

## Fifth Sunday in Lent

### OLD TESTAMENT – Jeremiah 31:31-34

**31 “Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, 32 not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. 33 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34 And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”**

**31:31–34**† The high point of Jeremiah’s prophecies, this passage is the longest sequence of OT verses to be quoted in its entirety in the NT (see note on Heb 8:8–12; see also Heb 10:16–17). Verse 31 contains the only OT use of the phrase “new covenant,” which (together with its NT echoes) has come down to us (via Latin) as “new testament.” (CSB)

In Jeremiah’s third oracle, the Lord will create also the kind of spiritual reconstruction necessary for the exiles to be His people and He their God. (TLSB)

These verses constitute one of the most important prophetic passages in all of Scripture, as testified by its quotation in its entirety in the NT, Heb 8:8-12. In fact, this passage is the primary reason we refer to the Scripture’s two sections as the OT and NT. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 4, Part 2)

“Declares the Lord” occurs four times in these four verses. Jeremiah is speaking with authority straight from God. Notice throughout that God takes the initiative: “I will make,” “I will put,” “I will be,” “I will forgive,” etc. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 4, Part 2)

**31:31** *The days are coming.* Lit. “The days are coming” (as in vv. 27, 38), a phrase that often refers to the Messianic era. (CSB)

Time, a creation of God, is also his servant. The revelation of this “new covenant” will be perfectly timed to utilize the condition of Israel and meet the needs of his people. Paul teaches, “When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son” (Gal 4:4). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 2)

*make.* Lit. “cut” (CSB)

*new covenant.*† As the old covenant was solemnized by the blood of sacrificial animals, so the new would be solemnized by the blood of Christ. See Lk 22:20. (CSB)

What God agreed to do to enable Israel and all sinners to become His people became a reality in that new covenant sealed with the blood of Jesus, the only mediator between God and man (cf 1Co 11:25).

Irenaeus of Lyons: “One and the same householder produced both covenants, the Word of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, who spake with both Abraham and Moses, and who has restored us anew to liberty, and has multiplied that grace which is from Himself” (*ANF* 1:472). See pp xlv–xlvii. (TLSB)

The concept of covenant is taken from the Hebrew *bərith*. Debate exists over the origin of this word, whether from the root for “to bind,” or even “to determine.” The Greek offers additional insight in using *diathēkē*. As opposed to *sunthēkē*, indicating equality, *diathēkē* implies the promised disbursement of a

property. It connotes a will or testament and reminds us of Jesus' words, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins" (Mt 26:28). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 2)

This text contains the only Old Testament reference to a new covenant. Jeremiah's words gave rise to the familiar terms "Old Testament" and "New Testament." The church father Tertullian first gave the name "New Testament" to the last twenty-seven books of the Bible. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

The only places in the New Testament where this text is quoted are Heb 8:8–12 (quoting vv 31–34) and Heb 10:16–17 (quoting vv 33–34). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

The new covenant is referred to in the following New Testament passages: Matt 26:28; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20; 1 Cor 11:25 (these four dealing with the Last Supper); Heb 9:15; 10:13; 12:24; 2 Cor 3:6; Rom 11:27. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

The "new covenant" (vv 31–32) is an unconditional covenant of divine commitment, also called a royal grant (See *Concordia Self-Study Bible*, p. 18). Jeremiah contrasts this covenant of pure grace with the Sinai covenant (Ex 19–24), a legal covenant involving human obligations—and thus conditional—which Israel broke. As Jeremiah spoke, rebellious Israel was about to be expelled from the promised land in fulfillment of the curse associated with breaking the covenant. But God speaks of a time when he will make an entirely different arrangement. This new covenant of divine commitment relates to other royal covenants, e.g., the Abrahamic (Gen 15:9–21), and the Davidic (2 Sam 7:5–16). These royal grants point to the radically new covenant brought into effect through the person and work of Jesus Christ which supersedes the Sinai covenant of human obligation mediated through Moses (Heb 8: 13). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

In the coming days, the covenant made at Sinai will be referred to as the "first" or "old" covenant. The new covenant does not violate the old, nor do its benefits differ in substance. But the new supersedes and fulfills the old. Like the old, the new will involve Torah (teaching or doctrine), forgiveness, and a covenant relationship between God and His people. The difference is that it will be written on His people's hearts. The external demands of the Law will give way to the internal guidance of the Spirit. The rigid, burdensome commands will be replaced with the freedom, joy, and spontaneity of people who are new creations in Christ. The old creation groaned, but the new will sing for joy. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 4, Part 2)

This new covenant is eschatological; it will be fully realized at Christ's return when God's people enter the new heavens and earth. True, it is now already in place due to Christ's work. We already have forgiveness, the Spirit, and membership in the people of God. But we still have need of teachers – pastors, theologians, Bible study leaders. We still need confession and absolution. We are not always faithful to our covenant Lord and God. Our hearts and consciences yet have reason to accuse us. But the new covenant makes us heirs of the age when God's promises will be fully implemented, when the old will be forgotten forever. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 4, Part 2)

The way of salvation in both covenants, the old and the new is the same. A person is saved by faith in Christ. The believer under the old covenant looked ahead to Christ as the fulfillment of all the types and pictures of the old covenant. The believer under the new covenant looks back to the accomplished work of Christ. Because the Lord understands human nature and its weakness for sinning, the Lord provided many ways under the old covenant for the believer to receive forgiveness. Through many offerings and various sacrifices, the penitent was assured he had been reconciled with God. (PBC)

*house of Israel ... house of Judah.* The reunited people of God. (CSB)

**31:32** *covenant I made with their fathers.* The covenant at Sinai eventually became known as the “old covenant” (2Co 3:14) or “first covenant” (Heb 8:7; 9:15, 18). (CSB)

