringing an everlasting "righteousness" (Daniel 9:24). As these events unfolded surrounding this prophesy, the disciples may have understood at the moment but certainly did in retrospect.

- Promises of God being fulfilled:

God will often make personal promises to you, which he will fulfill in amazing and unexpected ways. These works that are both unexpected and *exceedingly blessed* by his hand affirm his promise to you.

- Hidden Kingdom realities made known:

As the Lord God works through you to reach his people, he will do so in unmistakably amazing and unexpectedly fruitful and providential ways. By these

works, you will understand the *secrets* and the dynamic of how his Kingdom indeed takes shape on earth. This work will be hidden or even threatening to those living in the flesh, so be careful. If you find yourself being opposed by those who don't see what you see but are threatened by the work of God, you will know that you are true and they are fleshly.

Finally, the reason God will work and reveal amazing realities of the Kingdom to you is that he shares with the few who will do his *great works* the depths of his heart. If he can trust you to serve him in the humblest yet most needed ways, you can be sure that he gives you access to his thoughts and heart that few will ever know.

Case Study: An Amazing Unfolding:

As the Lord calls you as his *sacrificial servant* to greater and greater areas of responsibility, his *amazing* work is the clearest reward and affirmation of the authenticity of his call.

In my earlier seasons as a disciple, the Lord has always been faithful to the calling he put in my heart. When called to graduate and international students unreached by the Church, the Lord eventually brought dozens to faith and raised up a dozen disciples from that group. When the Lord put on my heart a home-group ministry to reach the nations, he installed me at a church gathering over seventy nations and gave me nearly a hundred leaders to lead home-groups to serve these people.

But, the most abiding *call* he put on my heart was to the Jews. So, when he shared his heart of the *blockage* keeping his people from himself, I left my perfect life in the paradise of Hawaii and step into the *frigid hardship of Chicago*.

Over time, he amazed me by opening doors for me. I worked for a Conservative rabbi, attended Shabbat dinners at the Reform congregation of my Hebrew teacher's husband, a rabbi. Finally, through his connections, I settled in a Modern Orthodox congregation whose rabbi gave me access to do field work among his people. So, I was welcomed into homes as I listened to these Jews discuss Torah.

Once, discussing Torah before an ultra-orthodox Shabbat dinner, a young talmid wondered together, "Does Torah provide within itself guidelines for its own interpretation?" Starting with Genesis, I was amazed as the Spirit traced the phrase *elle toledot*- these are the generations" throughout the Tanakh, creating a path leading directly to the Davidic Mashiach. For, at key junctures of the "generations," God promises a "Seed," the designated Heir of his

household, anointed with the Right of Redemption: The Seed of Woman, to crush the serpent's head (Genesis 3:15); the Seed of Abraham, to restore God's "blessing" to all earth's families (Genesis 22:18); and, the Seed of David, *raised up by God*, to be the Son of God (2 Samuel 7:14) and the Son of David (12) who is disciplined for iniquity (14) to redeem sons for God's (13) and David's House (11), who establish his throne and the rule of his eternal kingdom (16).

Amazingly, the traditional rabbis and the modern Jewish readers themselves saw *toledot* and *zera* in these same ways. Yet, tragically, they stopped short of realizing that God promises to "raise up Seed" for David as a matter of *redemptive duty* (yibbum) (Genesis 38:8) and *right* (geullah) (Ruth 4:10), thus promising Mashiach to be the Son of two fathers—David (2 Samuel 7:12) and God (14).

2. Great Sacrifice (33-34).

The Kingdom and its throne is founded on the House that Jesus Mashiach establishes. So, the sacrifices God requires for the Kingdom's establishment and growth are family sacrifices, calling for our *greatest* and total efforts. For the sake of family, the greatest and most enduring sacrifices have been made.

