

Fifth Sunday of the Great Fast
Sunday of Saint Mary of Egypt
April 21, 2024

*On Sunday April 21st we Commemorate
Hieromartyr Januarius, Bishop of Benevento, and those with him.
Martyr Theodore of Perge.*



Icon of Saint Mary of Egypt

Holy Wisdom Orthodox Mission

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Divine Liturgy, Sunday Mornings at 9:30 am

Great Vespers, Saturday Evenings at 6:00 pm

Presanctified Divine Liturgy, Wednesday Evenings at 6:00 pm

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*Holy Wisdom Orthodox Mission
is a parish in the Diocese of the West
of the Orthodox Church in America
under the spiritual and ecclesiastical jurisdiction of
Archbishop Benjamin of San Francisco and the West*



SUNDAY EPISTLE AND GOSPEL READINGS

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Epistle for the Fifth Sunday of the Great Fast, Hebrews 9:11-14

BRETHREN, Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Epistle for the Saint Mary of Egypt, Galatians 3:23-29

BRETHREN, Before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all, but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world. But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

Gospel for the Fifth Sunday of the Great Fast, Mark 10:32-45

AT THAT TIME, Jesus took the twelve disciples, and began to tell them the things that would happen to Him: "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and deliver Him to the Gentiles; and they will mock Him, and scourge Him, and spit on Him, and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again." Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Him, saying, "Teacher, we want You to do for us whatever we ask." And He said to them, "What do you want Me to do for you?" They said to Him, "Grant us that we may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on Your left, in Your glory." But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" They said to Him, "We are able." So Jesus said to them, "You will indeed drink the cup that I drink, and with the baptism I am baptized with you will be baptized; but to sit on My right hand

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and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared.” And when the ten heard it, they began to be greatly displeased with James and John. But Jesus called them to Himself and said to them, “You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

Gospel for Saint Mary of Egypt, Luke 7:36-50

AT THAT TIME, One of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee’s house, and sat down to eat. And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee’s house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, and stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil. Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he spoke to himself, saying, “This Man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner.” And Jesus answered and said to him, “Simon, I have something to say to you.” So he said, “Teacher, say it.” “There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?” Simon answered and said, “I suppose the one whom he forgave more.” And He said to him, “You have rightly judged.” Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, “Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil. Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little.” Then He said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.” And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, “Who is this who even forgives sins?” Then He said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you. Go in peace.”



REFLECTION ON THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

4

Fifth Sunday of the Great Fast

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

“He entered once for all into the Holy Place, taking not the blood of goats and calves but his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.” (Hebrews 9:12)

In the Old Testament, the High Priest entered the “Holy of Holies” – the most sacred part of the Tabernacle in the wilderness and later of the Temple in Jerusalem – once a year to offer a blood of sacrifice for his sins and a blood of sacrifice for the sins of the people.

At the beginning of the New Testament, however, Jesus Christ has become The High Priest, and has offered Himself, His *own* Body and Blood, for us. He thus “remitted” each sin we commit.

At the Divine Liturgy the Bishop, as a living Icon of Christ, enters the same Holy of Holies in our parish temple to offer the “bloodless sacrifice” through bread and wine that become the Body and Blood of Christ which we receive in Holy Communion. In the absence of the Bishop, his designated presbyter (priest) does this for him.

Through this action – which we do in obedience to the command of Christ, “Do this in memory of Me” – we are brought to contemplation of what Jesus did for us: how He endured sufferings on our behalf. We also enkindle great love for Him as our Great Benefactor, and look forward to the enjoyment of the future blessing He promised us.

“But it shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant.” (Mark 10:43)

We must also consider that the Priesthood of Christ is not like the authority wielded by men, or like the honors given to worldly men in authority. Rather, Jesus Christ came as a servant – even though He was God Almighty through Whom all things were made!

We are all Baptized into the royal priesthood of Christ, and thus we participate in the Divine Liturgy by standing in the sanctuary (the Holy Place) of our parish temple. Some are ordained to the sacramental priesthood to serve as living icons of Christ in the celebration of the Divine Mysteries. But we are all called to be servants, never thinking of ourselves as greater than one another.

Remember, in the Church there is no “democracy” since there is no power (“krateia” or “-cracy”) wielded in the Church; instead there is merely order, whereby each fulfills his or her responsibility of service.

The Apostles considered themselves somehow superior, as we read in today’s Gospel. But this was before the Cross, the resurrection, the ascension, and the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. After Pentecost, when they received the Holy Spirit – as we do at Chrismation – they became the servants of all by grace.