Why was this new covenant necessary? Certainly not because God was initiating a new way of salvation. The Sinai (Mosaic) covenant definitely was based on the grace of God; in Ex 20:2 God says that his saving activity is the basis for the Ten Commandments. Yet in comparison with the new covenant, the old was weak (Heb 7:18–19, 8:7). Though the moral law embodied in the covenant is holy and good (Rom 7:12), it is not able to justify lawbreakers nor empower fulfillment. Israel broke the Mosaic covenant. God intended the Mosaic covenant to last only for the interim between the Abrahamic Covenant and its fulfillment in Christ (See Gal 3:6–29, and note that “law” in this text refers to the Sinai covenant). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

To portray our ingrained sin, Jeremiah asked, “Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots? Neither can you do good who are accustomed to doing evil” (13:23). Human nature hasn’t changed much in the 2600 years since Jeremiah. People still rebel against leaders, live an immoral lifestyle, and worship other gods. But God has done something truly new: he has made available the forgiveness of sins through the vicarious work of Christ Jesus. As a result, God the Holy Spirit works in people’s hearts to change their lives. Those who believe Christ died for them now have the promise that the Holy Spirit lives within them. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

The old covenant pointed to Christ as its fulfillment. By its very nature, then, it was temporary and passing. Many of its activities, repeated animal sacrifices, for example, emphasized its transitory nature. The old covenant, announced at Mt. Sinai, also served to keep the Jewish people separate from the surrounding heathen, a unique nation, preserved intact by the regulations laid upon them by the old covenant. Their separation insured that they would remain a people until the promised Messiah would come. (PBC)

*took them by the hand.* See Hos 11:3–4. (CSB)

*my covenant they broke.* See 11:10. The people, not God, were responsible for violating his covenant. (CSB)

The old covenant imposed many rules upon the Jew, rules they found impossible to observe. Hence the old covenant certainly proved that no one could be saved by keeping it. For that reason the Lord says of their fathers, “They broke my covenant.” We would say: before the ink was dry they broke the covenant with the sin of the golden calf. (PBC)

*I was their husband.* Baal the Canaanite god of fertility was Yahweh’s chief competition. The sacred covenant union could be reestablished only by God’s forgiveness and mercy. Christ is the bridegroom, and the church is his bride, washed clean. God is merciful. He loves his people. He reinstates, forgives. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 4, Part 2)

**31:33-34** The basic meaning of *torah* “law” (v 33) is “instruction.” Therefore, the word actually refers to Gospel in the wide sense, not doctrinal Law as opposed to Gospel. This new covenant will be characterized by personal knowledge of God and the forgiveness of sins. “Know” (v 34) denotes intimate personal knowledge, and here refers to saving faith. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

The prophet Ezekiel said it this way: “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws” (Ezek 36:26–27). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

**31:33** *house of Israel*. Here includes both Israel and Judah. (CSB)

Just: “The true spiritual Israel, and descendants of Judah, Jacob, Isaac, and Abraham ... are we who have been led to God through this crucified Christ” (ANF 1:200) (TLSB)

Even as Israel and Judah will be reunited, so Jew and Gentile will be one in Christ in the new covenant. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 4, Part 2)

*put my law within them*. Internally (see Dt 6:6; 11:18; 30:14; Eze 11:19; 18:31; 36:26–27), in contrast to setting it before them externally (see 9:13; Dt 4:8; 11:32). (CSB)

*write it on their hearts*. So that it effectively governs their lives, in contrast to the ineffectiveness of merely presenting it in writing, though inscribed on durable stone (see Ex 24:4; 31:18; 32:15–16; 34:28–29; Dt 4:13; 5:22; 9:9, 11; 10:4). (CSB)

God’s creative and transforming inscription of His will on the people was necessary because the root of their sin lay in their perverse and stubborn will to follow their own evil heart, as Jeremiah often pointed out (3:17; 4:4, 14; 5:23; 7:24). “Faith brings the Holy Spirit and produces a new life in hearts. It must also produce spiritual movements in hearts. The prophet Jeremiah shows what these movements are.... Therefore, when we have been justified by faith and regenerated, we begin to fear and love God, to pray to Him, to expect aid from Him, to give thanks and praise Him, and to obey Him in times of suffering. We also begin to love our neighbors, because our hearts have spiritual and holy movements.... We have said above that renewal and beginning to fulfill the Law must exist in us.... If anyone should cast away love, even though he has great faith, he does not keep his faith. For he does not keep the Holy Spirit” (Ap V 4, 98). (TLSB)

This is the miracle of conversion. Jesus told the Samaritan woman, “A time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks” (John 4:23, 24). (PBC)

So that it completely governs their lives. The external demands of the Law will give way to the internal guidance of the Spirit. The rigid, burdensome commands will be replaced with the freedom, joy and spontaneity of people who are new creations in Christ. The old creations groaned but the new will sing for joy.

*I will be ... my people*. The “new” covenant does not abolish the “old” but supersedes it in the sense that through the new covenant the old is fulfilled and its purpose achieved. (CSB)

It is God’s grace alone that makes us his people. Through Christ’s death and resurrection, we have become the children of God. The Father has adopted us for the sake of his Son. The human mediators of the old covenant (Moses, the priest, etc.) who stood between God and his people have given way to Jesus, the one mediator between God and man. Now God deals directly and individually with each of us, giving forgiveness and mercy. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 4, Part 2)

**31:34** *No longer ... teach his neighbor.* When the Lord has done his new work, there will no longer be among his people those who are ignorant of him and his will for human lives. True knowledge of the Lord will be shared by all—young and old, the peasant and the powerful. (CSB)

The promise is that through the proclamation about Christ those who hear and believe will know for themselves the salvation of God. (PBC)

*Know.* In the experiential, not the academic, sense. (CSB)

Not merely an intellectual knowledge but an acknowledgment of a sacred relationship. The new covenant creates a conviction of fellowship with God that is self-authenticating and available for all. (TLSB)

Some claim no one can truly know or understand God. Even the prophet testifies, “Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth; . . . his understanding is unsearchable” (Is 40:28–29). But God also declares, “Call to me and I will answer you, and will tell you great and hidden things that you have not known” (Jer 33:3). God wants to reveal his will, his plan, his very self to us. Such knowledge is more than enough for our salvation but won’t be fully realized until we are with him: “For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face” (1 Cor 13:12). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 2)

