

108EN-THE 7 SINS OF THOSE WHO BELIEVE THEMSELVES TO BE FATHERS AND HOW JESUS CHANGED THEM INTO CHILDREN - Mark 9-11

The theme has been recorded on the 17th/06/2023.

The peace of CHRIST, beloved brethren, the little flock of the LORD JESUS CHRIST! We are today in the Shabbat day, in the Sabbath day, in the day of rest that the LORD has blessed and sanctified for spiritual use. We are, at the same time, on the 478th day of this war that has produced so many dead, so much destruction up to this moment in Ukraine, this war that is not foreseen to end. People do not know how long it will last. About this we have talked, sometimes, that it is possible that it will last 1290 days. At the moment we are 12 days before the first 490 days that we have pointed out in the diagram of the end of the world as a possible fulfillment. We will see in 12 days what will happen. This will be in the middle of the counteroffensive or at the very end of the counteroffensive that has begun. We will see what this may mean in this context of war. And this week we have received from the LORD several messages for those who have listened to the previous Sabbath theme. We have talked about Matthew, from chapter 17 onwards, in parallel with the book of Malachi. And surprisingly, this week the LORD has not given Matthew, but He has given Mark. It's the same thing from Matthew 17 onwards. The same thing that we have talked about, that we have read from the chapters of the book of Matthew, the LORD has given us this week on three occasions. On three different days the LORD has given us from Mark 8 to Mark 11. They are the same chapters that we have studied last Sabbath, but in the book of Matthew. The LORD has given us the same, practically, seven days later. This means that we have to insist a little bit more in discovering more necessary things that the LORD has left written here. And we are going to talk today about the seven character defects of the disciples that are found here in these pages. We are going to talk about the seven defects or, as we can call them, errors, sins. They are those things that separated them from the kingdom of GOD, from entering into the kingdom that JESUS CHRIST has come to bring on this earth. We are reminded that since the days of John the Baptist, the kingdom of GOD or the kingdom of heaven is open for anyone to enter into. But we will find in these pages that there are some conditions and that not even the disciples have been able to enter this kingdom of GOD until the death of CHRIST JESUS of Nazareth and His resurrection. Until that time they have not been able to enter, although they have been with the LORD JESUS. But we will see that because of these seven defects of character, they have not been able to fit through the narrow gate. Although the LORD has spoken of many more impediments for other people, such as, for example, riches or love of the family, rather idolatry of the family and other defects that others had and that the disciples did not have. Or some of the disciples also had these defects, for example Judas, the one who did not make it in any way, he loved money. But here the LORD has recorded seven defects of his eleven disciples, especially those that they managed to overcome just after the sacrifice of the LORD JESUS CHRIST. Let's open our Bibles to Mark, to

the book of Mark. And we are going to take a look at these chapters, starting with chapter eight through chapter eleven, to remind ourselves that we studied exactly these chapters last Sabbath. For example, in Mark eight we find the multiplication of the loaves and then, from verse eighteen onwards, we find that scene that we little understand, where the LORD rebukes His disciples for not understanding, for not understanding something evident to Him, for not understanding and for having eyes and not seeing, and for having ears and not hearing, and for not remembering the two multiplications of loaves that we will explain later. And then He speaks of John the Baptist, He speaks of Elijah, He speaks of Himself, the Messiah who was to come. Then it is the scene on the mountain of transfiguration with the two, Moses and Elijah. Here the order of the chapters is reversed than in Matthew, but they are the same events. After the mountain of transfiguration, when He comes down, we have the scene when the LORD rebukes and we will see hereafter to whom this rebuke was directed, saying "O unbelieving generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I suffer you?" Then we have a chapter, this chapter full of rebukes. And in chapter 10 we find the same thing that we have studied last Sabbath about marriage and about whether it is lawful for a husband to put away his wife, put away is the word, put away his wife, or whether it is lawful for the wife to put away her husband, as it says here in Mark 10:12. If you didn't know, these Pharisees had taught for hundreds of years, I believe, that it was lawful, that you could, according to the law given through Moses. If you didn't know, even wives could put away their husbands. It is unimaginable, but even this they said was possible. And we have seen it with Herod who married his brother's wife. And there is no other way that he married her while his brother was alive, but that wife repudiated her husband, who was not a king. She repudiated the one who was not king and went to the one who was king or governor. It was a repudiation out of self-interest and adultery. Then we have the rich teachings of the LORD JESUS about the children that we have talked about, that we have explained last Sabbath. In chapter 11, in the last chapter, we have the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, when the poor receive Him and the priests make plans to kill Him. And then follows another chapter preparatory to Mark chapter 13, which is the equivalent of Matthew chapter 24. So we have practically the same chapters before this prophetic message of Matthew chapter 24 or Mark chapter 13. Let's begin to explain a few things. First of all, let's start with the multiplication of the loaves in Mark 8. From verse 18 we do not find the same multiplication, but the recollection of the two multiplications of the loaves. What interests us is why the LORD JESUS so strongly rebuked His disciples for not understanding, for not seeing, for not hearing, for not being attentive to what He was doing. Even when He gave food, it does not matter, everything the LORD did was of the utmost importance. These works of the LORD JESUS contained spiritual messages, prophetic messages. He did nothing that did not have much deeper meaning than it appeared. So, these two multiplications, although the disciples quickly forgot them, the LORD did not forget them and the LORD reminded them of these multiplications. And why did they not understand? Why did they see with their eyes and did not understand? Why

did they have eyes to see and did not see? Why did they have ears and did not hear what the LORD said and did? This reproof I believe is the same reproof that Laodicea needs, because Laodicea also has eyes, but does not see, has ears, but does not hear, because Laodicea has shut herself up in a prison of self-sufficiency. And this rebuke is for all those who want to get out of the Laodicean state. Practically, to them, to the disciples, he has said what he has said to the leaders. "Ye understand neither the Scriptures nor the power of GOD." More than sure the message was for everyone, even His disciples. So let's read Mark 8 from verse 17. "And when JESUS understood, He said, What reason ye, because ye have no bread? Do ye neither consider nor understand? Are ye yet hardened in heart?" So what was the state of the disciples' minds after three and a half years of being with JESUS? Well, their hearts were hardened. And the LORD saw this very well. The LORD could see exactly the state of their minds or their characters. By what they did, by what they spoke, by what they let be seen in their behaviors, He knew the inside, the inner character. Then He gave His diagnosis and said, "ye have yet a hardened heart," that is, a heart of stone. You still have a hardened heart; you have not reached the heart of flesh that my Father wants to put in the human being. Verse 18, "Having eyes ye see not, and having ears ye hear not, and remember not?" Practically, it is Revelation 3, it is the message to Laodicea. Verse 19, "When I broke the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of the fragments did you lift up?" And they tell Him twelve. "And when the seven loaves among four thousand, how many baskets full of the broken pieces did you lift up?" And they said seven. And He said to them, "How do you not yet understand?" It is amazing. Every time I have read these verses, I have felt myself in the situation of the disciples. I was so amazed at His insistence that the disciples did not understand something that the LORD wanted them to understand. And I have always wondered what the LORD wanted His disciples to understand. What was so obvious and yet so far from the disciples' minds? And we are going to try to give an explanation on this occasion, although that is only the beginning of the theme. We are interested in what comes next, but we are going to show what the LORD has shown us a few weeks ago. We all know the biblical symbology of numbers. Now it's easy for anybody to have a phone with a Bible, with a search engine, even in Greek, in Hebrew, and be able to find out where in the Bible these verses are found. So, if you do a search, you will see that the word "five" has to do very, very closely with the Church. The word "five" or "fifty" has been used a lot about the sanctuary, in the building of the tabernacle, then in the tabernacle service, and then onward. We are reminded also of First Kings 18, and of the sons of the prophets, who were a hundred in number, who have been protected and kept in caves from fifty to fifty. This exact expression appears in Luke 9:14, which describes the same scene here of Mark 8 and Matthew 14, only it adds this detail, that the LORD has told the disciples to organize the people in groups of fifty by fifty. This exact expression of fifty by fifty is found in First Kings 18, I think verse four, where it says that this servant of Ahab, but who was very fearful of GOD, in order to save these people that he cherished, the prophets and the sons of the prophets, he kept them, he hid them in the caves fifty by fifty. It is the