In this way, Jesus as "the Son of Man," humanity's most honored Heir and Firstborn Son, relinquishes all his rights completely that he might endure the greatest sacrifice for his family. He gives up his basic right to justice as he is "delivered" to his enemies, the "chief priests and scribes" (33). These leaders should know the ancient prophecies of the coming Mashiach and were responsible for preparing the people for his coming. Instead, they are the very ones to reject and prosecute Mashiach.

Not only does he allow himself to be *tried* by the Jews, but he gives himself over to the power of the Gentiles (33). Freed of the restraints of God's Law, they take away even the *rights and dignity* he has as a person, humiliating and mocking him (34). In the end, he gives up all he has and is "killed."

But, we will see that Jesus Mashiach gives up the greatest sacrifice of all. As the Son of God, Jesus has enjoyed a perfect "oneness" with the Father for all eternity (John 10:30). To redeem his people, Jesus "becomes sin" that they might become "the righteousness of God" (2 Corinthians 5:21), causing the Father to "forsake" him at the cross (Mark 15:34).

If you are to serve the Lord with *great responsibility*, be prepared to lose all that you once thought of as your *right* and *necessary for life*. The things which *make us human* are the very things stripped away for the sake of the Kingdom, and this world is the crucible for this great testing. But, know this. Suffering for the Kingdom, you are not suffering for *unrelated strangers* but for the family of God—the Lord’s family and your family. You sacrifice according to your heavenly Father’s will—the Father of the Mashiach and your Father. Only *our family* can call you to the great sacrifices you will face.

But, you will find that *great sacrifice* opens the door for *great service*.

3. Great Responsibility:

When the disciples were sent out by the Lord in pairs, we saw that the Kingdom was structured around households which were led by parental pairs: households of faith formed extended families, and these great families would adaptively extend the Kingdom through languages, peoples, and nations. So, when God assigns *responsible disciples* to care for his people, he appoints them as *shepherds*, for he promises his people: “And I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding” (Jeremiah 3:15).

So, when the first disciples consider their *roles* as shepherds of God’s flock, they realize that they have been entrusted with *great responsibility*—not just caring for single households but for generations of households and for the *generating* and reproduction of these households. One day, they would each take responsibility for entire *populations*—Peter would go to the *diaspora Jews*; Paul would go to the Gentiles, helping to reach the entire Roman Empire for the Gospel.

These disciples *grasped the greatness of their responsibility*, so they naturally thought of the *privileges*, the *benefits* that would go with their positions of responsibility. For, in the world, great responsibility won great reward. In the world, rulers would be selfishly pampered as they “lorded” over their people and as their *power* translated to great *influence*, manipulation, and subjugation of the people.

But, Jesus defines “greatness” in the Kingdom not as “Selfish privilege” but as “Responsibility to serve,” with the ones having the greatest responsibility as those who have given up their Self-Rights *in order to be rightfully responsible* for “all” (44).

In describing how you should see yourself as a *sacrificial servant* of the Kingdom, Jesus starts by talking about your *personal freedom*, your right to act

purely for your own benefit, to close your heart to the needs and requests of others.

As the *greatest* in the Kingdom, Jesus does not have the *right* to close his heart, to indulge his flesh, so that he is the only one to benefit. Instead, we have seen him set aside his own self-interests for the sake of the *hungry crowds*, the *leper*, the *demonized synagogue dweller*, the *woman suffering from bleeding*, a *dead little girl*. He even took responsibility for a woman's child who did not belong to the *children of Israel*, the people to whom he is called first.

So, consider yourself. Are you seeking to *serve*, even *serve sacrificially*, so that ultimately you would maximize your Self-interest and greatness in the Kingdom of God?

Or, will you only serve when you are seen, when you are credited with good deeds to improve your status among people?

Or, do you see the Kingdom and its service as a way to achieve *greatness* on this earth?

Instead, the mark of your service should begin with a *heart* burdened with and a *commitment* to serve "all" whom the Father brings to you. To set aside your own *rights and privileges* that they might be *fed* in the Kingdom and secured in the House.