*I will forgive ... their sin.* The glorious basis of the new covenant (see Heb 10:14–17). (CSB)

A primitive root; to *forgive*:—forgive, pardon, spare. (QV)

To forgive is only used of divine activity. The new covenant is not based on a sinless people, but on a forgiving God. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 4, Part 2)

This phrase is not an indictment of God’s omniscience, but a description of his mercy. For the sake of Christ, he will not recall our sins on the Day of Judgment. Revelation 20 describes the opening of books that recorded the deeds of the dead and declares there will be no punishment for those whose names are found in the Book of Life. Matthew 25 indicates the “sheep” do not have their sins remembered, but only hear recounted the deeds done in faith. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 2)

#### EPISTLE – Hebrews 5:1-10

**For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. 2 He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is beset with weakness. 3 Because of this he is obligated to offer sacrifice for his own sins just as he does for those of the people. 4 And no one takes this honor for himself, but only when called by God, just as Aaron was. 5 So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him, “You are my Son, today I have begotten you”; 6 as he says also in another place, “You are a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek.” 7 In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. 8 Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. 9 And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him, 10 being designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek.**

**5:1–4** The high-priestly office had two specific qualifications: (1) A candidate had to be “selected from among men” (v. 1) and thus be able to represent them before God; and (2) he had to “be called by God” (v. 4). (CSB)

The author advances the thought of Christ’s superior priesthood by drawing a comparison between Him and the high priests of Judaism. (PBC)

**5:1** *chosen ... appointed.* An OT priest could not decide on his own initiative to be high priest. God chose the sons of Aaron and on the basis of this election they fulfilled their office (cf Ex 28:1; Nu 3:10) (TLSB)

*gifts and sacrifices.* Emphasizes the way the high priest offered something other than himself to atone for sin. (TLSB)

**5:2** *the ignorant and wayward.* See Isa 53:6. Contrast the unintentional sin (as in Lev 4; Nu 15:27–29) with defiant rebellion against God (see Nu 15:30–31; cf. Heb 6:4–6; 10:26–31). (CSB)

The high priest, too, was weighed down by weakness in the face of temptation. (TLSB)

Those who sinned defiantly and thus blasphemed God were to be cut off from Israel and carry their sins with them. Those who sinned ignorantly and unintentionally were to have their sins covered by the sacrifice brought on the Day of Atonement. The high priest, knowing from his own human experience the weaknesses with which his people had to grapple, could deal moderately with them. (PBC)

**5:3** *offer sacrifice for his own sins* – But being a human also had a disadvantage, since the high priest would have sins of his own. Leviticus 16 relates how the ritual on the Day of Atonement made provision for his sins. Before he sprinkled the blood of the goat on the mercy seat as an offering for the sins of his people, the high priest had to enter behind the veil into the Holy of Holies with the blood of a bullock “to make atonement for himself and his household” (Leviticus 16:17). (PBC)

The high priest, being a sinner, had to make atonement for his own sins as well as for the sins of the people. (TLSB)

**5:4** *No one takes this honor for himself.* In Christ’s day the high-priestly office was in the hands of a family that had bought control of it. (CSB)

In Exodus 28 and Leviticus 8 God established the OT priesthood and called Aaron as its first high priest. Through Aaron’s direct call God also marked his descendants as the ones from whom the high priests would come. (PBC)

**5:5** *also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest.* The Son was appointed by the Father, as the two prophetic statements cited here show (Ps 2:7; 110:4). His high priesthood, however, was “in the order of Melchizedek” (v. 6), not in the order of Aaron. (CSB)

The Father appointed Jesus to serve as the true High Priest. The quote from Ps 2:7 was addressed to the earthly king of God’s people. Yet it prophesied Christ’s enthronement in glory after His ascension. (TLSB)

The word “glory” is used instead of “honor” because Christ’s is the greater priesthood. Note, how John 8:54 pointed out to the Jews how He obtained that glory, “If I glorify myself my glory means nothing. My Father, whom you claim as your God, is the one who glorifies me.” Here was the greater high priest holding a glorious office as appointed by God Himself. (PBC)

**5:6** *the order of Melchizedek* – Melchizedek is one of those mysteries of Holy Scriptures, appearing only three times. In Genesis 14:18-20 he appears briefly as he meets and blesses Abraham returning from rescuing Lot. There he is called both “King of Salem” and priest of God Most High.” In Psalm 110:4 David refers to him even more briefly and by inspiration sees in him a type of Christ, who would be both King and Priest. Here in Hebrews the reference is in much greater detail. (PBC)

Melchizedek was a priest and king who blessed Abraham and received offerings from him (cf Gn 14:18–20). Like Melchizedek, Jesus is a true priest, even though He was not from Aaron’s lineage (cf v 10). (TLSB)

Following the example of Ps 110:4, the writer of Hebrews provides an extensive comparison between this ancient priest of Salem (Jerusalem) and Jesus. The Dead Sea Scrolls and other early Jewish literature show a similar interest in the priesthood of Melchizedek, who was viewed as the first to establish priestly services at or near the site where the temple was built (Jos, *War* 6:438). Using Melchizedek as an illustration is one reason why the audience for Hebrews is considered to be a Jewish-Christian congregation. For the history of Melchizedek, cf Gn 14. (TLSB)

**5:7** *days of his flesh*. The principal reference here is to Christ’s agony in the Garden of Gethsemane. (CSB)

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*Offered*. Same word is used for offering sacrifice. This emphasizes the priestly nature of Jesus’ suffering. Luther: “That is the true sacrifice... It deserves to be praised to the utmost and to have every honor given to it, especially over against those other false, lying sacrifices of our own works which were invented to deny and blaspheme this sacrifice. He is also the Priest who ought to be called a priest above all others. What man can praise and exalt Him enough?... No matter how great or burdensome sin, wrath, hell and damnation may be, this holy sacrifice is far greater and higher. (TLSB)