same thing that the LORD has done here with those who were to receive the food, the bread. And the bread in the Bible we know very well what it represents. In the tabernacle the twelve loaves represented the twelve tribes of the house of Israel. And here the LORD has arranged Israel, the people who followed Him, in groups of fifty, that is, fifty by fifty, waiting for the food. The food, in the Bible, also represents the word of GOD. And we remember another scene when a woman who was not from Israel said to JESUS with great faith, that even in Israel the LORD had not seen such faith; she said to Him, "LORD, even the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from the table of their masters". These were words spoken in symbolism, for the dogs were a symbol of the Gentiles or of those who were not of Israel, of the heathen, so to speak. They were called dogs. And the crumbs were the word of GOD and not only, because in reality they were even more than the word, they were the healing that the LORD JESUS carried with Him. The LORD has said that He has been sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, but that woman had faith. It was not boldness, but it was faith, because she needed the mercy of JESUS. So she asked in faith and received. And in reality, the lost children of the house of Israel, in the broadest sense of this expression, refers to the worldwide Israel, to the lost Israel of Adam's family, because we are all brothers, we all come from the same parents, Adam and Eve. We are all, in principle, from the flock of the Eternal Father and we have all been led astray, lost. And that is why the LORD has come to this world, to seek the lost children of the Heavenly Father. Not only those from that land of Israel, but from all over the world, all those who will manifest the faith that the LORD has placed in Abraham, the faith of Abraham, or the faith of JESUS, just as that woman did. She manifested that faith and in humility spoke to JESUS. All those who have come in humility, have humbled themselves, and have shown desperation to receive the help of the LORD, all have been considered to have that faith. We have here some verses for everyone to read: Matthew 14, 17 to 21, which is the same scene; Matthew 16:9; Mark 6:44. And let's go to John 6:10 to read this verse. John 6:10 says like this. "Then said JESUS, make men sit down. And there was much grass in that place, and they sat down about the number of five thousand men." It says here that five thousand sat down. This is also the same figure we find here, where in Mark 8:19 it says, "Five loaves among five thousand." They were five thousand males. And in ancient times the males were counted. For the sanctuary they counted the males. And let's read Luke 9:14 to see that it says exactly fifty by fifty. It says. "And they were about five thousand men. And he saith unto his disciples, Make them sit down by companies of fifty by fifty. And they did so, making them all sit down." This scene reminds us also of that scene on Mount Sinai when the LORD seated the seventy elders and fed them before His presence. And He sat them down because the LORD wants the people to feel at ease in His presence and to be filled with all good things. And then we go to the first multiplication. Here it says five loaves divided among five thousand. The first thing the word "five" reminds us of is about the five wise virgins. He deliberately said "five wise and five foolish." But He said five wise. These five wise women represent Laodicea that will wake up. Those virgins were sleeping, but they woke up, happily, so they

could go inside. The other five remained outside. And here the LORD means that this first multiplication represents the first harvest, so to speak, the first harvest for heaven, of the two great harvests. The first is the children of Israel, in quotation marks, that is, Laodicea or the GOD-knowing people, the people who know GOD or who have His word and read it. These would be symbolized in this first multiplication. And the LORD has promised that there will be an awakening, and that these five virgins will be sanctified, cleansed, purified as silver and gold in the furnace, and they will be brought forth, these five virgins, pure. And as we understand so far, these five virgins will become the wife of the Lamb. It is a symbolism. The church is the wife, she is the bride, and in Revelation we find her adorned for her husband, adorned with the ornaments of the character of JESUS CHRIST, the ornaments of holiness. So, we are going to read some texts about the number 50 because we find that those who benefited from these five loaves were grouped in groups of 50. The first time the number 50 appears in the Bible is in Genesis 6:15. It refers to Noah's ark, the ark that Noah built. It speaks of 50 cubits, of its width. Then, let's look for the next number 50. And we find the scene of the visit of the three angels to Sodom. But before they came to Sodom, they came to Abraham, to Abraham's camp which was in the mountains. And Abraham interceded for Sodom, apparently, but rather for Lot. And he said in Genesis 18:24, "Perhaps there are 50 righteous within the city." We notice that the figure 50 has to do with the righteous, it means righteous, it means holy. The number 50 has to do with the holy church. Let's go further on. And then we go to Exodus 18:21 and we see that the LORD has organized His people and has placed a holy leadership, let's say, some fathers, so to speak, and He has placed them over 100, over 50 and over 10. This is the organization of the church, the organization that symbolizes the heavenly organization that is in heaven. We find this in Exodus 18:21 and 18:25. And then we come to Exodus 26 where we find the plan of the sanctuary, the sanctuary built by Moses at the foot of Mount Sinai. And there, in this construction, we find countless times the word 50. For example, in Exodus 26:5, "50 loops you shall make in one curtain and 50 loops you shall make in the border of the curtain which is in the second joint". We know well the meaning of the border of the garment of the LORD JESUS, the border which that sick woman touched and was healed. And about this border that will be touched by those who need healing, it also speaks in the Old Testament. Then it speaks of the righteousness of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, practically, the number 50. The number 50 is found here in these chapters, 26, 27, 30, 36, 38. Let's look at another place, another meaning in the Bible for the number 50. Leviticus 23:16. And it's one of the most important meanings of the number 50 in the Bible. "Until the morrow after the seventh sabbath ye shall number fifty days, then ye shall offer new present unto I AM." This is Pentecost, 50 days counted from the resurrection of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, another figure that has to do directly with the church knowing the law of GOD and keeping the law of GOD, that is, it has to do with those who will be awakened from the Laodicean state and remember the law of Moses, as it says in Malachi, chapter 4. They will return to the faith of JESUS, return to the old paths, return to the first love, or however we want to call it. It appears in many,

many parts of the Bible, and they will again be made holy, they will enter into the grace of the LORD, they will truly enter into the kingdom of GOD. And we will talk a little later about this entrance and why the disciples have not been able to enter in the first three and a half years of being with the LORD JESUS, because they have not been able to enter into this spiritual heavenly kingdom. And then it speaks in Leviticus 25:11 where it speaks of the jubilee which is the 50th year. From 50 to 50 years all the lands return to their original owners and not only that, the slaves, those that have been sold and many things. It is like a reset to zero of everything and everything is restored as GOD has established it at the beginning. This jubilee symbolizes the coming of the LORD JESUS CHRIST for the second time, that is, the end of the six thousand years, when everything is reset and the redeemed of the LORD will inherit their promised possession, the new earth. They will enter into their inheritance, eternal life and the new earth. Will the purpose of the jubilee be fulfilled? And just to mention, in the six thousand years, how many jubilees are there? There are about 120 jubilees, right? There are exactly 120 jubilees. 120 were those who have been on the day of Pentecost in Acts, chapter 2, and have received the Holy Spirit, the early rain, 120 people - 120 jubilees.