Whether you are called to serve a single household or all households of a clan, a tribe, a nation, a territory, or a generation, consider the *great responsibility* you have been given by your Lord and Father. He is entrusting to you his own people, the members of his own household. As your people grow and thrive, they will reproduce, multiply, and form new households, establishing the throne of our Lord and Redeemer, Jesus Mashiach. Thus, your great work ensures that *future generations* will spread the rule of our Lord Jesus throughout the land. But, you can only fulfill your duty to *feed* your people if you are willing to lay down your life in sacrifice, including your right to be selfish and self-honoring. But, laying your life down, you will have a great impact—bringing life to those who were once dead.

4. Great Impact.

¹⁵ “And I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will **feed you** with knowledge and understanding. Jeremiah 3:15

¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have **life and have it abundantly**. ¹¹ I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd **lays down his life** for the sheep. John 10:10-11.

As every parents understands, it is the primary responsibility of a caregiver to be a “life-giver”—to take responsibility to feed and nurture the young and dependent ones in the family. Without a parent to *give life* to these children, they would not survive.



In this way, God knows that a well-fed and cared for people will reproduce and multiply households for the Kingdom, thus establishing the throne and kingdom of his Mashiach. So, he promises his people, “I will give you shepherds after my own heart... who will **feed you**...” (Jeremiah 3:15). But, this care and feeding is not cheap. Shepherds simply do not put knowledge and information before the people. In a fundamental way, only “life” passes on “life.” As Paul says, “we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves” (1 Thessalonians 5:8b).

Thus, Jesus Mashiach explains that in the Kingdom, he comes as the Mashiach to bring “life abundantly” (10:10), but this life comes with a great price. As the good shepherd, he only brings life by “**laying his life down** for the sheep” (John 10:11).

Of course, only the Son of God, Mashiach, bears the Firstborn’s right to redeem his people, laying his life down on the cross. However, the principle holds true in the Kingdom—*shepherds only bring life to their people* when they offer their lives in **sacrificial service to** the Lord God.

For, parents realize that they are not simply life-givers, but to feed their children, they must be “life-giving-Up.” To feed and nurture the younger ones, it requires them



to give up life that the other might gain life, sacrificing time, resources, and comfort so that the needy one may receive.

As a shepherd, you know that serving others will always cost you, but this expenditure is the *valuable offering* you give up to please the Father. As David resolved that he would not give to the Lord God sacrifices “that cost me nothing” (2 Samuel 24:24). Cheap service or even Self-serving service feeds only the shepherd, but Jesus was willing to give up “all” to serve the “all,” saying that he came “to give his life as a **ransom** for many” (10:45).

So, as a level five shepherd resolving to *sacrificially serve* the Lord and the people of his Kingdom, check your readiness to serve as the Lord Jesus served:

- Are you willing to *hear* the Lord’s calling to give you a *great responsibility* for a people he will give to you?
- Will you *walk by faith* to be *amazed* at how the Lord works in your life to care for and feed these people as their shepherd?
- What are you willing to *sacrifice* in order to serve the people whom God has given you?
- Who are the people you are willing to put ahead of your own Self-interests to serve?
- Are you willing to *give up* what is yours in order that your people will *gain life* by your life-giving service?

Focus:

5.7.(C). (40). Life-Giving Service: Ransom.