*loud cries and tears* – The anguish and the agony deepen till they lead to His sweat “like drops of blood falling to the ground” (Luke 22:44). Did any of those Hebrew Christians think they were alone? Was persecution’s pressure rubbing their souls sore? Here was one who, utterly alone, had gone through more than they would ever know. Here was one who would know just how to help them. (PBC)

*who was able to save him from death*. To the Father. Jesus did not shrink from physical suffering and death but from the indescribable agony of taking mankind’s sin on himself (see Mt 27:46). Although he asked that the cup of suffering might be taken from him, he did not waver in his determination to fulfill the Father’s will (see Mt 26:36–46). (CSB)

Jesus trusted that His Father would bring Him through death to resurrection and new life. (TLSB)

*he was heard*. His prayer was granted by the Father, who saved him from death—through resurrection. (CSB)

Jesus lived with pure devotion to the Father. His prayers conformed fully to the Father’s will and were heard. Luther: “In the same manner He also fulfilled the third part of the priestly office: intercessory prayer. Along with, and beyond, His sacrifice Christ also prayed to God the Father in our behalf. Isaiah 53:12 speaks of this function of His priestly office: ‘He bore the sins of man, and made intercession for the transgressors’... By means of such prayer He won for us and communicated to us the power and merit of His sacrifice, that is, forgiveness of sins, righteousness, and eternal life. Prayer like that is valid

forever and works its power in all Christendom. In short, He continues to exercise this office as our Mediator and Advocate before God” (AE 13:320). (TLSB)

*because of his reverence – taking well (carefully), that is, circumspect / (religiously, pious):—devout.- caution, that is, (religiously) reverence (piety); by implication dread (concretely):—fear (-ed). (QV) – Here again Christ’s humility is emphasized, this time in respect to the reason for the answer to his prayer. His humility, as his obedience, is perfect, demanding nothing from his Father and refusing to use what was his own (his nature and power) to save himself. He lived and prayed in perfect submission to the Father.*

**5:8** *he learned obedience through what he suffered.* He was made “perfect” (v. 9) through suffering, namely, his temptation in the desert and his ordeal on the cross. Though he was the eternal Son of God, it was necessary for him as the incarnate Son to learn obedience—not that he was ever disobedient, but that he was called on to obey to an extent he had never before experienced. The temptations he faced were real and the battle for victory was difficult, but where Adam failed and fell, Jesus resisted and prevailed. His humanity was thereby completed, “made perfect” (v. 9), and on the basis of this perfection he could become “the source of eternal salvation” (see 9:12). (CSB)

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*aupakouo to hear under (as a subordinate), that is, to listen attentively; by implication to heed or conform to a command or authority:—hearken, be obedient to, obey. (QV)*

This follows on the heels of his humility. While the Greeks took it as axiomatic that learning comes from suffering, this phrase is difficult for many today who believe that suffering is to be avoided at all costs. But in becoming the perfect High Priest, the humble servant of God, submitted himself fully and willingly to suffering, and through that suffering learned obedience rather than resentment.

**5:9** *being made perfect* – More literally it means “having reached His goal” of cross, tomb and throne. (PBC)

*source of eternal salvation* – The fountain of Jesus’ blood never dries up. It is an unending source of salvation. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 4, Part 4)

**FOR ALL WHO OBEY HIM** – *to hear under (as a subordinate), that is, to listen attentively; by implication to heed or conform to a command or authority:— hearken, be obedient to, obey. (QV)*

Here obedience is the fruit of faith, that is, utter trust in the person, word and work of Christ who humbly submits to the will of God out of love.

**5:10** *designated by God* – While God’s will was thwarted in the Garden of Eden, it was fulfilled in the Garden of Gethsemane. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 4, Part 4)

Solemnly acclaimed by the Father. (TLSB)

**4:14–5:10** Jesus Christ, our true High Priest, shares our humanity and knows the weaknesses that we experience. Being one with the Father, He is the source of God’s full forgiveness. If we approach God confident in our own goodness, we will be condemned according to the strictness of the Law. But Christ Jesus is gentle and understanding. He forgives us, gives us confidence before the Father, and helps us in all our needs. • Lord Jesus, our true High Priest, help us, in our weakness, to call to our Father for all that we need. Amen. (TLSB)

#### GOSPEL – Mark 10:35-45

**35** And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came up to him and said to him, “Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.” **36** And he said to them, “What do you want me to do for you?” **37** And they said to him, “Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory.” **38** Jesus said to them, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?” **39** And they said to him, “We are able.” And Jesus said to them, “The cup that I drink you will drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized, **40** but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared.” **41** And when the ten heard it, they began to be indignant at James and John. **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.”

**10:35–45** Parallel to 9:33–37. Both passages deal with true greatness and both follow a prediction of Jesus’ suffering and death. Both also show how spiritually undiscerning the disciples were. (CSB)

This passage is paralleled at Matthew 20:20-28. In Matthew the mother approaches Jesus with the request. The differences between the two accounts are very minor. There are no conflicts or disagreements. Form criticism plays real havoc with this section. They speak of primary and secondary narratives, the theology of the early church and early Christology. John as author of the fourth Gospel is subtly denied. This opinion is found in the *Interpreter’s Bible*. (Buls)

Lessons in humility, after Caesarea Philippi, are intertwined with the three passion narratives. See Mark 9:33-37; 10:13-16 and this one at 10:35-45. Furthermore, read John 13:4-17 and Luke 22:24-30. Sinful pride was constantly evident in the disciples. Furthermore, the disciples were blind as to the true meaning of Jesus’ suffering and death and the nature of His Kingdom. See Acts 1:6. The disciples were a strange mixture of faith and selfish pride. But Jesus always gently leads them back to the truth. Compare John 15:2-3. Jesus constantly purifies the pure. (Buls)

The preceding context provides the basis of the misguided question of James and John as recorded in Mk 10:35. A ministry of glory attracts those who only heard Jesus say, “No one who has left home. . . . for me and the gospel will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age . . . and in the age to come” (vv 29–30). The self-aggrandizing question of James and John (v 37) shows that they also overlooked the theology of the cross in Jesus’ third passion prediction (vv. 33–34). The material following the text illustrates the final verse (v 45). In giving sight to Bartimaeus, entering Jerusalem on a

colt, cursing hypocrisy and cleansing the misused temple area, Jesus served God and was giving his life to ransom people from evil. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

