

Mark 9:1-13

“Hear Him!”

I have discovered (no doubt you have as well) that though times may change, and cultures may vary, human nature remains the same. Things weren't much different in Jesus' day than they are today; people had a mix of opinions concerning Him. Some people thought He was a national reformer, some people thought He was a powerful preacher, some thought He was a prophet; perhaps even spoke the words of God.

All kinds of people say all kinds of things about Jesus; what's important (Jesus said) is who do *you* say that I am? It doesn't matter what your buddy thinks, what your mom and dad believes, or what you heard 1 time at church, you have got to come to a conclusion *personally* concerning who Jesus is in *reality*. and The ramifications that lie in the balance based upon your answer to that question are eternal; it's that important.

Peter upon hearing that question (who do you say that I am) looked at Jesus and said, “You are the Christ; the Son of the Living God.” “You are the Messiah sent from heaven to save us Jesus.” and Jesus said, “Very good Peter, you're right on the money. That's exactly who I am.” and Then Jesus began to correct some misunderstandings concerning the nature of His Messianic mission, they thought Jesus was going overthrow the boot of Roman oppression that was pressing down upon them and set them free *as* a nation and rule reign *over* the nations. and The time will come when Jesus will reign upon the earth, make no mistake, but it wasn't going to happen right then, there was something else a little higher on the priority list than where they were at politically. Of higher priority was where mankind was at spiritually, Jesus came to liberate *not* from the bondage of Rome, but from the bondage of sin. and Not by ruling upon a throne, but dying upon the cross, suffering, being despised and rejected by men, shedding His blood, laying down His life that we might have life. *“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Rom 6:23* Jesus paid the penalty of our sin so that in Him we could inherit the reward of His righteousness.

But upon hearing what was to happen the disciples began to short circuit, they weren't able to reconcile the idea of a suffering Savior, victory and liberty through death, they couldn't make the connection between the crown and the cross. and We're not going to review in detail but ultimately Jesus said, “Listen, the cross isn't only in *My* future, but if anyone would desire to *come after Me* there's a cross in their future as well.” Oh not literally perhaps (though for some of His disciples there would be) but principally. and That's where we left off last week; no to the self will, submit yourself to God's will, and be obedient to His word. “Deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow Me.” Forget about what *you* want, submit to what *God* wants, and be obedient to Christ, that's what discipleship is all about; now look at Vs 35 of Ch 8.

Vs35-Ch 9:1

The Ch break there is really an unfortunate thing because the 1st Vs of Ch 9 actually brings the resolve, or conclusion to the subject at hand in Ch 8. Remember we spoke of the fact that Satan will promise you glory but only leave you suffering. God will promise you suffering but in the end transform your suffering to glory. There *will be* a cross, but there will also be a

crown, there *will be* suffering, but somehow and in some way God takes the suffering that we experience *presently* and turns it to glory for us to experience and enjoy *eternally*. Again remember what we read in the book of Romans, “*For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*” Rom 8:18 Here’s one more, “*For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,*” 2 Corinthians 4:17

So catch the context. Jesus has just been enlightening us to the fact that following Him isn’t going to be a primrose kind of a path, narrow is the path and difficult is the way that leads to life, and few find it. Yet wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction and many go in by it. He’s just said that there’s a cross in view for His followers (and again we know He’s not speaking literally, but principally, spiritually) but understand being 2,000 yrs removed and on the other side of the planet we’ve sanitized the cross. We make jewelry of it and decorate our homes with it. That’s not the image that was being conjured up in the minds of those who were there that day. They thought of capital punishment, humiliation, degradation and shame. It’s a tall order to issue, “I’m not sure I *want* to be identified with that kind of thing, or a person who says He’s my Savior, then gets beaten tremendously, abused brutally, scourged until He’s a bloody unrecognizable mess, stripped naked, nailed to a cross and killed...” That’s why Jesus said what He said there in Vs 38 (read again).

Jesus is saying, “If you won’t stand with Me here and now, I won’t stand with You on that day, if you’re ashamed of Me, I’ll be ashamed of You.” But there toward the end of Vs 38 and on in to Vs 1 of Ch 9 He begins to place a bit of a silver lining around what seems to be an otherwise dark cloud. He begins to speak of *glory*, and the power of God. He realizes that what He’s just laid out there is a tough pill to swallow, so He reminds us that it’s simply a necessary means to an end. It doesn’t end in humiliation, it ends in glorification, it doesn’t end with the cross, it ends with the crown, the emphasis isn’t to be placed on the physical/temporal, but the spiritual/eternal. Don’t get caught up in the temporary pleasures and distractions of this life (remember like water we like the path of least resistance) but maintain the *eternal* perspective.