And before the coming of the LORD JESUS CHRIST there will be another outpouring of the Holy Spirit that will seal His people. In the Old Testament alone, the number 50 appears many, many times. And let's go back to the text to see, evidently, that the first multiplication of the loaves, practically, symbolizes the awakening and the gathering together in bundles for GOD's granary, of the saved from among the 12 tribes of Israel, to say thus, in symbolic language, from among the knowers of GOD on this earth, those who have been slumbering in the sins of Laodicea, in selfishness and other things and have forgotten that they have been called to be priests on this earth and to teach the world to live happily, to keep the law of GOD which is love and which is the whole of man. That text has been given to us by the LORD JESUS this week also. Ecclesiastes, the last chapter, the last text, the last verse, says, "This is the whole of man, to keep the commandments of GOD". Why? Because this is the best thing there is and this is the beginning of the happy way, of life in abundance in this world. No one can be happy without GOD and separated from His commandments. No one can live blessed by GOD and protected by His hand and by His angels without keeping the commandments of GOD which are commandments of love, they are good commandments. The law of GOD is holy and good, says the Bible. So, the LORD has symbolized this first work in this first multiplication and to see still other arguments we come to the fragments lifted up by the disciples. How many baskets? Twelve baskets. The number twelve is the number of the church, of the twelve tribes, of the twelve apostles, of the twelve patriarchs, of the twenty-four elders, which is two times twelve, twenty-four elders in heaven. Why twenty-four? Because surely twelve of these elders are the twelve apostles and twelve of those twenty-four elders are the twelve patriarchs who have been here and are still there before the throne of the Father, seated on thrones, as the book of Daniel says, participating in this final work of the day of atonement. We have explained this subject for those who are interested in knowing

who the twenty-four elders are. So, the first multiplication is full of symbolism of the church, of the Israel of GOD, as the New Testament names the true Christians, those who walk in spirit with GOD, not only in external ceremony, in appearance, but in a clean heart, in a humble and gentle spirit, in a mind transformed by metanoia, by true repentance. This true church, which is the living church, the church which is in the kingdom of GOD, or which is the kingdom of GOD on earth, is the flock of which the LORD JESUS speaks in the Gospel of John, chapter 10 - the Gospel of the kingdom of GOD, the Gospel of those who love GOD and have died to the carnal heart, and who no longer live, but CHRIST lives in them. This is the true church, the living church, the church about which Ellen White has said that GOD has a church on earth and that it is not any of the Christian denominations of this world, nor the great cathedral, nor the church officially established by the State, but it is the two or three in the midst of whom is JESUS, those who keep the commandments of GOD and have the faith of JESUS, for only the presence of the LORD, or the High and Sublime, who lives in eternity, only His presence can form a church. So we can understand what is the true church in the eyes of the Father. There may be many cathedrals like those in Italy, big, like the Vatican, expensive - they are zero before the Heavenly Father. What the Father is looking for is a sanctified and humble heart. So, here we find the twelve and the fragments are the redeemed, they are the church, the whole church, who through them, through these disciples made apostles, have believed throughout history, have believed and have been added. We find this in John chapter seventeen. Let's read this what we have mentioned. Verse nineteen, onwards. "And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth. But I do not pray for them only, but also for those who are to believe in Me through their word, that they all may be one, just as You, O Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be one in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which Thou hast given Me I have given to them, that they may be one even as We are one, I in them and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected in one, and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them even as Thou hast loved Me." Very beautiful are these words, and they are finished with the blessed promise of the twenty-fourth verse. "Father, those whom Thou hast given Me, I will that where I am, they also may be with Me, that they may behold My glory which Thou hast given Me, because Thou hast loved Me from before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world has not known You, but I have known You, and these have known that You sent Me, and I have declared Your name to them." That is, His character, the Father's character, the name is the character. "And I have declared Thy character unto them, and will declare it, that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me, may be in them, and I in them." Who is to be in the true Christians who form the visible church? CHRIST. That is, His word, His character and His word, for the word we have is CHRIST. "The word became flesh and dwelt among us," says John chapter one. Then, those who love the Word of GOD and keep the things written therein, and not only the Bible, but the Word that GOD will send until HIS second coming, because HE will continue to speak, will continue to give dreams, visions, prophecies or

explanations of prophecies; all this Word that comes from the throne of GOD will be the delight of HIS church. And CHRIST, with HIS SPIRIT and with HIS character, must live in us. Our old character must disappear. Our evil mind must be subjugated, enclosed, imprisoned, in a prison of holiness, wrapped in a spirit that is the SPIRIT of GOD. Our "self" must no longer open its mouth in our minds and in our lives. The "self" must be silent under the power of a SPIRIT that is not of this world. So, going back to Mark, chapter 8, we understand that this first part refers to the visible church. We have 12 baskets and before reading from verse 20, we remember that Revelation chapter 7 speaks of the sealing of these 12 tribes of the house of Israel. They are named this way symbolically, but it refers to the Christians, to the church, to Laodicea awakened, to the 144 thousand, which are 12 times 12. Now we read verse 20 and 21, speaking of the second multiplication. "And when ye had divided the seven loaves among four thousand, how many baskets full of the broken pieces took ye up? And they said, Seven. And HE said unto them, How do ye not yet understand?" Now, the second multiplication contains the figure 12 because it is 7 loaves and the first time it is 5 loaves. So, 5 loaves that they had in the first multiplication plus the 7 of the second multiplication are 12. And we have the 7 loaves, and 7 is also a figure of complete work. The number 7 is a number that refers to the completion of the work. 7000 years, 7 days has the week, 7 millennial days, has the great work against sin. And truly the work against sin will not be finished until after the 1000 years that we will be in heaven with the LORD. Although we will receive the reward at the end of the 6000 years, during the 1000 years we will be doing a work that still has to do with the purification of the sanctuary, with the purification of the universe and the earth from the evil that has appeared in this universe. That is, the destruction of the evil angels and Satan. This will occur only at the end of the 7,000 years, after the 1,000 years have passed, when the LORD will return, for the third time, to this earth, with HIS redeemed people; then the world will be purified with fire and the wicked, both people of this world and evil angels and Satan, their head, will be burned, consumed, destroyed forever. So it refers to a complete work. So it is 7 loaves among 4,000 people. Let's read in Matthew, chapter 15:34-38, where the multiplication takes place. In Matthew 16:10 we find the same as here. And in Revelation, chapter 14, we find the harvest of the earth, which is the Gentiles. Then, the complete church that will join, as Ellen White says, the church in heaven, is not only formed by the visible church, by the Bible connoisseurs, but it is also formed by those invited to the wedding of the Lamb, the Gentiles who will be saved by the testimony of the 144 thousand, probably. We have explained this in Revelation, chapter 14. We have explained the 3 messages and then the following angels, that is, the 7 angels that appear there in Revelation. And there we find the reaping of the harvest of the earth. And with this reaping we have seen that grace comes to an end. This reaping is the last thing that GOD will do for salvation. After this reaping of the harvest of the earth there will be no more people left who would want to repent. In Revelation, afterwards, it only speaks of the inhabitants of the earth who, as the plagues will fall, will not repent of their sins. Then only wicked men will be left on this earth, after the LORD brings HIS people out of Babylon from

among the Gentiles and reaps the harvest of the earth. In this second part there is the last multiplication, which is a multiplication that appears here before the entry into Jerusalem, before the work of the LORD JESUS was finished, and they gathered up seven baskets. This time they gathered up seven. The first time they gathered twelve because it was the church. Now they gathered seven. We notice that these are not figures that have nothing to do with the Bible. All these numbers are symbolic, they have a symbolism in the Bible. The number seven has to do with the seven trumpets, for example, and the seven trumpets are blown during the time when the harvest of the earth is gathered. Practically, before the first trumpet of the seven trumpets is blown, the 144 thousand are sealed at the beginning of chapter eight of Revelation. These first ones, which are the twelve tribes of Israel, are sealed before the beginning of the trumpets. Then follows the time of these seven trumpets. And here it says that there are seven baskets. So, we cannot say that the second multiplication represents the same as the first, because, clearly, only in the first one the number twelve appears, while in the second multiplication the number seven appears as the totality of the saved of the LORD in this last loud cry that will be given to the inhabitants of the earth before the close of grace.