After Peter's confession identifying Jesus as the Messiah (8:27–30), Jesus began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, be killed, and after three days rise again. He made three such predictions. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

The issue of greatness first emerged in 9:33–37, just after the second prediction, when Jesus and the disciples were on the road to Capernaum. The third prediction took place when they were on their way to Jerusalem, with Jesus leading the way for astonished disciples (usually the teacher was in the middle with disciples in front and behind). Then James and John decided to ask Jesus a question. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

### Parallel Passages

1. Mark 9:33–37 deals with true greatness. Both this passage and our text follow a prediction of Jesus' suffering. Both show how spiritually undiscerning the disciples were. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

2. Matthew 20:20–28 is a direct parallel. The request, in this case, is made by the mother of James and John, yet there is no contradiction. She came to Jesus with her sons. Jesus' response was directed at James and John, who were really asking through their mother, and who were present. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

3. Luke 22:24–30 reports a third dispute about greatness. This takes place after the Passover meal while the disciples were still in the upper room. Jesus' response reflects his foot washing (John 13) as a servant. He confers a kingdom on the disciples and promises them great places at the table in his kingdom. Jesus then addresses Peter, who boasts of his great commitment to serve the Lord. Jesus predicts Peter's three denials, and also his restoration in faith. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

4. Philippians 2:1–11 describes the kenosis or self-emptying (2:7) of Jesus while taking on the very nature of a servant. Being united with Christ (2:1) makes it possible for us to deny self, take up our cross, and follow Jesus in servanthood. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

5. Luke 14:7–11 records Jesus' parable about taking places of honor at the table and ends with the oft-repeated principle, "For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted." (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

**10:35–36** *want ... want.* James's and John's desire for position and power would be realized only if they willingly submitted to servanthood (see "wants ... wants" in vv. 43–44). (CSB)

**10:35** Here is the root of the trouble. The disciples are consumed with their desires, in contrast to what Jesus taught them in the simple prayer, "Thy will be done." Similarly, the disciples want "whatever we ask" instead of praying in Jesus' name (cf. Jn 14:14). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 2)

Using a concordance, review biblical references to James. In Greek, his name is that of the Old Testament patriarch Jacob. Some scholars think that Jesus and James were cousins (Mt 27:56; Jn 19:25). Note that in

Matthew's and Mark's Gospels, the earlier accounts, James is always mentioned before his brother John. Three times, Luke (Lk 8:51; 9:28; Acts 1:13) places the name of John before that of his brother, suggesting that John became more prominent only as the memory of his brother receded. James' memory and leadership may have had more meaning in the Markan community because he is mentioned nine times in the Gospel of Mark, while in Matthew he is mentioned only three times and in Luke—Acts only seven times. James is not only one of the Twelve, he is one of the privileged few to be with Jesus at special times. The preacher should consider reviewing the events of Mk 5:37–43; 9:2–13; 13:3–37; and 14:33–42 in the sermon. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

It was surprising that James and John brought this request to Jesus. As part of the inner circle they should have known better. But the human heart is by nature sinful. According to Matthew it was their ambitious mother who actually brought the request to Jesus. Mark put the words into the mouths of James and John and showed that they went along with her in their ambition. (PBC)

*we want you to do for us whatever we ask* – More shocking was their preliminary request with which they sought to bind Jesus without His knowing what they were going to ask. Their request showed they believed Jesus could give them anything they might ask. That they first asked Jesus to assure them hints that they suspected Jesus might not approve. How right they were! (PBC)

James and John asked for a decision before they made known the nature of the request. (TLSB)

They practically ask Jesus to sign a blank check. Likely they had misunderstood Matthew 19:28. (Buls)

**10:35b-37** Ponder the incredible requests the two brothers ask of Jesus. They seek privilege and power in the messianic kingdom, perhaps sitting beside Jesus as messianic judge or beside him at the messianic banquet (Daniel J. Harrington, "The Gospel according to Mark," *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary* [Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1990] 618). Speculate on their motives and reflect on how we as disciples today make analogous demands of God. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

In the parallel story in Matthew (20:20–28), the mother of James and John makes the request. The difference can be easily explained. A request can be identified by asker or instigator. Did the sons have the idea but have their mother actually ask Jesus or vice versa? Some scholars see Matthew protecting the reputation of James and John. Perhaps Luke was inspired to omit the story for a similar reason. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

The brothers show how they would use power in Lk 9:52–56. The brothers who ask Jesus for permission to have lightning destroy a village are aptly called "Sons of Thunder" (Mk 3:17). Scholars speculate that Herod Agrippa I first killed James either because of his prominence or because he was especially feared and hated. His thundering reputation may have stayed with him even after Jesus' resurrection. Speculation on his character and reputation as a "Son of Thunder" could add human questions to the sermon. Do we use "thunder" to seek power and influence in God's service? Is thunder and lightning the glory of Christ we want to share? Do we as Christians expect special rewards for service to God, e.g., less suffering or more prosperity? The brothers' question can also hold comfort for pastors and congregations. Thank God for bad questions! The two brothers asked an unworthy question, but all disciples received a blessing in Jesus' response. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

To sit at the right and left hand would be to hold the two most important royal court positions. Although a democracy is completely different from the royal court image in James' mind, for the sake of comparison, it might be similar to asking a presidential candidate for the positions of vice president and secretary of state in the new administration. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

**10:36** WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM ME – Jesus asks that of you and me today. What is it that you seek regarding greatness—success in business, power in the church, status before others, or a sincere desire to serve God to the best of your ability? (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

Jesus does not sign a blank check. (Buls)

Notice how Jesus is so consistently matter-of-fact rather than being exasperated, condescending, or cynical. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 2)

**10:37** *sit at your right and the other at your left.* Positions of prestige and power. (CSB)

First and second positions of power. James and John are referring to an earthly kingdom. (TLSB)