1. Witnessing Kingdom Justice: the Heir is humbly killed to be gloriously raised. 10:32-34
2. Kingdom Glory: Sacrificial Servant Leaders. 10:35-44;
3. Kingdom Growth: Son of Man’s sacrificial service is life-giving ransom 10:45

Consider:

F

Question:

Further Discovery:

5.8.CR(33).Hidden Glory of King Revealed. Mark 9:1-13

Imagine the Son of God, facing his accusers in the religious court of the Jewish Sanhedrin. This glorious Son was with God in the beginning, fashioning the worlds at the Father's command, leading Israel through the wilderness like lost lambs following their Shepherd, even protecting Hezekiah and the nation from the threats and powerful invading force of Sennacherib. This Son, always at the Father's side, was now hidden before his accusers as an errant outsider. The very Firstborn Heir of David Himself, heir to the throne, future-world ruler, the Elohim anointed by Elohim to sit on an eternal throne, now standing in simple cloth in the presence of finery, gold, and religious power. Then, the High Priest accuses him of *blasphemy*. This maddening gap between the true *reality* of the Lord's hidden glory and the injustice which the worldly blindly accuses in its unbelief is what you will face constantly as a shepherd.

But, in the Kingdom, the Lord God and His Mashiach sees and will repay. But, if you have suffered derision, rejection, and humiliation for the sake of his name, remember that you are blessed!

Keep serving the Lord, until this hidden glory of the Kingdom will be fully known! Until then, rest in the Lord who sees you in secret! (Matthew 6:6).

Mark 9:1-13.

And he said to them, "Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they **see the kingdom of God** after it has **come** with **power**." 2 And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was **transfigured** before them, 3 and his clothes became **radiant, intensely white**, as no one on earth could bleach them. Mark 9:1-3

Background:



The Kingdom of God and its exceeding glory are hidden from fleshly eyes, but these disciples “saw the kingdom of God after it has come with power” (9:1) when this material world and its blinders were outshone on the mountain, so that they “saw...Jesus only” (8).

So, in this story, we will discover how we too, as disciples, might know the full glory and power, a small glimpse of the full reality that will one day be ours to fully experience. And, this exposure to the Kingdom of God in its power is given to us only because of and for the goal that we might “see Jesus only!”

#1: Relational Glory: Knowing Jesus Only.

In one scene, Mark gives us glimpse of our Kingdom predicament. When these *mortal disciples* were exposed the to raw power of the Kingdom at the *transfiguration* of Jesus, they were at a loss over what to do and what to say. Simply drawing from their very inadequate human experiences, the best they could come up with was to erect “three tents,” perhaps thinking of how Moses met with God in the “tent of meeting” and how the presence of the Lord

accompanied Israel in a *tent—a tabernacle*. For, Mark shows us Peter as being overwhelmed by this experience—he was “terrified” (6) and at a loss for words.

So, our initial human impulse is to receive the revealed glory of the Kingdom and translate it into familiar religious receptacles. Forms that will comfort us in the sheer *terror* of the Kingdom. For, the Kingdom and its Glory *terrifies* our weak flesh because our flesh cannot control it; our fleshly Self-importance can’t compare to its exceeding glory; and, the darkness of its sin has no place in its perfection. But, after even God addresses them from heaven, they realize that the one thing that remained, the bridge anchoring the Kingdom and its exceeding glory to their lives in this untamed material world was Jesus alone. So, the main application of how we can know the Kingdom’s Glory even in our world which is currently in rebellion against his rule? “See Jesus only!” And, let us not diminish the Kingdom’s glory to *controllable and reasonable religious forms*.

Case Study: the danger of knowing everything but Jesus.

The church of Jesus Mashiach, whose place in the Kingdom is a *temporary structure of seven lamps*, was the first to receive the outpouring of the Kingdom’s power as the testimony of Jesus Mashiach was accompanied by the “signs” of the Kingdom. But, when the fleshly Self-interests of man shaped how the people were to live out their Kingdom life, through traditions and religious forms, *religious* life grew complicated, seeking to replicate the Kingdom’s power by the resources of man. The Word’s power to command was replaced by man-made theologies and doctrines, enforced by institutions to achieve a standard of piety. The workings of the Spirit were diminished into religious entertainment and spectacle. Even the harvest of the Kingdom was monetized.