It is the number seven. Twelve plus seven is nineteen, in total, the number of those invited, of all those who will be saved. And we have, the first time, five thousand men, which would be ten groups of five hundred or a hundred groups of fifty, however we want to put it. But then we have the figure four thousand. About the four thousand that appear in the second multiplication, we notice that there are seven loaves of bread and the fruit is seven baskets of fragments. The number that we can find the most in the Bible is the number seven, but we are going to mention about the number four thousand only in some place in the Bible where it appears. It does not appear much and this can tell us that it has more to do with the Gentiles who will be added to the kingdom of GOD. For example, the number four thousand is found in First Chronicles 23:5, where it says: "Moreover four thousand porters and four thousand to praise I AM, said David, with the instruments which I have made to render praise". Here it is about the service of the sanctuary when Solomon, his son, the one who was to build the temple, was made king. The temple of GOD is the temple of the one hundred and forty-four thousand, but, in Revelation, we see how there is also a city, New Jerusalem, which has twelve gates with twelve angels with the names of the twelve tribes of the house of Israel, and the foundations of the wall are twelve for the four walls (it is a square, so it is four sides) and they have the names of the apostles. But if the city is the bride of the Lamb and is a symbol of the one hundred and forty-four thousand, then the redeemed of the LORD, even the redeemed from among the Gentiles, must enter through the twelve gates. Then the guests at the wedding of the Lamb also enter through the gates, probably, and this city with its inhabitants may be a symbol of all the redeemed. Here it speaks of "four thousand porters and four thousand to praise I AM, as David said". In the Bible it appears a lot that the redeemed of the LORD will walk with songs of praise and will enter into salvation, they will enter into the kingdom of GOD with songs of praise. That appears a lot in the Bible,

especially in the book of Isaiah. We have seen in Isaiah forty-nine, in Isaiah sixty-six, and in other parts of the Bible, that it always talks about Israel, the five wise virgins, and then it talks about the Gentiles. In the last few issues we have dealt a lot about this. For example, in Isaiah sixty-five it says, "I was sought of them that asked not after ME; I was found of them that sought not after ME: HE said unto a nation that called not on MY name, Here am I, here am I". Then he says about this Laodicea: "I stretched out MY hands all day long to a rebellious people, who walk in a way that is not good, after their own thoughts, a people who provoke ME continually to anger in MY face". We can also read in the fifty-sixth chapter of Isaiah, where it says: "Blessed is the man who does this, and the son of man who embraces this, who keeps the Sabbath from profaning it, and keeps his hand from doing all evil. And let not the son of the stranger that is near unto I AM speak, saying, I AM will utterly separate ME from HIS people; neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree. For thus says I AM to the eunuchs who keep MY sabbaths and choose what I want and embrace MY covenant. I will give them a place in MY house and within MY walls, and a name better than that of sons and daughters, I will give them an everlasting name that shall not perish. And the children of the strangers who come near to I AM to minister to HIM and who love the name of I AM to be HIS servants, all who keep the Sabbath from profaning it and embrace MY covenant, I will bring them to the mountain of MY holiness and will recreate them in MY house of prayer. Says the LORD, I AM, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, I will even gather others unto him".

Let us note these words that are for the Gentiles. Then, we note that within the walls, as we have read, will also enter the Gentiles who will choose to keep HIS Sabbaths, to keep the law of the LORD, and will enter within the walls, within the New Jerusalem. So, this number, four thousand, probably refers to these who will be saved with songs of praise, the redeemed of the LORD, just as we have read here in First Chronicles 23:5 about those who will be in the service of the LORD: four thousand porters and four thousand to praise I AM with instruments. Clearly, these four thousand of the second multiplication of the loaves are symbolized here. And now let us understand the number seven. Well, the number seven has to do with Revelation. Let's go to Revelation, chapter one, and let's read. Verse eleven: "I AM the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last. Write in a book what you see, and send it to the seven churches which are in the East or in Asia: to Ephesus, and to Smyrna, and to Pergamum, and to Thyatira, and to Sardis, and to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea." We cannot ignore the fact that all these churches are churches outside of Israel, they are churches among the Gentiles, churches in Asia, in the East. So they are also a symbol of the Gentiles who will repent, who will change. Here we have seven churches, in Revelation. Another evidence is the seventeenth chapter of Revelation, where the number seven is well related to Babylon, to this beast and to this woman sitting on top of it. For example, in verse nine it says: "Here is the mind that has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits, they are seven kings." We can understand that all this has to do with Babylon. And we have explained that this has to do with Asia, with these powers like China. Let's go to chapter eighteen, because it

follows after this chapter seventeen, where the destruction of Babylon is announced. Again it is said, in 18:2: "it is fallen, Babylon the great is fallen", which clearly is a place of paganism where there is almost no Christianity, but there is a lot of idolatry. And the message to GOD's people who are still in Babylon, in verse four, is, "And I heard another voice from heaven saying, Come out of her, MY people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues!"

The LORD has a people in Babylon, a people HE wants to save, a people that HE will take out of these places where the judgments of GOD will fall to destroy this Babylon that also has the number seven. The number seven is not only the number of GOD, although it is found in the week, in the seven thousand years, but it is also the number of the people of GOD among the Gentiles. We have seen the seven churches and this Babylon, from where the LORD calls out a people not to die, not to suffer in the punishments of Babylon. So this second multiplication has to do with the people of GOD that the LORD will call out of Babylon in the seven penultimate plagues - the seven trumpets. So seven loaves have been distributed and seven other loaves have been gathered, so to speak. If a basket would be one loaf, then seven loaves distributed among the Gentiles have brought one fruit, seven baskets. These multiplications, as we have said, are very closely connected with that scene, with that woman who said that the dogs also eat of the leftover bread that falls from the table of their masters. At the moment, it cannot be seen in the Bible how many Gentiles have had the benefit of the Gospel two thousand years ago, because when they received the early rain, they still preached to the Jews, to the visitors who were still in Jerusalem. To them they preached and they became Christians, but being Jews, because the LORD has said: "Begin ye from Jerusalem and from Judea". That is to say, the Gospel has to begin with the house of Israel, with Laodicea, who will be the first whose opportunity will be finished. Then the opportunity will be extended for a few more years for the reaping of the of the harvest of the earth, which is the Gentiles. And then they, when that persecution began, were scattered throughout the known world and bore much fruit among the Gentiles, but it is not stated in the Bible how many. Nor now will it be known how many. The only thing we know is that they will be more, they will be in much greater number than the 144 thousand, all the Gentiles that will be redeemed from all over the world, from all the churches there are, Christian or pagan churches, from any social or religious or political situation in this world. With some of them the Spirit of the LORD is working every day. The Holy Spirit has the work of reproving not only Laodicea, but all men of sin, righteousness and judgment. Not all will accept HIS work, many will fight against their conscience, but there are fearful men like Cornelius, that leader of the Roman army, who was a GOD fearing man, because he accepted the voice of conscience that The Holy Spirit uses to speak to our minds. Then, men like him will be all over the world and these parables will be fulfilled. We will go forward in these chapters and here we find the LORD's question, "Who do men say that I AM?" And He pronounces the name of GOD, "I AM." And then, in verse 29, again HE says, "And whom say ye that I AM? And Peter saith unto him, YOU are the anointed." CHRIST means anointed. And then he gives them the teachings needed by

those who want to enter the kingdom of GOD. "Whosoever would come after ME, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow ME." This means that the disciples, still, after three and a half years of being with JESUS, had not denied themselves. Yes, they had followed JESUS, but they had not denied themselves. This kind of character is the most common kind of character found in the so-called Christian world. Many call themselves Christians, they think they are Christians, they walk with the Bible, they go to the churches there are, of different denominations, but without denying themselves. They believe that simply the fact that they are registered in a register of members of some church means that they are Christians, but JESUS teaches that it is not so, but that a Christian is the one who dies crucified together with CHRIST, that is, his "I" dies crucified with CHRIST and CHRIST lives in him. Only that one is an authentic Christian.