The disciples are sincere and forthright but much mistaken in their understanding. "In your glory" is equivalent to "in your Kingdom." (Buls)

James and John want to sit at the right and left hand of Jesus when he comes into his glory. Why? Attention? Power? How meaningful is it to sit with someone when you have no real part in their glory? Since humanity has thrown away the glory that God gave us as the climax of his creation made in his image, man has had an insatiable appetite for glory. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 2)

IN YOUR GLORY - *Glory, hē doxa*, in the proper sense of the word, means “to do what no one else can or would do.” From a human perspective, *glory* has to do with a person’s ability to take more than they give and to protect themselves, absolutely. What kind of people have their pictures on the covers of magazines? Athletes, who win at the expense of others; actors, who are paid to pretend to be what we are not; business people who are the most effective at turning a profit. People want to be associated with the great, by proximity, imitation, or just by a ball cap or T-shirt. At the same time, many such people have no interest whatsoever in pursuing the discipline or study that would make them like the person they admire. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 2)

From God’s perspective, *glory* means to lose everything so that others might gain, to live a real life that will make a real life possible for others, and to give only and never take from others, except to take their condemnation upon himself. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 2)

**10:38** *you don’t what you are asking* – Jesus’ answer was blunt. He told them right out that they did not know what they were asking. (PBC)

By "you don't know what you're asking" Jesus is signaling them to stop pursuing this course. He is gentle. (Buls)

*drink the cup I drink.* A Jewish expression that meant to share someone’s fate. In the OT the cup of wine was a common metaphor for God’s wrath against human sin and rebellion (Ps 75:8; Isa 51:17–23; Jer 25:15–28; 49:12; 51:7). Accordingly, the cup Jesus had to drink refers to divine punishment of sins that he bore in place of sinful mankind (see 10:45; 14:36). (CSB)

Figures of speech for intense experiences associated with suffering and death. Early Christians referred to martyrdom as baptism with blood. (TLSB)

"Drink" is present active, denoting His active obedience, and "baptized" is present passive, denoting His passive obedience. He is implying that the way to glory is the way of suffering. (Buls)

Jesus is the truth and consistently exposes it. He says that James and John do not know what they are asking. "To drink the cup" is a metaphor, describing the content of one's life. "Baptism" means "to wash" or "to be awash." This, too, refers to the whole content or context of a person's life. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 2)

"Cup" can be a semitic expression for either blessings (Pss 16:5; 23:5; 116:13) or woes. Here it symbolizes Jesus' suffering and is to be interpreted in light of passages like Is 49:6; 51:17–23; Ps 75:8; Jer 25:15–28; 49:12; and Ezek 27:31–34. Baptism or burial in water can symbolize purity (Mk 1:9) or death (Ps 69:2–3, 15; Mk 14:36). Here Baptism is obviously parallel to the cup of suffering. There are a variety of extra-biblical references to Baptism as martyrdom (*Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 2nd ed., edited by Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich-Danker [Chicago: U. of Chicago, 1979] 132). The Baptism imagery, for some reason not reported in the Matthean version of this incident, can be explained and illustrated well by reference to Romans 6. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

Note the present tense is used to describe Jesus' drinking and being baptized while aorist infinitives are used for the two disciples' fate. Jesus asks if they can completely participate in his ministry of suffering and death, which is already in process. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

They did not understand that the way to the throne is one of suffering and death, His suffering and death He had just spoken about. (PBC)

The cup and baptism signify that Jesus in His passion will be the voluntary sacrifice for the sins of men. (Lane)

**10:39 WE CAN** - "“We can,” they answered.” Paul reminds us, “Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you . . . we have different gifts, according to the grace given us” (Rom 12:3–7). Has God graced you with mature faith and the right spiritual gifts for the big job you want to do? Or is there another job for which you are better equipped by God? (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

How typical it is of human nature to say easily and quickly what we are loath to accomplish faithfully. "Talk is cheap." Yet once again, Jesus' response is very matter-of-fact and to the point. In spite of the disciples' vanity and failings, they are his chosen vessels and, once filled with the Holy Spirit (at Pentecost), they will indeed follow in the way of their Master. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 2)

The confident reply of the two disciples, together with Jesus' corrective remarks, suggest that James and John understood Jesus' fate and their own to be that of heroic martyrs, perhaps in the manner of the Maccabee brothers (C. E. B. Cranfield, *Gospel according to Saint Mark* [Cambridge, University Press, 1959] 338). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

Their single-word (in Greek) answer is astounding. Look at 14:50. Their self-confidence did not proceed from faith. Jesus' answer to them is a prophecy fulfilled at Acts 12:2 and Revelation 1:9. To drink the cup and to be baptized are obvious metaphors for suffering. (Buls)

*you will drink the cup* – Jesus told them that they would indeed share in that suffering. (PBC)

Jesus predicted a life of suffering for the sake of the Gospel. (TLSB)

“Jesus said to them, ‘You will drink the cup I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with.’” It is highly significant that Jesus uses sacramental language. The cup of God’s wrath is described in the Old Testament (Is 51:17, 22; Lam 4:21; Ps 75:8; etc.). Jesus drank the cup of God’s wrath while on the cross (Mark 14:36; John 18:11). By doing this for us, Jesus turned the cup of God’s wrath at our sins into the cup of God’s blessing for us. In fact, one of the first names for the Lord’s Supper was “the cup of blessing” (1 Cor 10:16; unfortunately, the NIV translates it “cup of thanksgiving”). We who drink the Lord’s cup receive his grace together with his blood. We also pledge ourselves to be faithful to him who shed his blood for us, even to death. The early church called the martyrdom of a Christian “to share in the cup of Christ” (Martyrdom of Polycarp 14:2). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

Jesus was baptized into his role as the suffering Servant. The words the Father spoke at his Baptism (Mark 1:11) draw in part on Isaiah 42:1, the first of the four Suffering Servant Songs in Isaiah. Isaiah 53 is the fourth Song and the best known, since it prophesies his death and resurrection so clearly. We too are baptized into suffering in that we are baptized into the death of Christ, so that we might die to sin and live in newness of life (Rom 6:1–4). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