We are now approaching the commemoration of events which remitted of our sins and opened the Kingdom of heaven to us. Let us be like the Apostles: if we are not now enlightened, let us embrace Christ and be humble servants like Him, just as the Apostles before us.

Amen.

Fifth Sunday of the Great Fast, Sunday of Saint Mary of Egypt
In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

At the end of the coming week Great Lent will be over. Next Saturday is Lazarus Saturday, followed by Palm Sunday, the Entry of our Lord into Jerusalem, and then by Passion Week. However, today we commemorate another entry into Jerusalem, not that of our Lord, but that of Saint Mary of Egypt. Who was she and what is her significance for us today?

Born in Alexandria, Egypt in the middle of the fifth century, as a young girl Mary fell into the vice of prostitution. For seventeen years, from the age of 12 until the age of 29, she lived the life of a harlot.

Going Jerusalem once out of curiosity, she went to the Church of the Resurrection to see the Precious Cross of Christ which Saint Helena had placed there. She found, however, that she was unable to go into the church, because some invisible force prevented her from entering.

Frightened, she asked the Mother of God, praying before her icon at the church entrance, why this was. The Mother of God replied that Mary first needed to repent of her sins before she could approach holy things.

Only after promising to do so was she able to enter the church and venerate the True Cross. Then Mary then heard the Mother of God tell her: “If you cross the Jordan, you will find true peace.”

Shaken by these events Mary forsook her old life and, having taken communion, crossed the Jordan and went to live there in the desert. There she dwelt as a hermitess, eating plants, living in torments and struggles with passionate thoughts, and eventually obtaining the grace to work miracles, even being able when necessary to cross the Jordan as if on dry land.

She lived naked and became withered and emaciated, as we see in her icon, but nevertheless she survived in the desert for forty-eight years. She was discovered by a pious monk, Saint Zosimas, who is often portrayed in the icon together with her. It was to him that she related the story of her life which we have today.

The example of the life of Saint Mary teaches us many things. The first and most obvious lesson we can learn from her is that we should never judge anyone. “Who will be saved?” It is impossible to answer this question, for it is never too late to repent, not for any one of us.

When we consider the life of Mary up to her twenty-ninth year, we might think that salvation had become impossible for her. And yet the hymns sung to her today call her “the greatest of saints.”

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Continued from page 5 ☩ Indeed, we are all condemned because of our sins, but by the grace of God everything, including the height of repentance, is possible. No man has the right to judge another.

The Life of Saint Mary of Egypt also teaches us something about human nature. In each of us there is the desire for worldly pleasures, for amusement and entertainment, for food and drink, for the pleasures of the senses. But there is also the desire for pleasure of a higher sort, pleasure that is lasting, which we may call spiritual joy.

Spiritual joy is so much higher than the fleeting pleasures of the senses that it alone constitutes the path to lasting happiness. Societies which are devoted only to the satisfaction of the pleasures of the senses, pleasure-seeking societies, are societies without lasting joys, full of sad faces.

The Life of Saint Mary additionally teaches us that the values of the Church are quite different from those of the world. Mary went out into the desert and had nothing: no friends, no home, no possessions, no clothes and hardly any food and drink. The world looked for pleasure, the satisfaction of the senses, money and power, but Mary was moneyless and powerless in the world.

Today’s Gospel confirms the choice of Saint Mary, for it says that those who wish to be great must be servants. This is upside down from all the ways of this world. But our Lord preached this and Mary lived like Him.

As we have already said, the Church calls Saint Mary “the greatest of saints.” The use of this word “great” may surprise. In everyday life, we use “great” in other meanings. The world speaks of “great politicians,” “great soldiers,” “great film-stars,” “great performances by sportsmen,” “a great holiday,” “a great car,” “a great amount of money” — all things which are great and famous for a very brief time.

But the Church speaks of Saint Mary as “great,” and a thousand and a half years after she lived we ask for her prayers, but not for those of any politician or soldier or film-star or sportsman. Let us think more carefully before next we utter this word “great.”

As this last week of Great Lent begins, let us also ponder on the words of the Mother of God, which led Mary to her salvation through repentance and her greatness: “If you cross the Jordan, you will find true peace.” These mysterious words are also addressed to each of us today; the interpretation of their mystery is open to the souls of each of us, but only if we ask the Mother of God and Saint Mary to guide us. And then we shall find our own “entry into Jerusalem.”

Venerable Mary of Egypt, pray to God for us!