Jesus even goes as far as to say that there were a few people who were present right then and there who would glean a glimpse, get a bit of a foretaste of the coming glory of Christ. Now that’s confused some people down through the years because they think that because all of His original disciples have died and He hasn’t come again there must be some mistake, Jesus must’ve missed that one.

But one thing you need to know regarding biblical interpretation; if you come to a passage that seems to show Jesus as wrong, or contradict another passage; *Jesus* isn’t wrong, your *understanding* of what Jesus said is wrong. It’s not that the passage is in conflict, it’s that my understanding of the passage is improper. Jesus didn’t say that they’d see the 2nd coming in their flesh. He said they’d get a glimpse, they’d see the glory of the kingdom. and In each of the gospels that record this event, guess what follows that statement? The transfiguration, Jesus showing Peter, James and John His glory and how He will appear in the kingdom. So I don’t see the need to complicate the matter, Jesus said they would see it, then 7 days later, they saw it.

Notice
Vs2-3

Or to understand that another way whatever your detergent of choice is (Tide, Clorox bleach, whatever) they wouldn't hold a candle to what these guys were seeing. What they were seeing wasn't *natural* it was *supernatural*; they were seeing the glorified Christ, getting a sneak peak of how He's going to appear in the kingdom age. I mean this was radical!

and There's a couple of things that are going on here, 1st of all Jesus spoke of the cross, then 6 days later took them up on a Mt (probably Mt Hermon) and on the 7th day (or as it says here, "after" 6 days) was *transfigured* before them. He revealed His glory to them; the idea underscoring the future glory that would follow the present suffering both for Him and for them. I think this would also help to reassure them that He was in fact in control and that the cross wasn't some sort of gross misfortune or unforeseen tragedy.

This event is also reminiscent of another event that took place in Ex Ch 24 whereby Moses went up on a Mt for 6 days and on the 7th day the Lord called out to Moses, spoke to Moses and showed His glory to Moses. and Of course when Moses went up to receive the Law of God when came back down he was literally glowing, he was reflecting God's glory. The things *foreshadowed* through Moses and the law was *fulfilled* in Christ.

But there's also a very important difference between what happened with Moses and what's happening here with Christ. Moses *reflected* God's glory, Jesus *radiated* God's glory, it wasn't something that shown *upon* Him, it was something that shown *forth* from *with in* Him. It originated *in* Him and emanated *from* Him.

and It's important that you understand that, if you're not careful here you can almost get the idea that they were all engulfed in this light that was surrounding them. But there was no light shining *upon* Jesus, it was light that was coming forth *from* Jesus, from the inside shining out. The word *transfigured* is the Greek word "metamorphoo" from where we get our word "metamorphosis." We're talking from caterpillar to butterfly here, they're getting the teaser trailer, a sneak preview (if you will) of the glorified Christ! and As amazing as this is what's even more amazing is that Jesus was ever able to *conceal* His glory, we shouldn't be surprised when He *revealed* His glory, we should be shocked that He was ever able to *conceal* His glory. But this is a strong encouragement to them that those who are willing to bear the cross will be recipients of glory.

Vs4

Now this almost with out a doubt happened at some point in the night, Luke tells us that having gone up to pray, Peter, James and John were heavy asleep; they almost missed this! But somehow, perhaps hearing voices one of them woke up and no doubt instantly rattled the other 2 out of their slumber. and It's interesting to note that Luke tells us that His appearance was altered as He prayed, something about drawing near to God through prayer will alter your person, you'll become more *like* Him as you spend time *with* Him.

But how did they know it was Moses and Elijah? Maybe they were calling each other by name, maybe there was just an innate awareness. One of the glorious aspects of heaven is that we're going to actually be able to remember everybody's name. I don't know about you but I'd like a little of that glory right now, Lord just pour it out. But sometimes people wonder, will we know one another? The answer is "Yes" you'll know even as you're known, you won't be less intelligent in heaven than you are on earth.

Something else we realize is that they were still called, “Moses, and Elijah” they didn’t get some mystical identification or office on the other side. Evidently if you’re called “John” on earth, you’ll still be called “John” in heaven, remember that parent’s when you’re choosing your child’s name. ;0)

and Of course this is more assurance for them regarding the reality of the resurrection, Moses had been dead (physically) for around 1,400 yrs, Elijah was taken from the scene some 900 or so yrs previous to this. Yet there they were alive and well, God’s not the God of the dead, but of the living. To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord.

The question comes up; why Elijah and Moses? and I think there are a # of good reasons why. One thing we realize is that Moses represents those who come into God’s presence through the *natural* means of death. Moses went up on a Mt and died, the bible tells us that God Himself buried Moses. Elijah represents those who will enter God’s presence through a *supernatural* means; being suddenly *snatched up* into His presence.