In his omniscience, Jesus knew that James would be martyred (Acts 12:2), and John would be exiled to Patmos. All Christians will share in the sufferings of the Lord. We carry in our bodies the death of Jesus so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our bodies (2 Cor 4:10). We participate in the sufferings of Christ (1 Pet 4:13). The sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives (2 Cor 1:5). As we share in the sufferings we enter a fellowship with all believers who suffer (Phil 3:10). We continue the work of God in Christ by offering our lives as “instruments” of righteousness for the Lord (Rom. 6:13). The hardships we Christians suffer—sometimes even at the hands of the organized church—happen so that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead (2 Cor 1:8–9). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

To share someone’s cup was a recognized expression for sharing his fate. In the OT the cup of wine is a common metaphor for the wrath of God’s judgment upon human sin and rebellion, and this understanding was kept alive into the first century. (Lane)

*be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with.* The image of baptism is parallel to that of the cup, referring to his suffering and death as a baptism (see Lk 12:50; cf. Ro 6:3–4 for the figure). (CSB)

Apparently Jesus call His passion a baptism (cf. Luke 12:50) because He and His disciples were familiar with John’s rite of repentance, which he called “baptism” and set in an explicit context of God’s judgment upon human sin. Jesus understood that His baptism expressed His solidarity with sinful men and signified His willingness to assume the burden of the judgment of God. The baptism which He anticipates is His death upon the cross in fulfillment of His messianic vocation. Applied to Jesus, the images of the cup and baptism signify that He bears the judgment merited by the sins of men. (Lane)

**10:39-40** Jesus teaches three things. First, the brothers will share his cup and Baptism, i.e., they will suffer for the sake of the Son of Man’s ministry. Second, in his state of humiliation, Jesus cannot grant positions of power or privilege. Third, the places are not open for arbitrary distribution but are designated for those for whom they have been prepared. God the Father is clearly the implied giver, but he remains unstated out of reverence for God’s name by listeners or readers. Matthew (20:23) makes explicit what Mark implies. The recipients remain a mystery. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

**10:40** *is not mine to grant.* Jesus would not usurp his Father’s authority. (CSB)

Compare these translations: NIV: "These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared." Beck: "Something I can give only to those for whom it is prepared." (Buls)

Ylvisaker: This may be done only in accordance with the will of the Father, to whom He now willingly submits. In His lowly estate he may do nothing of Himself (John 5:19). (Buls)

Stoekhardt: Jesus does not say that the Father has a power which the Son does not have. He means that He does not act as does an earthly king. He does not assign places to His servants in the Kingdom on the basis of caprice or pleasure but the Father, who has chosen them from eternity by grace to everlasting life, will give them their portion with the Son in the coming glory and rule. (Buls)

Lenski: Jesus is now carrying out all the Father's counsel of grace and thus says regarding these glory-seats that they are not his own to allot by gift at this late date. Their very preparation the Father has attended to long ago, also their allotment to those who shall occupy them . . . It is possible that this knowledge was withheld from Jesus during His state of humiliation. (Buls)

In 37 James and John said: "Give to us." In 40 Jesus says: "It is not mine to give." They ask on the basis of presumptuous pride. His answer is the very antithesis of this -- humility. (Buls)

Notice the humility and focus of the Son of God. First, he explains that one's place in the universe is determined by the Father; this prerogative does not belong to Jesus. Second, Jesus consistently refers to and defers to the will of God, who has prepared work for us to do and reward that is concomitant with such service. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 2)

**10:41** *the ten*. The other disciples. (CSB)

*indignant*. Possibly because they desired the positions of prestige and power for themselves. (CSB)

The other disciples also hoped to sit in the seats of highest honor. (TLSB)

Hendriksen: The spiritual attitude of the ten was not any better than that of the two. How easy it is to condemn in others what we excuse in ourselves. (Buls)

Lenski: The ten show themselves no better than the two. Many feel wronged by the success of others, when similar success on their part appears quite without wrong to them. (Buls)

Surely the other disciples would take advantage of the lesson just taught, but they did not. Again, human nature simply refuses to grasp the truth, but instead grasps in futility for what does not belong to it. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 2)

*aganaktein*, "to become indignant," is the same word used in reaction to the woman in Mk 14:4. It marks an expression of displeasure. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

"When the ten heard about this, they became indignant." Paul reminds us to "serve one another in love. The entire law is summed up in a single command: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other" (Gal 5:13–15). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

The ten were no better than James and John, but only sorry they hadn't thought of asking first. (PBC)

Their insensitivity to the seriousness of the moment links them with James and John, and suggests the cruel loneliness which Jesus faced the journey to Jerusalem. It also indicates the degree to which selfish ambition and rivalry were the raw material from which Jesus had to fashion the leadership for the incipient Church. (Lane)

**10:42-44** The Good Shepherd addresses a situation that is getting out of hand. Jesus now plainly and profoundly inverts the accepted thinking of dysfunctional humanity. Pyramid schemes refer to businesses that base their success on an ever-growing number of supporting workers. Jesus inverts the pyramid concept. The more capable you are, the more God has gifted and called you, the lower you place yourself in the interest of supporting others. This is not a glory that anyone would seek. It is a service that only regeneration, the Spirit of God, and the needs of people can press us toward. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 2)

In Christ's kingdom, positions of authority carried a servant's job description, as He demonstrated with His own life. (TLSB)

**10:42** *Jesus called them to him* – Lest this matter become a cause of strife among the Twelve, Jesus then instructed them on the enormous difference between the kingdoms of this world and the kingdom of heaven. (PBC)

"Called them together" is used more frequently in Mark than Matthew or Luke. Jesus nips the argument in the bud. Note the utter contrast between Himself and the twelve. Note the parallelism for the sake of emphasis. The point is their selfish, dominant authority. It is a fact of life in the kingdom of power and is such because we live in a world of sin. Jesus is not passing judgment on them here. (Buls)

*exercise authority over them* – *katexousiasoudzin* means pure raw power. In a world having many unbelievers, it necessary for the rulers to have this authority so that they can make society safe for all.