The Reverend Andrew Phillips, Pastor
Saint John’s Orthodox Church, Colchester, England

On the fifth Sunday of Great Lent, we celebrate the memory of our holy and venerable Mother, Mary of Egypt. The recorder of the life of this wonderful saint is Saint Sophronios, Patriarch of Jerusalem.

During the Great Fast, Hieromonk Zossimas went into the wilderness across the Jordan. There he saw a person with a withered and naked body and with hair as white as snow. This person fled until she stopped at a stream and called, "*Father Zossima, forgive me for the Lord's sake. I cannot turn around to you, for I am a naked woman.*" Father Zossimas threw her his exorasson, and she turned around to him. At his insistence, she told him the story of her life.

She was born in Egypt and lived as a prostitute in Alexandria from the age of twelve, spending seventeen years in this way of life. One day she boarded a ship sailing for Jerusalem and upon arrival attempted to enter a church to venerate the Precious Cross, but some unseen power prevented her from entering.

In great fear, she turned to an icon of the Mother of God, begging to let her go in and venerate the Cross, confessing her sin and impurity, and promising she would go wherever the Most Pure One led her. She was then allowed to enter the church and, after venerating the Cross, she went out before the icon and thanked the Mother of God.

Hearing a voice saying, "*If you cross the Jordan, you will find true peace,*" she set off for the wilderness. After receiving Holy Communion at the monastery of Saint John the Baptist, she crossed the river, and spent forty-eight years in the wilderness in torments, terror, struggles with passionate thoughts like gigantic beasts, and feeding only on plants.

After meeting Father Zossimas, she asked him to bring her Holy Communion the next year on the bank of the Jordan. He did so and stood amazed as he saw her arrive on the further bank, make the sign of the Cross over the river, and walk across as though it were dry land. After receiving Communion, she begged him to come again the following year to the same stream.

The next year Father Zossimas went and found her dead body there. Above her head in the sand was written: "*Abba Zossima, bury in this place the body of the humble Mary. Give dust to dust. I passed away on April 1, on the very night of Christ's Passion, after Communion of the Divine Mysteries.*"

For the first time, Father Zossimas learned her name and realized she had arrived at that stream the previous year on the night of the same day on which she had Communed – a place that he had taken twenty days to reach. Saint Zossimas buried the body of the saint, and upon returning to the monastery, he recounted the whole story of her life and the wonders to which he had been an eyewitness. Thus the Lord glorifies repentant sinners. She entered into rest about AD 530.

Saint Mary is remembered today, as we reach the end of the Great Fast, to arouse the energy of the slothful and to urge sinners to repentance.

O Christ our God, through the intercessions of our Venerable Mother Mary of Egypt, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

Tone 5, Troparion, Resurrection

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word, • co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, • born for our salvation from the Virgin; • for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh, • to endure death, • and to raise the dead • by His glorious Resurrection.

Tone 8, Troparion of the Temple, of the Midfeast of Pentecost

O Savior at the Middle of the Feast, fill my thirsting soul with the waters of piety, as Thou didst cry to all: "If anyone thirst, let him come to Me and drink." O Christ God, Fountain of our life, glory to Thee.

Tone 8, Troparion, for St. Mary of Egypt

The image of God was truly preserved in thee, O Mother, • for thou didst take up the Cross and follow Christ. • By so doing, thou taughtest us to disregard the flesh for it passes away; • but to care instead for the soul, for it is immortal. • Therefore thy spirit, O holy Mother Mary, rejoices with the angels.

Tone 5, Kontakion, Resurrection

Thou didst descend into Hades, O my Savior, • shattering its gates as Almighty, • resurrecting the dead as Creator, • and destroying the sting of death. • Thou hast delivered Adam from the curse, O Lover of man, • and we cry to Thee: "O Lord, save us."

Tone 4, Kontakion of the Temple, of the Midfeast of Pentecost

Christ God, the Creator and Master of all, cried to all in the midst of the feast of the law: "Come and draw the water of immortality." We fall before Thee and faithfully cry: "Grant us Thy mercies for Thou art the Fountain of our life."

Tone 3, Kontakion, for St. Mary of Egypt

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Having been a sinful woman, • thou becamest through repentance a bride of Christ. • Having attained angelic life, • thou didst defeat demons with the weapon of the Cross. • Therefore, O most glorious Mary, thou art a bride of the Kingdom.

Tone 2, Kontakion of the Theotokos

Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen. Steadfast protectress of Christians, • constant advocate before the Creator; • despise not the entreating cries of us sinners, • but in thy goodness come speedily to help us who call on thee in faith. • Hasten to hear our petition and to intercede for us, O Theotokos, • for thou dost always protect those who honor thee.