The death of JESUS on the cross symbolizes the death of sin because CHRIST became sin, says the Bible, thus HE was considered by THE FATHER and HE took upon HIMSELF the sins of the world and HIS death means the crucifixion of sin in the deepest sense for us. We have to understand that CHRIST has opened the possibility for our sins to be taken and our sins are taken by HIM when we confess and forsake them. Then HE can fill our minds just as THE HOLY SPIRIT could not fill the eleven disciples and then the others in the upper room until they emptied themselves of self. Yet, here, in chapter nine, where we will read of the seven defects of the disciples, they were not empty of self, they were not empty vessels to be filled by THE HOLY SPIRIT. And THE SPIRIT of GOD will not fill any mind that will not empty itself of self, of selfishness, completely, and will not let CHRIST come in and dine with HIM and "he with ME", as Revelation says. All the LORD's parables about this are very clear. The LORD will not accept a divided heart, a part of our mind that serves our desires, ourselves, and another part that serves GOD. The LORD cannot accept such a heart. Such a heart began, one day, to have Lucifer in heaven and then that heart became completely contaminated by "self". A divided heart will eventually end up completely given over to Satan. That is why The LORD says, "Give me, MY child, your heart!" This is the call of the HEAVENLY FATHER to all mankind. Only those who will give their heart, that is, their mind, their conscious and subconscious to GOD completely, denying themselves, as Mark 8:34 says, will be made new creatures. We will not read all the verses, but we will read the warning for those who will not do that, in verse 38. "For whosoever shall be ashamed of ME and MY Words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him shall the Son of man also be ashamed, when HE shall come in the glory of HIS FATHER with the holy angels". The one who does not accept CHRIST completely in his heart, in his mind, the one who does not empty himself completely, the one who does not deny himself completely, means that he is ashamed of JESUS CHRIST. And then, he who is ashamed of ME, it says here, "of MY words", The LORD JESUS, when HE will come, will be ashamed of him also. And also there, standing in the Most Holy Place, HE will not intercede for such a person. HE will be ashamed of such a person who does not understand that the entire destiny, the everything of man, the entire future that a person can have, the entire eternity, depends on emptying

ourselves completely of ourselves and receiving CHRIST. This is what Judas has not done. He asked for forgiveness, but only out of fear, and he did not receive CHRIST, he was ashamed of CHRIST. So, his fate has been tragic. Let's move on to chapter nine. And here we are going to pass from this part with the mountain of transfiguration, because we have explained this last Sabbath, about Moses, about Elijah.

The only thing I would like to add is that there are many evidences, at least here in Mark 9:13, there are evidences that Elijah, who was to come, is not only John the Baptist, but it is John the Baptist and the LORD JESUS CHRIST, because here it says: "But I say unto you that Elijah is come, and they did unto him whatsoever they pleased, as it is written of him". These words, "as it is written of him", cannot refer to the messenger sent before HIM, because nothing is written about that messenger, that he will die or suffer. "All that is written of him, and that they did unto him whatsoever they pleased," we find in Isaiah 52 and 53, and it refers to the LORD JESUS CHRIST. And the LORD JESUS CHRIST is named "MY servant", there in Isaiah 52. "MY servant", that is how the LORD names HIMSELF in HIS first coming, because HIS first coming is to prepare the way for GOD in our minds, that is, to prepare our characters so that in the second coming what Malachi announces will not happen. We read in Malachi, "lest He should scourge the earth with a curse". It says there in Malachi: "Lest I come and smite the earth with destruction". Therefore, the work of the second Elijah was done by both of them; first John the Baptist began it, he was killed, the LORD JESUS continued it, HE was killed, and then the apostles continued it. Then, in the work of the second Elijah enter both John the Baptist and the LORD JESUS CHRIST, as well as the apostles, because the work of the second Elijah is to prepare the way for the second coming of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, so that HE can take the saved with Him to heaven. And let's turn the page, let's get to verse 19, and from here we will read some verses to find the defects that the disciples still cherished in their hearts during three and a half years of living with GOD in person in the body of man. Living next to GOD, eating with GOD, talking with GOD, walking with GOD, and still not wanting to repent. It is what has happened in ancient times with those people brought out of Egypt, who walked with JESUS in their midst, saw with their eyes the pillar of fire and cloud, heard HIS voice at times, saw the sanctuary shining at times, or heard the voice of GOD speaking there in the Most Holy Place, and yet they walked in their own hearts, in their own will, in the flesh, as it says, symbolically, in the Bible. "The flesh", that is, in the evil will, in the evil mind. Verse 19 of Mark chapter 9 says: "And HE answered and said unto them, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long must I suffer you? Bring him to ME." To whom do you think the LORD JESUS says this rebuke? Many may think that this rebuke is directed to this father who has come with his son to be healed. And we may think: "Yes, he deserved these words because due to his sins, surely the son, since he was little, was possessed by that deaf and dumb demon". But the Bible says that this was what the people of Israel said, the doctors, the Pharisees, the priests. This was their philosophy about GOD, that the parents ate the sour grapes and the children suffered the consequences. That is, the parents sinned and the children paid. That was in their mind.

That is why even the disciples have asked the LORD, "LORD, who sinned? Why did it happen to them like this? Their parents?" The same contamination, and The LORD has made it very clear in the Bible that this saying would no longer be said, because everyone who commits sin, he himself will pay for that sin. "O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you?" How many years had The LORD been with these in person? Three and a half years. But with mankind and with that hard-hearted Jewish people, fifteen hundred, or thousands of years, because before also they were always defiled, they came with hardened hearts. But, this time, he is speaking to HIS disciples because this father had come to the disciples and the disciples had tried to get the demon out like those seven sons of that Jew who tried to get some demons out. The demons had tortured them, practically, because they tried to cast out demons while they themselves were with demons, while they themselves were in the worldly heart, in the carnal heart, not having THE HOLY SPIRIT in them. The same thing did these disciples of the LORD JESUS, they tried to cast out demons, they still being separated from GOD. And that is why the LORD, tired, after three and a half years of them seeing HIS example, HIS hard work, HIS daily consecration, HIS much prayer, HIS consummation, as Paul said, "I have spent everything and I have spent myself to save many", the same as the LORD JESUS has done. They seeing all this selflessness in person, all this love of GOD for three and a half years, day after day, The LORD comes to these last moments of HIS life here on earth and still sees that wickedness in HIS disciples. Anyone can be discouraged. It says elsewhere in the Bible something like this, "I have brought up serpents," or something like that. So, the rebuke is to HIS disciples. How do we know? Let's read it a little further, and the first thing we notice is that the LORD speaks in another way to the father who brought this child, this demon-possessed son. He asks him how long has it been since this happened, and he told him that since he was a child. Then JESUS speaks very gently to this father, because this father has not been with JESUS for three and a half years. The LORD does not judge in the same way the one who has more light and the one who has less light. Each one will be judged according to the light he had, according to the opportunities he had. The disciples have had the full light among them, while this father, perhaps, is the first time he came to listen to the LORD, or he did not even listen to Him, he came directly because he heard about JESUS of Nazareth from a neighbor. The LORD does not speak harshly if one has not rejected and rejected and rejected and rejected and rejected again HIS words. Only after much insistence, when HE sees that one is hardened in rebellion, the LORD raises HIS voice, He begins to rebuke, He begins to shout, He begins to become angry. But when one recently came, the LORD always speaks to him with love, meekly.

