





Jesus Teaches About Suffering and Service

Here's a full breakdown of **Matthew 20:20–28** and **Mark 10:35–45**, where **Jesus teaches about suffering and service**, including the meaning of “**the cup**” Jesus refers to.

Context Summary

Category	Details
 Passage	Matthew 20:20–28; Mark 10:35–45
 Main Characters	Jesus, James, John, their mother (in Matthew), the other 10 disciples
 Location	On the way to Jerusalem (just after Jesus' third prediction of His death)
 Theme	True greatness in the Kingdom comes through servanthood and suffering , not status or power

Side-by-Side Comparison

Topic	Matthew 20:20–28	Mark 10:35–45
Request Made By	The mother of James & John (on their behalf)	James & John themselves
Request	Sit at Jesus' right & left in His kingdom	Sit at Jesus' right & left in His glory
Jesus' Response (Part 1)	"You don't know what you are asking"	Same response
The Cup	"Can you drink the cup I am going to drink?"	"Can you drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?"
Their Answer	"We can."	"We can."
Jesus' Clarification	"You will indeed drink My cup... but sitting at My right and left is not Mine to grant."	Similar, includes baptism imagery
Other Disciples	Become indignant	Become indignant
Jesus' Teaching on Greatness	Be a servant and slave; Jesus came to serve , not be served	Same teaching, almost word-for-word

Jesus Teaches About Suffering and Service



Key Themes Explained

Symbol/Theme	Meaning
“The Cup”	A symbol of suffering and God’s will . Jesus refers to the suffering He will endure (Gethsemane: “Let this cup pass from Me” – Matt. 26:39).
“Baptism” (in Mark)	Another metaphor for being immersed in suffering and death (cf. Luke 12:50)
Right and Left Hand Seats	Positions of honor and authority in the coming Kingdom. But Jesus emphasizes they are assigned by the Father.
Disciples’ Attitude	They were still thinking in earthly terms —glory and reward—missing Jesus' teaching on the cross .
Jesus’ Redefinition of Greatness	True greatness is not about power but humble service . The greatest is the servant/slave of all.
Jesus as the Model	He “came not to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many” – a clear foreshadowing of the cross .



Summary: What’s the Takeaway?

Element	Lesson
The Cup	Symbol of suffering and submission to God's will
True Greatness	Measured by service , not status
Jesus’ Example	He willingly drinks the cup and serves others—even to the point of death
Disciples’ Growth	They would eventually share in suffering (Acts 12:2: James is martyred; John is exiled)

Jesus Teaches About Suffering and Service

Jesus fulfills all four Passover cups. That insight **deepens the connection** and **adds a rich layer of meaning** to the "cup" language Jesus uses. Here we will bring in the **Jewish Passover Seder framework**, where **four cups of wine** are drunk, each symbolizing a part of God's promise in **Exodus 6:6–7**.

Let's walk through this observation:

The Four Passover Cups and Jesus' Fulfillment

Cup	Name	From Exodus 6	Meaning in the Seder	Fulfillment by Jesus
1st	Cup of Sanctification	"I will bring you out..."	God sets apart His people	Possibly reflected at the Last Supper when Jesus first takes the cup and gives thanks (Luke 22:17)
2nd	Cup of Plagues / Wrath	"I will deliver you from slavery..."	Remembers God's judgment on Egypt (the plagues)	Gethsemane: Jesus wrestles with taking the "cup of wrath" — and accepts it (Matt. 26:39; Luke 22:42) 💧 He even sweats blood , just as Jews drop wine to symbolize the plagues.
3rd	Cup of Redemption	"I will redeem you..."	God redeems with outstretched arm and judgments	The Cross: Jesus fulfills this cup when He gives His life (Luke 22:20 — "This cup is the new covenant in My blood")
4th	Cup of Praise / Restoration	"I will take you to be My people..."	Anticipates final deliverance and fellowship with God	Jesus says He won't drink this cup until the Kingdom (Matt. 26:29), pointing to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:9)

So, What About the "Cup" in Matthew 20 / Mark 10?

Given this fuller picture:

- Jesus' question — "**Can you drink the cup I am going to drink?**" — is most directly referencing the **2nd cup**, the **Cup of Wrath / Plagues**.
- This would mean Jesus is asking:
👉 "Can you share in **My suffering** under the wrath of God, like the judgment poured out in Egypt?"
- That **intensifies the moment**: Jesus isn't only speaking metaphorically about hardship, but connecting His path with the very **story of deliverance**, woven into the Passover.

Gethsemane and the Cup of Wrath

Your point about Jesus dropping sweat like **blood** and Jews dropping **wine** for the **ten plagues** is a **profound parallel**:

Jewish Seder	Gethsemane
Wine is dropped for each plague (10 drops total)	Jesus' sweat falls "like great drops of blood" (Luke 22:44)
Reminder of God's wrath on Egypt	Jesus accepts the cup of God's wrath on Himself for us (Isa. 53:5–6, 2 Cor. 5:21)