Prokeimena

Thou, O Lord, shalt protect us and preserve us from this generation forever. God is wonderful in His saints, the God of Israel.



Евангелие

Когда были они на пути, восходя в Иерусалим, Иисус шёл впереди их, а они ужасались и, следуя за Ним, были в страхе. || Подозвав двенадцать, Он опять начал им говорить о том, что' будет с Ним: вот, мы восходим в Иерусалим, и Сын Человеческий предан будет первосвященникам и книжникам, и осудят Его на смерть, и предадут Его язычникам, и поругаются над Ним, и будут бить Его, и оплюют Его, и убьют Его; и в третий день воскреснет. Тогда подошли к Нему сыновья Зеведеевы Иаков и Иоанн и сказали: Учитель! мы желаем, чтобы Ты сделал нам, о чём попросим. Он сказал им: что хотите, чтобы Я сделал вам? Они сказали Ему: дай нам сесть у Тебя, одному по правую сторону, а другому по левую в славе Твоей. Но Иисус сказал им: не знаете, чего просите. Можете ли пить чашу, которую Я пью, и креститься крещением, которым Я крещусь? Они отвечали: можем. Иисус же сказал им: чашу, которую Я пью, будете пить, и крещением, которым Я крещусь, будете креститься; а дать сесть у Меня по правую сторону и по левую - не от Меня зависит, но кому уготовано. И, услышав, десять начали негодовать на Иакова и Иоанна. Иисус же, подозвав их, сказал им: вы знаете, что почитающиеся князьями народов господствуют над ними, и вельможи их властвуют ими. Но между вами да не будет так: а кто хочет быть бо'льшим между вами, да будет вам слугою; и кто хочет быть первым между вами, да будет всем рабом. Ибо и Сын Человеческий не для того пришёл, чтобы Ему служили, но чтобы послужить и отдать душу Свою для искупления многих (Мк. 10, 32-45).



Митрополит Антоний Сурожский

Во имя Отца и Сына и Святого Духа.

Мы вспоминаем сегодня святую Марию Египетскую; и от нее мы можем научиться многому, что нам нужно. Она была всем известной грешницей, предметом искушения и соблазна для всех. Как она стала грешницей – мы не знаем: качественное ли зло в ☞ 2

1 ☞ ней самой? была ли она соблазнена, подверглась ли насилию? Как она стала блудницей, мы никогда не узнаем. Но одно мы знаем достоверно: как-то она пришла в храм Матери Божией, Которая – образ совершенной цельности, целомудрия, и вдруг почувствовала, что не может войти в него. Не стоит представлять, будто чудесная сила не давала ей переступить порог; сила эта была, вероятно, – наверное! – в ней самой. Она почувствовала, что эта область слишком свята, чтобы она посмела войти в Ее присутствие, стоять внутри храма.

Но этого было достаточно, чтобы она осознала, что все ее прошлое темно, и что выйти из этого можно только одним путем: сбросить с себя все зло и начать новую жизнь. Она не пошла за советом на исповедь; она ушла из города в пустыню, в знойную пустыню, где ничего не было, только песок, и голод, и отчаянное одиночество.

Она может научить нас чему-то очень важному. Святой Серафим Саровский не раз говорил приходящим к нему, что **вся разница между грешником погибающим и грешником, который находит свой путь к спасению, в одном: в решимости. Благодать Божия всегда рядом: но мы не всегда отзываемся, как отозвалась Мария**; как она отозвалась на ужас, охвативший ее, когда она осознала себя и, вместе, святость, красоту, цельность и целомудрие Матери Божией, и на все, на все она была готова ради того, чтобы переменить жизнь.

И так год за годом, в посте, в молитве, среди жгучей жары, в отчаянном одиночестве среди пустыни, она сражалась со всем злом, накопившимся в ее душе. Потому что недостаточно осознать его; недостаточно даже отвергнуть его усилием воли: оно здесь, в наших воспоминаниях, в наших вожделениях, в нашей хрупкости, в той порче, которую приносит с собой зло. Ей пришлось бороться всю жизнь, но в конце концов она победила; она действительно подвигом добрым подвизалась, она очистилась от скверны, она смогла войти в область Божию: не в храм, не «куда-то» – в вечность.

Она многому может научить нас. Она может научить тому, что когда-то мы должны осознать: та царственная область, куда мы входим так легко, – Церковь, да и просто сам мир, сотворенный Богом, остался чист от зла, хотя покорился, поработился злу из-за нас. Если бы когда-нибудь мы осознали это и почувствовали, что только нам нет там места, и в ответ покаяться бы, то есть отвернулись бы в ужасе от самих себя, отвратились от себя в непреклонной решимости – и мы могли бы последовать ее примеру.

