

Towards the Passions

In this passage from the Gospel of Mark, the Lord lets the disciples enter His great mystery. He was ascending with them towards Jerusalem and He prophesied that the Son of Man, i.e. Himself, will be delivered to the chief priests and the scribes. Scribes are those who used to copy the Torah in order to be read over as many people as possible and because of this work they have become knowledgeable people. He said: "They will condemn Him to death and will hand Him over to the Gentiles". By "gentiles" Jesus meant the representative of Rome in Palestine, Pontius Pilate.

The Jews and Gentiles both took part in the killing of the Lord. Jesus spoke about the form of his passions: "they will mock Him and spit on Him, flog Him and kill Him. Three days later He will rise." This is what the other Evangelists also said.

Then, there is a weird conversation from the sons of Zebedee, James and John (The evangelist). They still thought that Jesus is a temporal political king, so they asked to be ministers in his government. Therefore He asked them if they could take the passions that He will take. But, as the others, they couldn't understand anything from what will happen to Him. The disciples felt mad from James' and John's will to be special among them although none of them understood yet that Jesus' kingdom wasn't from this world.

Then, Jesus called the twelve disciples to tell them that Gentile nations have their rulers. While among you, nobody dominates and if you wanted to search for the great among you, he shall be a servant for you. Service is the only way to the known greatness in Jesus' kingdom. Then, He stressed on the word servant as He said: "whoever wants to be first must be slave of all".

The model is in front of you, the Son of Man that didn't come to be served but to serve. Not only that, but also to die.

For us, the great is the one that says about himself that he is the smallest. The Bishop used to sign his letters this way "the poor among bishops". This means that he is being humble to the extreme so that the believers would believe him and so that he could fulfill a righteous service. We all came to be a ransom for others, as the Lord did. We cannot become anything except through the Lord's grace.

Through this feeling, we come towards the Lord's passions, death and resurrection. It is the feeling of ignoring our ego, our interests, benefits and the love of appearing. You cannot take anything from the Holy Week unless you felt poor towards God as St. Mary the Egyptian did: The saint that we celebrate today who stayed 47 years in the dessert to gain the atonement of her sins.

Putting our sins to death starting from today gives us acceptance for Pascha.

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