In the Last Days, the Church devolved into a powerful, money-making enterprise. In Revelation, the *last church* has even become “rich” by shutting Jesus out of his own church—he has the “stand at the door and knock” (Revelation 3:20). So, let us never forget. Jesus Mashiach is the King, center, and glory of the Kingdom!

#2: Radiant Glory: A Righteousness not of this earth.

When Jesus Mashiach displayed in himself the “glorious” reality of the Kingdom, this glory was first of all a “radiant” glory rather than a mere “reflected” glory. Jesus, at the heart of His Kingdom, embodies the very life and presence of God.

The glorious life he gives to his disciples emanates from the fullness of his own life (John 1:1-5).

So, because Jesus emanates the very life of God, this glory is “intensely white,” displaying a purity and holiness that are revealed from the *righteousness* of his very nature.

For this reason, the King of the Kingdom of God makes his people righteous, for he is truly Yahweh Tzedekenu—*The Lord our Righteousness*. Not only does the King emanate the radiant glory of his righteous nature, but all of his people are similarly clothed in “white robes” (Revelation 7:9). These white robes of the Kingdom replace the “shameful nakedness,” the *corrupted life of the flesh*, which Adam had passed down to his generations.

#3: Revealed Glory: the Law and the Prophets testify.

Finally, Moses and Elijah talk with Jesus as the Kingdom’s appointed Mashiach. What a perfect picture of how the Law (voiced by Moses) and the Prophets (by Elijah) are in conversation with the Kingdom’s Heir, Jesus!

For, the Law reveals the Kingdom’s Mashiach in his original role as the “Seed,” “the Son of Man” who is the appointed Redeemer of all Adam’s generations to be the heirs of the “heavens and the earth.” As the Son of Man, humanity’s Heir, Jesus fulfills the promise to Abraham that in his Seed, Mashiach, “all the nations of the earth” will be blessed. For, as promised before Pharaoh, “Israel is my Firstborn” (Exodus 4:22) and so has the Right to Redeem all the families of the earth through the Seed of Abraham, Jesus Mashiach.

But, the Prophets reveal the Kingdom’s Son as Mashiach, the “Seed/ Son of David” who establishes a generational House which establishes Mashiach’s throne to rule a Kingdom forever. Spoken of first to David through the prophet Samuel, God promises to “raise up Seed” for David, thus ensuring that Mashiach will be both the Son of God and the Son of David by redemptive right- *geullah* and family duty—*yibbum*. This Mashiach, anointed by the Spirit and freeing the captive, as Isaiah predicted (Isaiah 11:1-3 and 61:1-3) would be raised up to be “the Lord their God and David their King” (Jeremiah 30:9) in order to restore David’s broken line, terminated by God at Jeconiah (Jeremiah 22:30).

Thus, never think that the Kingdom of God and his future for all humanity centers around anyone or anything but Jesus, the Kingdom’s source of glory!

A kingdom focused on the glory of its people becomes a cheap harlot sitting on a bloody throne. A kingdom showcasing the excellence of humanity becomes bestial

genocide and blasphemous tyranny. The Kingdom of Jesus Mashiach is glorious, but anyone else, a horror.

Focus:

- 1.f Revealed: Comes with Power) 9:1
2. King Radiant: Reality is Blinding in flesh) 9:2-5
- 3.Kingdom Terrifying to Flesh: See only Jesus, beloved Son) 9:6-8.
4. Kingdom Timing:when humbled Son of Man resurrected). 9:9-13

Consider:

F

Question:

Further Discovery:

Mission	1 Beget New Life	2. Bond	3. Build Family	4. Build Faith	5. Build Kingdom	6. Build House/ Homeland	7. Bear Sins
Disciples Stage	Reborn	Infancy: young child	Childhood: Older Child	Adolescence: Young Adult	Adulthood: Mature Adult	Parenthood: Young Parent	Eldership: Raise Parents
Growth	Receive Life (faith) Reject Death (repent)	Walk with (follow)	Plant Word- Teach Together	Represent Responsibly- Partner	Shepherd	Proclaim	Sacrifice
A. Raised up as David's Seed: 2 Samuel 7:12	The Son of God: (life-giver) 1. Son of God. 1:1 (life-giver) 2. Lord 1:2-3 (prepare)	The Son of Man 6. Authority: sp. Power/ life change. 1:21-34. 13. Grieved. Hard Heart. 3:1-12	Lord/ Head of House of Kingdom 14. Head of House Appoints Members. 3:13-21	Lord of the Harvest 23. Authorized Represent/ Proclaim: 6:7-13.	The Son of Man, Suffers to Serve (cross/ resurrection). 32. The Son of Man/ Mashiach Suffers to Serve. 8:27-32 40: Son of Man Serves: Gives Live a Ransom- true glory 10:32-45.	Raised up Seed. The Son of David/ The Son of God. 41. The Son of David. Merciful King. 10:46-52	Passover Lamb/ King of the Jews 57. Anointed for Sacrifice. Fulfilling Passover 14:1-9
B. Builds a House for God and David 7:11, 14	Baptizes (Rebirths) into House 3. Bapt. Rep. 1:4-6 4. Faith/ Bapt. Spirit: 1:7-8	Frees and Heals by His Power. 8. Moved with Pity. 1:40-45.	Appoints, Equips Members in House/ Kingdom. 14	Send out Teams to Bless Households. 24. Responsible Teachers: Report/Rest in Jesus. 6:30-33	Calls Disciples to Surrender to Serve: 32a. Servants Share Suffering: Lose life. 8:32-38	Revealing Himself as King to Children 42. Children welcome King and Kingdom. 11:1-11.	Lays life down Give Life to Household (Lord Supper) 58. Betrayed by Friend. 14:10-21 59. Bringing Life to Household by Sacrifice. 14:12-25. 60. Shepherd Struck: sheep flee. 14:26-31
B. Living in House: 7:11	Receive (Faith) and Reject (repent). 3-4	Following and Bonding with the Lord. 5. Follow Jesus. 1:16-20 11. Bridegroom: Kingdom celebrate.. 2:18-22.	Unity/ Encouraged to do Father's Will. 14a. Living Together in Household Faith. 3:22-30. 15. Family Relations. 3:31-35	Shepherding Needy. 24a. Responsible Shepherds: 6:34-42 30: Compassionate Heart. 8:1-10	Giving Kingdom to Little Children. 35. Kingdom Unity: Focus on Lord not differences for advantage. 9:38-41 36. Kingdom Innocence: Children pure. 9:42-50 37. Kingdom Faithfulness. Marital Unity 10:1-12 38: Children enter Kingdom. 10:13-16 39. Rich Ruler Blocked from Kingdom. Follow Jesus. 10:17-31	King Revealed to Israel. 43. Fruitless Fig Tree: Rejected 11:12-14 47: Seed Raised up for David. Willful Blindness. 12:18-27. 48. Law brings Near to Kingdom: Fear God. 12:28-34 49. Dual Sonship of Seed raised up: Son of David/ Son of God. 12:35-37	62: Crowd rejects Mashiach: 63: Sacrificial Witness. Testifies He is the Son of the Most High God" 14:53-65 64: Peter denies Jesus. 14:66-72 65. King of Jews Crucified. Hidden Kingdom Reality. 15:1-20 66. Crucified on Cross to Save Others. 15:21-32 67. On Cross takes on Dark Sin and Death. 15:33-41 68. Buried in Tomb. 15:41-47