Elijah never died a physical death, he was “raptured” taken up into God’s presence supernaturally. and Every believer will wind up in 1 of these 2 categories, we’ll either go to be with the Lord through the natural means of death, or we’ll be supernaturally translated into His presence at the rapture. The bible says, *“For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.”* 1 Thess 4:15-17 So by the natural means of death, or the supernatural means of the rapture; in Christ we’re all ultimately going to be in His presence.

Something else we realize is that Moses represents the law, and Elijah represents the prophets, both of which find their fulfillment in Christ. Jesus fulfills all that was foreshadowed in the law and all that was foretold by the prophets. They culminate in Christ.

and Because of this people lean even more heavily to Moses and Elijah being the 2 witnesses found in Rev 11 (which is certainly possible). Luke’s gospel tells us what they were talking about. They were talking about what Jesus was about to accomplish at Jerusalem, they were conversating in someway about the cross. The plan of redemption, how that He would lay down His life as God’s sacrificial Lamb for the sin of the world.

Vs5-6

Translation = “They were freaking out!” I mean can you imagine seeing something like this? This is a scene that would be *seared* into their minds for the rest of their lives. 2 of the 3 of these guys would write about this later. John said, *“...and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father;”* John 1:14 Here they are witnessing the glory of Jesus Christ with their eyes, and it’s not always a comforting thing, sometimes it might be corrective (as we’ll see in a minute) or fearful as we’re seeing here.

and Peter not knowing what to say just says, “Hey, Rabbi I have a great idea, let’s build 3 tabernacles, 1 for You, 1 for Moses and 1 for Elijah.” Now...we love the impulsive nature of Peter because this is so often the way we are, but can we just learn from this that when we’re in a place whereby we don’t know what to say that it’s just best to say nothing at all. The bible

says, *“Even a fool is counted wise when he holds his peace; When he shuts his lips, he is considered perceptive.”* Prov 17:28 But Peter, true to form, not knowing what to say sticks his foot in his mouth and starts chewing on it. Because if you were to compare me to Moses or Elijah, I’d be on cloud 9 right? I mean what an honor to be considered in the same class as those men. But when you place Jesus in that category it’s an insult. Because Jesus isn’t simply an incredibly godly man, or a really powerful prophet, He’s the Son of the Living God.

But Peter is thinking, “Man this is where it’s at! Let’s just stay in this place of communion, let’s abide in the holiness of this moment.” But what’s he forgetting? That there are people in desperate need of the knowledge of Christ who won’t ever get it if they just sit there in their own little personal place of enjoying God’s presence up on that Mt. Being on the Mt tops are great, but the needs are in the valley. and It’s good to be in God’s *presence*, but the overflow of that should be ministry to the *people*.

Vs7-8

You see being in God’s presence isn’t always comfortable, sometimes it brings us correction. Of this moment Peter wrote decades later, *“For we did not cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’ And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.”* 2 Peter 1:16-18

and It was surreal I have no doubt, they were freaking out, being rebuked by the Father and suddenly it’s like they looked around and all they saw was Jesus. He wasn’t shining anymore, the cloud was gone, no more Elijah, no more Moses, just Jesus. and You guys those 2 words are so important, “Only Jesus.” He’s all we need, it’s not about Moses, it’s not about legal works, it’s not about Elijah, it’s about Jesus, He’s the only One we need to see. We’re not to place anything or anyone on par with Him, we’re to hear *Him*. It’s about *His* word, *His* will, *His* ways, it’s about *His* kingdom, *His* glory, we worship *Him*, we serve *Him*, we lay our lives down for *Him*. “This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!” The law and the prophets only point to Him, speak about Him, they’re a foreshadowing and foretelling of Him, He’s the fulfillment of it all. Hear Him.

You know tis the season isn’t it? Election time is upon us, ever candidate is vying for your time having their people call your house, placing their ads on television and radio. They want you to *hear them* regarding their economic plans, their plans regarding the war in Iraq, alternative fuels, going green; all kinds of things they want you to hear them on. Let me encourage you; it’s important to know what these guys stand for no doubt. Not just on the surface, or in one area, but what’s the big picture, you should do your due diligence and research their positions, see who you’re willing to be accountable in standing for. But as much as you should perhaps seek to hear *them*, that doesn’t even hold a candle in comparison to your need, my need to hear *Him*. The way we regard what they say might impact us presently, but how you hear what Jesus says will impact you *eternally*. Hear Him!

Jesus said things like, *“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”* Matt 11:28-29 He said, *“If anyone thirsts, let him come to*

Me and drink.” John 7:37 He said, *“I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”* John 14:6 and Again, *“I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?”* John 11:25-26 Are you hearing Him? The Father didn’t speak from heaven and say, “Well as long as you’re sincere you’ll be alright.” “This is my beloved Son but really all roads lead to God.” He didn’t say that, you need to know what He’s said, then you need to know how you’re going to respond. and Let me tell you, ignorance of the law is no excuse. You can’t say, “Well, if I never read it I can’t be liable for it.” Wrong, besides all that you know it now. The only question is, are you going to hear Him, are you going to follow after in obedience to Him?