So, the scene does not end because in this chapter we have, perhaps, one of the last opportunities of this Laodicea that had lived with the LORD JESUS for three and a half years, one of the last opportunities to see its defects. It was not the last one because the last one was there in Gethsemane when they all abandoned JESUS and fled for their lives. That was the last straw, the last thing. But now it is a little earlier. And these disciples represent, symbolically, the five wise virgins. They have sins, they have

faults, they are not aware of them. They are also not as bad as the other five foolish virgins. They are not as bad as the Pharisees and doctors of the law and priests. They are not the same, they are not adulterers, they did not harm the poor, they did not steal, but they had other defects, just as the five wise virgins have. And then, in verse 28, they ask: "Why could we not cast him out? And he said unto them, This kind can come out by nothing, but by prayer and fasting". I would like to ask you, what kind is the LORD referring to? Is there any kind of demons that these disciples, in that state, could have cast out? When they were sent by the LORD JESUS, the 12 and the 70, they received a power that was a promise. The LORD gave them a grace and allowed them to taste of the power of the Gospel, but not because of their righteousness, not because of how holy they were, but because the LORD prayed to the FATHER to give this portion of faith to them, not because of their righteousness. But that was only because the LORD asked the Father. But, now, from these words, it is understood, for one who does not study the words in the original, that there are practically demons that one who does not have THE HOLY SPIRIT and is not truly repentant can drive out. Is that true? I personally do not believe it is true. The word kind here does not mean kind, it means nation or lineage. In the Bible it has been used as lineage or nation. It is the same word that is used there where it says that we, the church, are a "chosen lineage", a holy nation. And there are other known places where it is used. So, to my understanding, this verse means that these demons, that is, this nation; the demons are like a nation on this earth, they are invisible, but they are a people, to put it that way. We remember that in another part of the Bible it says that we do not struggle against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers that are in the air. So, if they are powers, principalities, they are like a nation. So, this nation of demons only comes out with prayer and fasting. That is, there is no Christian who does not need prayer and fasting. This does not mean that the LORD fasted every day. The LORD fasted from time to time, but true fasting, according to Isaiah, is to do good, is to be good, is to die to "self " and let THE HOLY SPIRIT live and do the works of GOD. This is the true fasting that JESUS practiced. They did not practice that. They did not pray, they did not know how to pray, they did not humble themselves, they did not struggle against themselves, against their evil mind. They had a struggle against each other and against others, as we will see later on, but against themselves they had no struggle. That is why it says that these demons, this nation, cannot come out just because you speak to them, but without a pure heart before GOD. Only the person who purifies himself, sanctifies himself, denies himself and allows himself to be filled with the HOLY SPIRIT who can only fill a humble heart, only that person with the power that THE FATHER has put inside can cast out demons. I believe this is the explanation. Let's read Luke 10:2, it goes like this. We are here in the sending of the 70 and it says, in Luke 10:2, "The harvest indeed is plentiful, but the laborers are few; pray ye therefore the LORD of the harvest to cast out (here it is not send) the devils out of HIS laborers." The word devils is not mentioned, but the word that is translated "send" is the word "ekbalo" which is used to cast out devils. "Ekbalo" = to bring out, but it is used to bring out demons; this word is always used

when demons are cast out.

So the problem of the workers is that they are possessed or occupied by the demons they have. The work that these disciples have to do is to get those demons out of the workers. It is the work that GOD has to do through the third Elijah with Laodicea. The 5 wise virgins need a work of "ekbalo", to remove these demons that keep their minds busy and keep them inactive. They need this work that the LORD has done with HIS disciples and that, finally, HE managed to do with the price of HIS death, because love conquers all. So we understand better this verse of Mark 9:29. We understand that in order to deliver the 5 wise virgins of Laodicea, it takes a person who walks with CHRIST in HIS footsteps with a humble spirit, with prayer and fasting, and with concern or love for souls. Such a person, yes, will be able to cast out demons. But even with all the power that JESUS CHRIST had, which was the most powerful life that any human person has ever had on this earth, and I am not talking about the power of GOD that HE left in heaven, but the power that he could acquire as a human person, in a body degraded by sin, like any of us. HE has been the person who has had the greatest spiritual power and the greatest character in the history of mankind. And with all this power that HE has had, that could perform many miracles, HE has not been able to get the demons out of Judas, of a person who has been living with HIM for 3 and a half years. He has not been able to get the demons out of that person, because GOD does not get the demons out by force. The LORD drives out demons if a person wants to. Even the demonized person has a little bit of mind, a little bit that the LORD reserves for him, a little bit of his will for the LORD to see if that person wants or is content with his demons. And then they went out from there, they walked through Galilee, and we come to verse 32. In verse 32 we find the first sign of the defects that they had, although we have seen before that they have not been able to get the demon out; they were clearly separated from the HOLY SPIRIT. They did not have THE HOLY SPIRIT. They did not have a clean, childlike mind, a mind without evil. They did not have that mind without evil. We have noticed this in these first verses that we have studied, but now let's really look at the defects that they had. Verse 32 says, "But they understood not this saying, and were afraid to ask him." Fear has nothing to do with the kingdom of heaven. In the New Testament it says that in agape love there is no fear. He who has agape love, the love of GOD, has no fear. And we could see this with Peter, for example. In Gethsemane, Peter was afraid for his life and fled for his life, because he did not have the agape, the love of GOD, the Holy Spirit in him. But then, after the death and resurrection of the LORD JESUS, a little time before the LORD went away completely, after the 40 days HE spent with the disciples appearing to them from time to time, on one of the last occasions, the LORD comes to Peter and tells him that death awaits him. He tells him, "feed MY sheep, feed MY younger sheep and feed MY lambs." And HE tells him, "the end of your life will be forced, you will be killed." But Peter, at that moment, was repentant. He had spent time there, meditating, weeping, seeing the consequences of his choices, seeing all the evil that was in him and he had done that work of repentance with his heart. Then, when the LORD says those words to him, he doesn't care. He is no longer afraid to

die. And then we see that all those who received the HOLY SPIRIT at Pentecost, and then afterwards, when they were in prisons or scourged, they rejoiced because they could suffer with CHRIST. This is a proof that they had the SPIRIT of GOD. Then, here it says that these disciples were afraid to ask HIM, as if this MASTER of ours is a cold tyrant, as it says elsewhere in a parable, a harsh lord who takes what is not his own, as those wicked men thought of that king. And this was because they did not know HIM, in truth, although for so many years HE has cared for them, protected them, they were still afraid of HIM. And fear always comes from sin. The first fear we have in the Bible is in Genesis, when Adam and Eve committed sin; when the LORD came to speak to them, they hid. And the LORD asks them, "why did you hide?" And they say, "because we are naked and we were afraid and we hid." Fear is the first fruit of sin. This is another sign. Then we go further in verse 33. "And HE came to Capernaum, and when HE was in the house, HE asked them, what disputed ye among yourselves in the way? " This was not enough for them, with the harsh rebuke that HE gave them, with all that the LORD said to them in those three and a half years, harsh things, sometimes; they still disputed on the way to see which of them was going to be the greatest in the kingdom of GOD as if the kingdom of GOD was a worldly kingdom where a ruler, a king like Putin, for example, can put his princes there and enrich whomever he wants, according to his taste, no matter his wickedness, his character. So they quarrelled in the same way that worldly people quarrel. I don't know if in your case it is like that, but I remember from when I was a little boy, a child, when I played with other children; I lived in the city because that's how I was born, in a capital of a country. And there I often remember how the children disputed among themselves about who was going to be first. Each one disputed and tried to get the first place, the main place of leader over the others. From the time they were children they had that. And these disciples have learned this teaching from the spiritual leaders of that time who did the same thing. So they talked among themselves, hiding from the husband, as a wife hides from the husband. When the husband does not see, the wife does other things. So were these disciples. And when they thought that JESUS did not hear or did not see, they behaved differently. So the second defect they had was that they wanted to be the greatest. Without having the greatest character, each one wanted to be the foremost. It's like Lucifer who wanted to sit on the throne of GOD, to be the chief in heaven, with his evil character. What reign of terror would have resulted from that? I imagine what reign of terror would have resulted if these disciples, thus, in that state, would have received kingdom or leadership positions. Verse 35. "Then HE sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man will be first, he shall be last of all, and servant of all." And with this the LORD has perplexed them, because this teaching they never heard, although they saw it for three and a half years in the person of the LORD JESUS CHRIST. But they did not want to accept it, they stayed with the teaching they liked best. Without effort, without doing anything, without fighting against oneself, without trying to sanctify oneself, one can reign, one can have leadership. We have seen it with these Pharisees and Sadducees and priests. That's the way they thought. Then we know the scene with the child, we have commented on

it last Sabbath. And let's go now after this to verse 38.