Bp. Prayer 7:13	Confess Sins 3	Devote Self: 7. Devoted Prayer. 1:35-39..	Bind Up Strong man/ Hearing 14b. Prayer: Binding up Strong man. 3:27-30 17b. Prayerfully Hear Word to Testify. 3:21-25	Accountable for Mission. 25. Responsible Prayer: Resting/ Review w/Father. 6:45-51	Praying to cast out unclean Sp. 34. Prayer for Spiritual Cleansing: Kingdom Conflict. 9:14-29	Kingdom-moving prayer. 44. Kingdom Moving Prayer: Israel to be displaced. 11:20-25	Pouring out Soul to do Father's Will. 61: Pouring out Soul in Prayer: Doing Father's Will. 14:32-42
C. Establishes Throne 7:14-16	Testify in Baptism of New Life. 4a. Anointed as Mashiach/ Son: 1:9-11 4b. Earth- Tested as Son (1:12-13)	Bring Needy to Jesus for Healing. 9. Faith: Forgiven/ healed. 2:1-12 6a. Restoring Prayer/Presence. 2:29-34. 10. Physician Calls Sick. 2:13-17.	Cultivate Faith/ resist unbelief. 19. Fear/Lack of Faith. 4:35-41. Who 21. Family Faith: Overcomes Fear. 5:21-43 17. Fruitful Faith in Word. 4:10-25 18. Kingdom Grows Naturally. 4:26-34 22. Unbelief: Fleshly View. 6:1-6	Confronting Hard Hearts to choke Faith. 27. Distant Heart: unbelief voids Word. 7:1-13 28. Defiled Heart. Corrupts person. 7:14-23 31. Hardened Hearts. Blinds Perception/ Misleads. 8:11-26	Models/ raises up Servant Leaders: Surrender Life to Serve. 35. Kingdom Service: Great Position Last to serve all. 9:30-37. Kingdom Faithfulness. Marital Unity. 10:1-9	Confronting Israel's Unbelief/ rejecting Ma. 43a. Israel's Future: House of Prayer for Nations defiled by religion. 11:15-19 45. Authority as Mashiach Questioned. People pleasing. 11:27-32 45a. Dispossessing Heir: oppose Mashiach 12:1-12 50. Sacrificing Life: Offering to please God. 12:38-44	Seated on Throne after Resurrection 69: Women Hear of his Resurrection. 16:1-8
CR. Rules a Kingdom Forever 7:16	Multiply Sons for Family of God. 4c. Proclaim Kingdom (1:4-15)	Release from Dark Bondage. 12. The Son of Man. Restores. 2:23-28.	Plant Word of God for Kingdom Growth/ Build Faith 16. Sowing Word: Kingdom Growth. 4:1-9. 20. Free Unclean Spirit. 5:1-20	Restore worshippers of the Father. 26. Touch: Focused Faith: waits for Lord's Answer. 6:53-56. 29. Humbled Heart. Healed. 7:24-37.	Kingdom Power Revealed. 33. Revealing Kingdom's Hidden Glory. See Jesus alone. 9:1-13	Establishes the Kingdom in Israel 46. Spiritual Kingdom/ Earthly Kingdom: Serving God. 12:13-17 51. Last Days Prophecy: Kingdom Established in Israel. 13:1-4 52. Birth Pains: False Messiahs after Church Ends. 13:5-8 53. Israel Proclaims (3.5 yr.) 13:9-13. 54. Tribulation (3.5 yrs.): Time of Antichris. 13:14-22 55. Son of Man Comes. 13:24-27	Disciples Sent to preach Gospel to Nations: 70. Risen Mashiach sends Disciples to Proclaim Gospel: to the whole world. 16:9-20

						56. Fig Tree Ripens before Birth Pains: Jews to Jesus. 13:28-36	
Topics:	1A. Sons Heaven/Earth 1B. Promised Mashiach	2A. Sacrificial Faith: 2B. Daily Devotion	3A. Praying by Holy Spirit 3B. Households of Faith	4A. Kingdom Partnering 4B. Holistic Ministry	5A. Hidden Kingdom Glory 5B: Redemption Cycle	6A. Raising Up Seed for David 6B. Redemptive Timing	7A. Resurrected Life 7B. Kingdom Come.