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# advance in the word – contextual support – 05/20/20

**CONTEXTUAL AND CORRELATION**

There is a story of Jesus casting out a demon from a young boy in Mark chapter nine. Commentaries and different Bible versions leave you in the dark as to whether the boy was actually dead or not. Here is a biblically supported reason for believing the boy seems to have died. I will use contextual support for this interpretation.

* The story of the transfiguration precedes our story. Peter, James and John see a glorified, resurrected Jesus that shone like the sun. Thus, messaging that Jesus will die and rise glorified. This follows 8:31. Jesus clearly states He will die and rise again. Our story (9:14-32) could be told to give the reader support to the newly introduced idea Jesus will rise from the dead.
* Again, Chapter 9:9-10 speaks of the Son of Man rising from the dead.
* The words in our story point to the boy actually being dead.
  + The boy became like a corpse. 9:26
  + The boy was believed to be dead. 9:26
  + Jesus took him by the hand and “raised him”. 9:27
* The story of Jesus walking through Galilee teaching His disciples about His trial, death and resurrection (9:31) follow our story of the young boy. Here He clearly proclaims He will die and rise again.

Mark chapters 1-8 tell the reader ***who Jesus is***. Chapters 9-16 tell the reader ***what Jesus came to do***. Dying and rising from the dead is what Jesus came to do. Furthermore, because Mark wants the reader to make the switch from *who He is* to *what He came to do,* He pivots to a heavy theme of dying and rising repeated in 8:31 and 9:9-10 (leading into our story); and 9:31; 10:34 after our story. Our story is found among this grouping.

Up to chapter 8, Jesus has not spoken of His resurrection from the dead. But when He does speak of it, He does so in a matter-of-fact way leaving no gray area. I say this having contextual support for this interpretation. Do you have contextual support for why you believe what you believe?

**But not so fast!** Do you have correlation? Correlation is seeing your passage in light of the other similar passages found in other books. Do they say the boy died? Do they say Jesus brought him back to life?

Actually, no. Matthew 17:14-23; Luke 9:37-45; do not even hint at the idea that Jesus raised the child from the dead. Matthew says, “the boy was cured at once.” Luke says Jesus, “healed the boy and gave him back to his father.” That being said, we should take Mark’s words, “the boy became so much *like* a corpse that most of them said, ‘He is dead’” (Mark 9:26) as being exactly what the author meant.

Context is extremely important. I cannot emphasize enough how you should always look at passages in light of context. Nevertheless, also entertain correlation. What do the other authors have to say about the same event? Do other books or other authors of Scripture support your stance? Do you have correlation support for why you believe what you believe?