And John answered and said, "Master, we have seen one casting out devils in YOUR name, who does not follow us, and we forbade him because he does not follow us." I don't know whether John or the disciples forbade that person to cast out demons out of envy, because they couldn't cast out demons, or for what cause, but the third character flaw we find here, or the fourth, however we want to count it, is that they were forbidders. They were little dictators. They thought they had the power to forbid. They were neither pastors, they were neither elders, nor deacons, nor in any position of leadership to forbid, as Paul said several times, "I have all power in CHRIST JESUS to command you or to forbid you, but I prefer to entreat you." Paul had that power because he, with much effort and suffering, sanctified his character. But not them, they, as dirty as they were, forbade a man who, perhaps, was much holier than them, who cast out demons. And here it says, "cast out devils", that is, he succeeded. That man was casting out demons. That means that his life was holy. But they forbade him because he did not follow them, that is, "if he is not of our religion, we forbid them all". It is like a kind of catholic, to say so, or orthodox, an inquisitor, a person who forbids, popes who do not accept other religions, but their own. "Those who do not follow us are sects and are destined to eternal perdition." They were something like this. And JESUS said to them, "forbid them not, for there is none that doeth a miracle in MY name, that can lightly speak evil of ME." That is, "if one does a miracle in MY name and succeeds in doing it, it means that his character is good. He is a child, in him there is no evil, then he cannot say evil of ME." This is what the LORD means. "For he who is not against us," that is, he who has no evil in him, "is for us." What evil did that person who cast out demons do? What evil has that person done to these twelve disciples or to the LORD JESUS? None. The simple fact that that person wanted to help other people and to drive out demons, that produced an anger, an indignation, but not a holy indignation, a bad indignation in those disciples.

And they have forbidden him. With these words of the LORD, all religious organizations, Christian or not, it doesn't matter, that prohibit others, all are destroyed by these words of the LORD. To prohibit is not something that can be done by someone who is not holy. Yes, a holy person can forbid, a father can forbid his children. Joshua commanded his household, Abraham commanded his household, he commanded to follow GOD, but of course, he did not force them, he only commanded and each one has chosen afterwards. Only a holy person can command or forbid because he always does it with goodness and always does it for good, for salvation. "For whosoever shall give you a cup of water in MY name, because ye are CHRIST's, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward." Here, although apparently speaking to the disciples, HE is not speaking to the disciples in that state as they are at that moment. These words are rather to this person whom they forbade, who was walking with CHRIST in reality, walking with GOD, casting out demons. And if these disciples had given him a cup of water or ministered to his needs, they would not have lost their reward. The LORD refers to him and he refers to them after repentance. These words are for them after repentance. "Whosoever shall give you a cup of water in MY name,

now because ye are children in wickedness and are in MY kingdom, because ye are CHRIST's, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward." And now let's read verse forty-two. "And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones or children that believe in ME, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were cast into the sea." Let's read now Revelation 18:21, "And a strong angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, With so great an impetus shall Babylon, that great city, be thrown down, and shall never be found." So what the LORD JESUS says here is the worst condemnation there is. And HE says it to those who would scandalize "one of these little children who believe in ME". Here is another verse that can confuse one, it can let one think that the LORD spoke these words to his good disciples who were so good and so holy and who did no wrong to anyone. But in reality, those words are a harsh rebuke and a death warning given to HIS disciples, because the one who was scandalized was this person who was casting out demons with the SPIRIT of GOD, with the finger of GOD. They scandalized that person, they forbade him, they scandalized him. And He has made it very clear to them, "whoever scandalizes one of these children, (if they can do miracles in MY name and cast out demons in MY name, it means they are children in wickedness) who believe in ME", just like, for example, the Gentiles who came to JESUS with a childlike faith. They came humbly because they knew they had no right, but the need, the love for their loved ones pushed them. And for example, Cornelius, or another Roman that was there, or that woman, or that Samaritan woman, or many that the LORD has found, who were not from Israel, the LORD has told them that not even in Israel did he find such faith. That is, faith means character, really. Faith means character. That is, faith means lack of evil. This is what faith really means. Faith does not mean believing that there is a GOD, because demons also believe and tremble. When one has faith, it means that he is GOD-like in character, in love. Such a person has faith. All these people who have come to JESUS and obtained HIS grace, HIS healing, HIS deliverance from demons, were people who have manifested faith, at least at that very moment, if they have done evil before and that is why they have come as they were. At least at that moment they were repentant and with humility and with total lack of evil in their mind they spoke to JESUS. That is why JESUS has said that HE has not found such a faith even in Israel. Such a faith. For even this Nathanael, about whom the LORD had said that he was an Israelite without wickedness, but even this Israelite, Nathanael, came to quarrel on the way to see who was going to be the greatest.

It says here that the disciples disputed. It does not say that there was a group that walked apart from the disputing group. They were all there together, they were together, they disputed, Nathanael also. So, we understand that the faith of the pagans who came to JESUS was greater than the faith of HIS disciples. And that is why here the faith of HIS disciples has been worthy of great rebukes and threats from the LORD JESUS. "Whosoever shall offend one of these little children that believe in ME, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were cast into the sea." Exactly the same condemnation as Babylon. But let's see if

the disciples were frightened, maybe they did not even consider those words to be for themselves. And the LORD continues to speak to them, "If your hand offends you, cut it off!" That is, if your hand wants to do something, do not let it, do not do. Do no evil, neither with the hand, nor with the foot, nor with the mouth, nor with the eye, it says here. With the eye, what can you do? Envy, covet, commit adultery, said the LORD JESUS. With the eye, merely with the eye. Verse 49: "For everyone shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt. Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another." What is salt? Salt, we have seen here that the context was faith, true faith, faith in JESUS. Salt seems to be a symbol of faith, that is, of the true Christian attribute, which is love, goodness, mercy, lack of evil. This is the true taste of a Christian. Salt is used for its flavor, and if a Christian loses his flavor, that is, loses his good character, and becomes evil, then we have to go in the Old Testament to see that it says there that "the person who has done good all his life, and has begun to do evil, all the good he has done will immediately be forgotten, and the evil he begins to do will condemn him. And everyone who has done evil all his life, and begins to do good, all the evil that he has done shall be forgotten, and the good that he has begun to do shall be reckoned to him." This is the law of the Judgment Seat of GOD. The LORD will judge everyone according to this law. And everyone, today, is called by their consciences, in their minds, by the needs that are everywhere; they appear on television, on the internet. By every possible circumstance, the LORD calls men to change, to abandon wickedness, to become altruistic, and to start doing good. And whoever does this will be saved, even if he has not been able to know CHRIST. So, therefore, it says here in verse 49: "For they shall all be salted with fire." In order for one to be salted, that is, to receive the good character, the mind of GOD, the mind of CHRIST, the true Christian flavor, which is a flavor of life unto life for others around, in order for one to be salted he will have to be put into the fire. Everyone will be salted with fire. Everyone will have to go through situations so that they will have the opportunity to abandon and condemn the evil they have been doing and begin to act unselfishly, in order to be priests for the LORD, in quotation marks, that is, to live their lives for the blessing of others. Such a person will be named a true Christian and Israelite. Such a person will have life in abundance and walk happily on earth. And because we have not finished with the count of the character defects of these disciples, after all this condemnation and threatening with fire, with hell, it says here, with the worst condemnation there is, that of Babylon, after that, it has not been enough for these disciples. Nothing was produced in them. It says hereafter, "he arose from thence and came into the borders of Judea," that is, quite a few days passed, and then we find the same scene about which we have spoken last Sabbath, about the repudiation of the husband or the wife. We know these words well, we have commented on that. And in verse thirteen, which will be one of the last we are going to read, we find another defect of the disciples. The previous one, which we have not insisted upon, because it comes after all this terrible warning on the part of the LORD which is not out of evil, it is a just warning. "He that doeth evil shall receive evil." This