**10:43** *Not so among you.* Jesus overturns the value structure of the world. The life of discipleship is to be characterized by humble and loving service. (CSB)

This is not a wish. It's a fact. "Among you" denotes the kingdom of grace. Note that this phrase is repeated in this verse and once again in 44. In 42 selfish, dominant authority is limited to a few. What Jesus speaks of in 43 and 44 is open to all. It is by grace, not by arbitrary choice or human endeavor, sinful human endeavor. In both 43 and 44 we have not a wish, but God's established way. (Buls)

*great among you* – *megos* means a high position or more prominent. This is associated with more responsibility. This takes for granted that there will be ranks and gradations of office in the church. Christ lays down the rule that men who become governors therein in order that they may serve their brothers be ministers of those who are subject to them.

*Must be your servant* – *diakonos* means to be ready to serve. It makes no difference whether there is a reward. They also know those whom they serve very well so that they can serve them properly. Those are served will be better off for having been served by these leaders (Ephesians 5:21-6:9).

**10:44** *would be first* – *protos* means chief, the most prominent or leading person.

*Be your slave* – *doulos* – Slaves had no freedom or rights. When Jesus washes the feet of his disciples in John 13, he is doing the work that only non-Jewish slaves did. They had the lowest status in society.

Stoekhardt: The domain of the church is nothing but service. (Buls)

Jesus teaches an important lesson to all disciples who seek honor, glory, or power. First, power marks the leadership style of non-Christians (v 42). The verbs *katakurieuosin*, “lord it over” and *katexousiazousin*, “exercise authority over” are emphatic and speak of absolute power. Jews living under Roman rule would have vivid biblical and contemporary examples of such arbitrary and absolute domination. The preacher may want to use illustrations of abuse of power in today’s political world to demonstrate Jesus’ concern about power seeking in the church. Second, greatness for disciples of Christ comes in service (vv 43–44a). The call to discipleship is countercultural in an age where people demand service. Third, the Son of Man provides the model and basis for such servant leadership (v 45). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

**10:45** A key verse in Mark’s Gospel. Jesus came to this world as a servant—indeed, the Servant—who would suffer and die for our redemption, as Isaiah clearly predicted (Isa 52:13–53:12). (CSB)

*but to serve* – Jesus set aside His own welfare for the sake of sinners. (TLSB)

*ransom*. Means “the price paid for release (from bondage).” Jesus gave his life to release us from bondage to sin and death. (CSB)

This expression explains Jesus’ mission and describes the purpose of the cross that He would soon bear. (TLSB)

“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” The gospels, record the title “Son of Man” 81 times. Daniel 7:13–14 pictures the Son of Man (Jesus) appearing before the Ancient of Days (Jesus’ ascension and session) in the end times. He is entrusted by the Ancient of Days with authority (Matt 28:18), glory (John 13:31–32), and sovereign power (1 Cor 15:24–28). Jesus gives his life in place of humankind, a substitutionary atonement, as the price paid to release us from bondage to sin, death, and the devil. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

The conjunction “for” makes evident that all the preceding thought is based on the verse to follow and concludes what the introductory verses (32–34) began. Lordship, dominion, power, and glory are displayed in self-sacrifice on behalf of the helpless. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 2)

lutron – The symbolism is that of prisoners who are liberated upon the payment of a price. This ransom was not paid to the devil, but to divine justice. God breaks the power of sin (as one would break chains) in order to release people from bondage. It is also a gift that covers or forgives a fault, given by one who acted in our place. In OT life, it was the dignified duty of a responsible relative to free a loved one taken as a captive, or to buy back land that belonged to the family. These were the responsibilities of the “kinsman-redeemer” (Leviticus 25; Ruth 4). God established a bond with us as our Creator. He then extended that bond to that of Redeemer by delivering Israel from the bondage in Egypt (Ex 6; 15:13), and promising to redeem the nation from its chronic, incorrigible sinful condition, though the nation would have to undergo tribulation first, as with the disciples in our text. The act of redeeming another was often done by money payment, but in more important transactions it was done with the life of an animal – or of another human being. The single most important passage for understanding Jesus’ use of this word is Isaiah 52:13-53:12. There, perhaps more clearly than in any other passage of Scripture, the Suffering Servant is described as offering his life as the price of redemption for the sins of many. In addition, the

meaning of Jesus' description of his purpose as "to serve" is defined by the four Suffering Servant Songs (Isaiah 42:1-9; 49:1-7; 50:4-11; 52:13-53:12).

*for.* That is, "in place of," pointing to Christ's substitutionary death. (CSB)

*many.* In contrast to the one life given for our ransom. (CSB)

"You see, even . . ." The "but" means "namely" or "in particular." Here is the true meaning of service. It is selfless, voluntary and universal. Though men served Him, never did He ask to be served. (Buls)

Hendriksen lists these verses as parallel thoughts: 1 Peter 1:18-19; Exodus 30:12; Leviticus 1:4; 16:15,16,20-22; Numbers 3:40-51; Psalm 49:7-8; 1 Corinthians 6:20; 7:23; Galatians 3:13; 4:5; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 2 Peter 2:1; Revelation 5:6,12; 13:8; 14:3-4. (Buls)

The redeemed are called many compared with the one Son of man. Look at Romans 5:19. (Buls)

Ylvisaker: The term 'many' is used with special reference to the great number in whose behalf the sacrifice should be made.

The Reformed, of course, deny the universal atonement at this point. They say that Christ died only for the elect out of all nations, many, not all. (Buls)

**10:35–45** Jesus puts our welfare and needs ahead of His own as He conducts His ministry, showing us what real leadership is. Jesus shows that those who lead in the kingdom of God serve others in humility. He leads by laying down His life as the sacrifice for our sins and calls us to similar sacrifice. • Dear Father, You have sent Christ to serve us, although He had the right to demand our service. Forgive us, Father. Lead us to give ourselves for the sake of others, that we, being last, might truly be first with Jesus in His kingdom. Amen. (TLSB)