Этот пример ее образа предлагается нам как завершающий момент постного времени, этой *весны*, жизни. Неделю назад мы слышали учение, призыв святого Иоанна Лествичника, составившего ☞ 3

21 апреля 2024 г.

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2 ☞ целую лестницу совершенства, с помощью которой мы можем преодолеть зло и прийти к правде. А **сегодня мы видим пример, – пример той, которая из самых глубин зла поднялась на высоты святости** и говорит нам словами Великого канона Андрея Критского: Душа, Бог *может* прокаженное убелить и очистить, не отчайся, хотя ты и прокаженная...

Пусть её образ будет для нас новым вдохновением, новой надеждой, даже новой радостью, но и вызовом, призывом, потому что напрасно мы воспеваем хвалу святым, если ничему не учимся от них, не стремимся подражать им.

Через неделю мы окажемся на пороге Страстной седмицы, и этот порог открывается в субботу двумя событиями: воскрешением Лазаря и Благовещением Матери Божией. Войдем в эту Страстную седмицу с готовностью встретить Матерь Божию лицом к лицу *хотя бы* нашей решимостью стать достойными Ее молитв, и затем пойдем день за днем, следуя за событиями Страстной и ставя все время себе вопрос: Где я стоял бы, окажись я их участником?

Аминь.



Митрополит Антоний (Храповицкий)

Во имя Отца и Сына и Святого Духа.

Когда были они на пути, восходя в Иерусалим, Иисус шел впереди, а ученики ужасались и, следуя за Ним, были в страхе. Спаситель их подозвал и снова начал говорить о предстоящем Ему, и потому они следовали за Ним в страхе. И вот Он снова говорит о том же, как бы в ответ на их страх и ужас. *«И поругаются над Ним... и оплюют Его, и убьют Его; и в третий день воскреснет».* И вот после этого страшного предсказания два ученика, Иаков и Иоанн, стали просить Иисуса исполнить их просьбу - дать им сесть у Него одному по правую, другому по левую руку в славе Его.

По Евангелисту Матфею (*Мф. 20:20*) эту просьбу высказали не они, а их мать, но дальнейшую беседу Спаситель ведет не с нею, а с ними и от них получает ответ. В этой просьбе выражается желание великой чести и великая преданность. Однако знали ли они с чем связана последняя и на что они идут? Если не вполне, то догадывались, потому что следовали за Ним в страхе. Вот, чтобы уяснить им это вполне, Спаситель, перед тем сказавший на что Он идет, предупредил их за что они берутся: *«Можете ли пить чашу, которую Я пью, и креститься крещением, которым Я крещусь?»* Они отвечали: *«Можем».*

☞ 4

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21 апреля 2024 г.

3 ☞ Торжественная обстановка вокруг этого трагического обещания. Оно было сделано так сильно и убежденно, что Спаситель подтвердил их готовность к подвигу и благосклонно отнесся к их просьбе о возвеличении. Это место Евангелия плохо понято, потому что не поняли его торжественности и трагичности, как не поняли и вознегодовали остальные апостолы за то, что братья Заведеевы просили себе особого великого положения в славе Его. **Сущность этой беседы в том, что Спаситель открывает ученикам, что получение великой чести на небе связано с уничтожением, страданием и мучением на земле.** Братья Заведеевы поняли это и прося великой чести на небе, просили быть убитыми за Него на земле.

Десять Апостолов вознегодовали на них, но почувствовали, что честь, о которой просили братья Заведеевы, весьма высока: для уяснения вопроса о ней, Христос упоминает о чести царей и князей. Далее Он разъясняет им, что если они хотят высокой чести в славе Его на небе, то на земле должны быть всем слугами, следуя за Ним, пришедшим не для того, чтобы Ему служили, но чтобы послужить и отдать душу Свою для искупления многих. **Само желание высокой чести небесной не осуждается, но указано, что оно связано с уничтожением на земле.**

Заключительные слова этого Евангелия не противопоставляются просьбе Иакова и Иоанна, но наоборот развивают ту же мысль о чаше и крещении, на которые они так торжественно выразили согласие, т.е на уничтожение, страдание и мучение: *«если кто хочет быть большим»* - и в такой именно форме, в которой выразили свое желание Апостолы Иаков и Иоанн, желание не осуждается - *«да будет вам слугою»* и далее - *«рабом».*

Аминь.

