

### (37) Ambition of James & John (Matt. 20:20–28; Mk. 10:35–45)

1. Mark records James and John as the questioners (Mk. 10:35), but Matthew records their mother's mediation (Mt. 20:20).
  - a. Zebedee is mentioned 12x in the NT but only one episode features him beyond the references to his paternity of James & John (Mt. 4:21–22; Mk. 1:19–20).
  - b. Mrs. Z (the mother of his sons) appears in this episode and at the cross (Mt. 27:56). ll texts helps to identify her given name as Salome (Mk. 15:40–41; 16:1) and also marks her as the sister of the mother of Jesus (Jn. 19:25).
  - c. Although their mother may have voiced it, the request remained theirs, and Jesus' answer was to question the two disciples (Mt. 20:22; Mk. 10:38).
2. The Sons of Thunder (Mk. 3:17) hoped to score prime seating in glory (Mt. 20:21; Mk. 10:37).
  - a. Such seating is the Father's sovereign choice, and the Son will not manipulate the Father in this.
  - b. If the Son will not manipulate the Father how sad is it for the cousins to use their mother in such a way!
3. Jesus' challenging response indicates that seating assignments are based upon victorious cups and baptisms (Mt. 20:22; Mk. 10:38).
  - a. The cup is what is provided (Ps. 23:5). Drinking is the volitional acceptance of that provision (Mt. 26:39; Mk. 14:36; Lk. 22:42; Jn. 18:11).
  - b. The cup can also be one of judgment (Ps. 11:6; Isa. 51:17,22,23).
  - c. Baptism can have a metaphoric use which speaks of maximum testing (Lk. 12:50; 1<sup>st</sup> Cor. 10:2) as it contains the imagery of being overwhelmed by a flood (Job 22:11; Ps. 18:16; 69:1–2,15; Isa. 43:2).
  - d. The disciples are promised suffering in the name of Christ, but eternal seating precedent remains the Father's business (Mt. 20:23; Mk. 10:40).
4. The ten became indignant, and Jesus exhorted them to exchange self-exaltation for self-humiliation (Mt. 20:24–28; Mk. 10:41–45).
  - a. Indignation has already been detailed (Jesus Blesses Children [LJ&PM33]).  
ἀγανακτέω aganakteō <sup>#23</sup><sub>7x</sub>.
    - 1) Resentment is the underlying attitude behind this kind of anger.
    - 2) In most cases, this anger is carnal, but Jesus illustrates a legitimate indignation.
  - b. In order to address the indignation of the ten, Jesus had to teach an immediate class to the twelve.
  - c. Gentile (Roman) political power plays form the antithetical illustration for Jesus' humility teaching.
    - 1) Ruling ones "lord it over" the ruled ones. κατακυριεύω katakurieuō <sup>#2634</sup><sub>4x</sub> (Mt. 20:25; Mk. 10:42; 1<sup>st</sup> Pet. 5:3).
    - 2) Great ones "authority over" the non-great. κατεξουσιάζω katexousiazō <sup>#2715</sup><sub>2x</sub> (Mt. 20:25; Mk. 10:42).
    - 3) For disciples of Christ greatness is derived by deacon-service (διάκονος diakonos <sup>#1249</sup><sub>29x</sub>).
    - 4) For disciples of Christ pre-eminence is derived by bond-service (δοῦλος doulos <sup>#1401</sup><sub>126x</sub>).
    - 5) Jesus' personal illustration is to be imitated (Jn. 13:14,15; Phil. 2:5–7).