This cloud overshadowed them, the Father spoke to them from out of it. and This cloud is seen all over the place throughout the scriptures. It was the pillar of cloud that followed the Israelites throughout the Exodus, it was the cloud from which God spoke to the nation of Israel, it was from this cloud that God met with Moses. It was the cloud that filled the temple when Solomon dedicated it so that the priests weren’t even able to continue ministering. It’s the cloud that overshadowed Mary when she conceived Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit, it’s the cloud that received Jesus out of the sight of the disciples at the ascension, and it’s the cloud that will display Jesus’ glory when He returns to the earth. (and That’s not every appearance we see, but it’s seen throughout the word of God). What a radical experience, huh?

Vs9-10

Can you imagine having to keep something like this a secret? What you’d seen, what you’d heard? No doubt they reminisced amongst themselves over and over again.

But Jesus said they could declare it after He rose from the dead; again suffering 1st, then the glory. But they didn’t really know what He meant by “risen from the dead.” We look on it in hindsight, but they were thinking, “Man, is He talking metaphorically, perhaps figuratively or something, what does He *mean* by that?”

Vs11

Here they are on their way down from the Mt, having just seen Elijah and it triggers a question. “Why do the scribes say that Elijah must come 1st?” Meaning before the Messiah would establish His kingdom.

The scriptures very plainly state, *“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he will turn The hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers,”* Mal 4:5-6 Elijah will be sent as a forerunner to prepare the way for the coming of the Lord. Of course realizing that Elijah didn’t technically die but was caught up to heaven in a chariot of fire he still qualifies to be on the earth during that time under the “Man is appointed once to die and then the judgment” clause, he didn’t technically die. Does that mean that somehow and in some way God has preserved his body until that time? I don’t know, maybe his body has been cryogenically frozen somewhere, God was way ahead of modern science. But before Jesus establishes His kingdom Elijah will be on the scene.

Now, the disciples are thinking, “Um, You’re the Messiah Jesus, what’s up with the Elijah thing, I though he was supposed to come 1st?”

Vs12-13

Matthew tells us that when He said that it clicked in them that He was talking about J.B. Now we know that J.B. wasn't Elijah, but the Lord is saying that He ministered in the same spirit, he was seeking to restore the hearts of Israel to the proper order, preparing them for the coming of Jesus. and Had Israel accepted Jesus, John would've fulfilled that role, however, God knew that Israel wouldn't and so Elijah is yet to come. and He'll come before the 2nd coming of Christ before Jesus establishes His kingdom upon the earth (again Rev 11).

But Jesus is seeking again to sorta snap them into reality regarding Himself. He says, "It's good that you're searching the scriptures regarding Elijah, but what do the scriptures say about the Christ? That He must suffer many things, and be treated with contempt." He's still trying to prepare them for what's ahead of them, their world is going to be rocked when they see what happens to Jesus. But He's seeking to assure them that nothing is going to happen to Him apart from what's already written of Him. God is in control and on the 3rd He'll rise again having paid the price for the sin of the world. He would taste death in the flesh that we might be born again by the Spirit.

and That's what I want to leave you with. As awesome as this experience was, it didn't make a lasting impact on their lives. They all still forsook Jesus, Peter would deny that He even knew Him 3 times. So often we think that if we just had a radical experience that would change us. and It might, for a few months or maybe a year. But nothing made a difference in these guys lives like being born again by the Spirit of God. Hearing God's voice, seeing the glory of Jesus is an awesome miraculous experience. Being born again by the Spirit of God is greater still, the greatest display of God's glory is your life being transformed from dead in sin, to alive in Christ Jesus. Look *to* Him, trust *in* Him, hear *Him*!

Prayer Points:

God give us ears to hear You beloved Son... and We thank You for the hope that we have knowing that the cross may be our lot presently, but the crown will be our reward eternally. and Lord may we be bold in our identification with You, that we not be ashamed of who You are, and what You've done. You've laid down Your life for us, now may we lead our lives for You.

and If you're in that place whereby perhaps you've not considered Jesus in the light you've seen Him in today, that He didn't come to condemn the world, but that the word (you and me) might be saved through Him. Listen, God's not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. Is life in Christ the ez way? Not at all, Jesus didn't say He was the ez way, He said He was the only way. He doesn't offer you a primrose path, but He does offer you the forgiveness of sin, freedom from guilt, new life in Him and everlasting life *with* Him. So if He's knocking on the door of your heart, why not open it now?