is the law of GOD, the law of the judgment seat of GOD. GOD cannot justify the wicked. So the LORD just puts before them what will be the consequence of an evil mind, of an evil life, an evil walk and gives them all these threats. And at the end, in verse fifty, He says: "have salt in yourselves", that is, true love, agape love, "and be at peace with one another". Does the LORD waste words, the LORD who is the one who said, "gather up the crumbs, that nothing be lost", HE who is so economical in everything. Does HE say words without meaning, without being the case? If HE said, "have peace with one another", it is because they did not have peace with one another. Who knows? They envied one another, they fought with one another, they quarreled. This is another defect, walking in selfishness. Only the person whose idol he worships is the ego, it is his image, his self, his importance, how others see him. Who am I? And always the self. Only such a person is willing to fight with everyone to defend and cherish this self. A person who has died together with CHRIST no longer lives, he is like a dead man in the grave. His evil mind is dead. Such a person does not care if others come and make war against him, or accuse him, or say whatever they say to him. He does not care because he is dead. He can have peace with everyone. He is no longer interested in defending himself, fighting for himself, fighting to justify satan, in other words. And let's go back to the last defect that we had started reading. In chapter 10, with verse 13, it says: "And THEY brought children to HIM to touch them, and the disciples rebuked those who brought them." After so much work with them, so many reproofs, so many warnings, so many threats, so many examples of goodness and mercy in these three and a half years, the LORD JESUS having told them a few days before so many things, they still walked in the carnal mind, in selfishness, in wickedness.

They brought children for HIM to touch, and satan used the disciples as he wished. Satan would tell them that they had to rebuke those who brought them, that is, the parents. They would cast them out. "Go away from here, go away, for the LORD has not come on this earth to deal with the poor and needy." So sick were their minds and polluted by satan, because of selfishness. Everything is due to selfishness. Everything that is bad in us comes because of selfishness. The disciples rebuked those who brought them. They had not learned from all the Bible they had, the Old Testament, and from the three and a half years with the living Gospel, the law and the prophets living in the flesh in their midst, the LORD JESUS, they had not learned, those disciples, that a disciple cannot rebuke anyone. Only parents can rebuke. Only the father of the family. Only he who is mature, he who has received approval from GOD, he who is sure that GOD is with him and he with HIM. He who walks in agape love can reprove, because he does not do it out of selfishness, he does it always for the good of others. He is the only one who can reprove, one who receives power from GOD to do that. But those disciples, whose power did they have to rebuke? They did not know what goodness is. They were still elementary school students to learn kindness, mercy, altruism. And with this bad state of mind, they rebuked others. What kingdom did they have in their heads? What kingdom do people have in their heads who, having selfishness, dare to rebuke others? Yes, a father can rebuke his children, a

husband can rebuke his wife or his children if he is truly a father and truly a husband and does it with love. A church pastor, a leader, can rebuke his sheep, because he does it to save them, as the prophets of old harshly rebuked the fallen. But those disciples were receiving orders not from JESUS, but from satan, because JESUS has never told them that they had to do that, and they were doing the works of their father, who was satan at that time. Through the works that one does, it is possible to know what spirit is in him. It can be known what kingdom he is in and whom he serves. "But when JESUS saw, HE was indignant, and said unto them, Suffer little children to come unto ME, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of GOD." I imagine the LORD raised HIS voice after so many times telling them the same thing. "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of GOD as a little child shall in no wise shall enter therein." HE spoke these words to them because they themselves were in this situation. In no way were these disciples going to enter the spiritual kingdom of GOD, which is agape love, in this condition of evil, of forbidders, of people who do not understand the goodness of GOD and the character of GOD.

In other words, the LORD JESUS has told them, "in no way, the way you are, are you going to enter the kingdom of GOD". And HE goes on and on talking about many things to the disciples' carnal mind's astonishment. He speaks to this rich young man. "How hard it is to enter the kingdom of GOD for those who trust in riches." And then, I don't know whether terrified of so many hard words to understand, difficult to understand, of so many teachings, so many strict conditions for their narrow minds, after all that, they, still trembling for themselves, probably, come and say to HIM, "We have left everything and then what shall we receive?" As if they had left everything. No, at that moment that he spoke to JESUS these words, they had not left everything. But the LORD answered them as for after their repentance, and told them the blessed promise of those who repent. And yet, at the end of this chapter, the LORD has to say to them again, "But it shall not be so among you, but whosoever would be great among you shall be your servant. And whosoever of you would be first among you shall be servant of all." And often, in the midst of all this wickedness of the disciples that was in their minds darkened by Satan, in the midst of all that, the LORD worked miracles around them. There were humble, meek people who came and asked for help and were healed. The LORD appreciated their faith and said that not even in Israel has HE seen such faith. And this has always been present during the three and a half years, but they remained the same, they remained selfish, they remained with the defects. This same thing happens in Laodicea, this same thing happens in the churches of this world. What else must happen so that one, instead of defending oneself and contending with others, fights against oneself and defends others? What must happen to turn things around? Surely metanoia, in Greek, which means change of mind or repentance, must happen. May Laodicea be able to understand these words that the LORD has insistently given us for the second time, for the second consecutive Sabbath, perhaps, to be able to make clear before the eyes of all the situation of each one that is the same as that of these disciples. Reminding us of the theme of last Sabbath, the theme "from the fathers to the children and from the

children to the fathers", where we have spoken about the same events, but in the book of Matthew, parallel to the book of Malachi, we will give another possible interpretation for this expression, "he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to the fathers". Just as we have seen in these chapters of Mark, we have seen that these disciples behaved as if they were fathers, but in character they were not. So, in reality, here the LORD can say that this must change and that the third Elijah, as it says here in Malachi 4:5, has to come and do a work of converting these evil minds of those who do not have the character, but behave as if they were fathers, they rebuke, they forbid, they command. And this prophet is going to do this work with this Laodicean people; he will transform this mind or this heart of parents into the heart of children. We have explained that the actual word here means child. It is necessary that first the selfish heart of Laodicea, who think they are parents, has to be transformed into a child's heart and then the child's heart will be transformed into a true parent's heart, this time, into parents for others, for the gentiles.

For example, as we have seen in Isaiah 49, where the LORD names children or sons the Gentiles who will be converted or saved because of the prayers and the work of these 144 thousand who once considered themselves fathers, but were not, and the LORD had to transform them into disciples and then into children in evil, that is, in minds without evil, so that later HE could raise them or elevate them to the level of docile instruments in HIS hands, that is, make them apostles, spiritual fathers for others. This work must take place from parents to children and from children to parents. May these words not be forgotten and may each one remember all this, for he who will not work with fear and trembling for his own salvation from this wickedness, from this evil mind, will by no means see the kingdom of heaven. May the love of the ETERNAL FATHER, the grace of the LORD JESUS and the communion of the HOLY SPIRIT, and the work of the HOLY SPIRIT with our minds, may it overcome in us and may it make us so lean in self that we may fit through the narrow gate which is the character of CHRIST JESUS! Peace be with all the humble! Amen!

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