

March 15

Children, Outsiders, and the Hierarchy of Heaven

The time comes, that I will gather all nations and languages; and they shall come, and shall see my glory – Isaiah 66:18

[Mark 9:33-50, Capernaum] He came to Capernaum, and when he was in the house he asked them, “What were you arguing among yourselves on the way?”

But they were silent, for they had disputed one with another on the way about who was the greatest.

He sat down, and called the twelve; and he said to them, “If any man wants to be first, he shall be last of all, and servant of all.” He took a little child, and set him *by his side* in their midst and said, “Most certainly I tell you, unless you turn, and become as little children, you will in no way enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Whoever therefore humbles himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven.” Taking him in his arms, he said to them, “Whoever receives one such little child in my name, receives me, and whoever receives me, doesn’t receive me, but him who sent me. *For whoever is least among you all, this one will be great.*”

John said to him, “Teacher, we saw someone who doesn’t follow us casting out demons in your name; and we forbade him, because he doesn’t follow us.”

But Jesus said, “Don’t forbid him, for there is no one who will do a mighty work in my name, and be able quickly to speak evil of me. For whoever is not against us is on our side. For whoever will give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because you are Christ’s, most certainly I tell you, he will in no way lose his reward. Whoever will cause one of these little ones who believe in me to stumble, it would be better for him if he were thrown into the sea with a millstone hung around his neck. Woe to

the world because of occasions of stumbling! For it must be that the occasions come, but woe to that person through whom the occasion comes! If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having your two hands to go into Gehenna, into the unquenchable fire, ‘where their worm doesn’t die, and the fire is not quenched.’ [Isaiah 66:24] If your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life lame, rather than having your two feet to be cast into Gehenna, into the fire that will never be quenched—‘where their worm doesn’t die, and the fire is not quenched.’ [Isaiah 66:24] If your eye causes you to stumble, cast it out. It is better for you to enter into the Kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into the Gehenna of fire, ‘where their worm doesn’t die, and the fire is not quenched.’ [Isaiah 66:24] For everyone will be salted with fire, and every sacrifice will be salted with salt. Salt is good, but if the salt has lost its saltiness, with what will you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.”

”See that you don’t despise one of these little ones, for I tell you that in heaven their angels always see the face of my Father who is in heaven. For the Son of Man came to save that which was lost. “What do you think? If a man has one hundred sheep, and one of them goes astray, doesn’t he leave the ninety-nine, go to the mountains, and seek that which has gone astray? If he finds it, most certainly I tell you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine which have not gone astray. Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.” [Matthew 18: 1-14, Luke 9:46-48]

Become as
little children

1. Who does Jesus welcome? Did the disciples also? Do you welcome them? How so?
2. What does “salted with fire” mean? How does “sacrifice” and cutting off change this?
3. Jesus, so I won’t make others stumble, I will cut off even my most precious things, like...

