

1) We began looking at Mark 9:9-13 so lets begin there.

Mark 9:9-13 (NIV)

- 1) Here again, Jesus gives Peter, James and John the command not to tell anyone what they had seen on the mountain.
- 2) One must assume this meant the other disciples as well since they would probably not understand and/or the three would not adequately be able to describe what took place.
- 3) Notice, this is the only time one of these admonishments came with a time limit – was only in effect until Christ had risen from the dead.

4) This next sentence (verse 10) is perhaps a little clearer in the NASB rendering:

NASB – 10 They seized upon that statement, discussing with one another what rising from the dead meant.

- 5) The disciples knew what raising someone from the dead was.
- 6) They had seen Jesus bring people back from the dead.
- 7) I think the issue being discussed was not the raising but what it meant in view of Jesus' ...
 - a) Messiahship
 - b) the coming of the kingdom, and
 - c) other things they were struggling with.
- 8) The disciples depart from their discussion of Jesus' rising from the dead to ask him another question that came to their minds.

“Why do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?”

9) The scribes based this claim on the final verses of the Old Testament

Mal 4:5-6 (NIV)

- 10) The disciples did believe that Jesus was the Messiah though they did not totally understand the meaning of that Messiahship at this point.
- 11) However, seeing Elijah on the mountain and knowing that he had not, to their knowledge, appeared to fulfill the Malachi scripture, they were curious.
- 12) Jesus tells them that basically, the scribes are correct.
- 13) The problem is that they (the disciples) and scribes and the rest of the religious leaders did not recognize him when he was here – that Elijah was John the Baptist.
- 14) Though, John, when asked, denied that he was Elijah, he was clearly the fulfillment of Malachi 4:5-6.
- 15) We see scriptural evidence of this in Matthew's account:

Gospel of Mark – NOTES

Matt 17:11-13 (NIV)

16) There is another aspect of this passage we should consider.

17) In the second half of verse 12, there is a question that Jesus injects into his answer:

Why then is it written that the Son of Man must suffer much and be rejected? NIV

18) The ESV renders the question:

And how is it written of the Son of Man that he should suffer many things and be treated with contempt? ESV

19) All of Jesus' answer including this injected question are a tie back to the prophecies that speak of this.

20) The LABC indirectly connects this back to Peter's rebuke of Jesus.

21) This is just one more time he is teaching and trying to bring them to a better understanding of the situation.

The fact that Elijah would come and restore all things would not change the plan of salvation that would require the suffering and rejection of the Son of Man. That the Messiah would suffer much and be rejected was written in Scripture (for example, Ps 22:14,16-17; Isa 53:1). The prophecies would not have been written if they were not going to come true. Jesus was showing them the close connection between the Cross, the Transfiguration, and the messianic passages in the Bible. He was also reminding them of what he said in 8:33. If they rejected the reality of his suffering, they would not have in mind the things of God.

22) This is also clear in the Matthew passage we read a moment ago (Matt 17: end of vs. 12)

In the same way the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands.

1) Jesus and the 3 now complete their trek back from the mountain and the transfiguration event.

Mark 9:14-19 (NIV)

1) On returning from the mountain, Jesus and the three disciples came upon a scene that was far from what they wanted: a scene of chaos!

2) On the one hand, there was a crowd surrounding the other nine disciples and, it appears they were observing an argument between them and some scribes (teachers of the law).

3) Jesus asks what the argument was about and got no answer from them.

4) Because of their silence, a man in the crowd sees an opportunity to interject and tell Jesus about his disciples' inability to rid his son of a demon.

5) I would speculate that the argument with the scribes was probably not about the disciples' inability to rid his son of a demon.

6) It was likely about something entirely different

Gospel of Mark – NOTES

- a) Perhaps a question that the scribes had asked the other nine disciples that they could not answer or answered in a way that caused the disagreement.
- b) They did not have Jesus' ability to handle these confrontations and the question degraded to and argument.

Matt 7:28-29 (NIV)

- c) This is a marked difference between Jesus and these men at this point:
- 7) In this case, the man simply seized the moment and brought another failure of the disciples to Jesus' attention.
- 8) Again, in my opinion, Jesus in exasperation speaks to the whole chaotic scene including the disciples:
19 "O unbelieving generation," Jesus replied, "how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you?"
- 9) Some commentators believe his comment was directed at the disciples because they had not been able to cast out the demon.
- 10) If that were the case, I don't believe He would have used the term "generation" in His statement.
- 11) Also, He explains to the disciples at the conclusion of the incident why they could not cast out the demon – NOT Unbelief.
- 12) Jesus' appearance and comment evidently stops the argument allowing attention to focus on the man and his complaint.
- 13) Hearing the man's complaint (inditement of the disciples if you will) He says:

Mark 9: 20-29 (NIV)

- 1) Jesus answers the man and tells him to bring his son to Him.
- 2) The indication here is that Jesus is either some distance from the crowd as He answered the father or He moves away from the crowd.
- 3) At any rate, when the demon sees Jesus, he immediately exerts his power over the boy and throws him into a convulsion.
- 4) What comes next is an exchange between Jesus and the boy's father.
- 5) There are a couple of things to note in this exchange.
- 6) First, the man is asking for help not only for his son but for himself as well when he uses the term us.
- 7) Second, depending on the translation you have, Jesus' reply to the man's statement "if you can do anything" may have a question or an exclamation mark.
- 8) The point in either case is not an inditement of the man but simple a challenge of his words.

Gospel of Mark – NOTES

- 9) Jesus simply wants to drive home the point that faith is required here.
- 10) To which the man makes one of those statements that I can always find myself identifying with – “I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!”
- 11) The man is honest enough to admit that though he believed in Jesus’ power, he struggled with doubt.
- 12) Just as he pleaded in desperation for Jesus to deliver his son from the demon, so also wanted Jesus to help him with any doubts he might have – his unbelief.
- 13) Even the strongest faith may at times be plagued by a measure of doubt.
- 14) I can see this case being that the man absolutely believed in Jesus’ ability to deliver him and his son from their predicament.
- 15) But I can also see him having doubts about so many other things that are involved in a relationship with Jesus.
- 16) Somewhere in here, there must have been a switch in location.
 - a) The crowd ran to Jesus when He first arrived and now, they are running to the scene where the boy is convulsing.
 - b) It is also possible that, since the scribes and the other disciples were arguing, not all the crowd ran to Jesus until this point.
- 17) At any rate, seeing the crowd approaching His position and the immediate need to help the boy, Jesus ends the conversation and takes action.
- 18) The demon is cast out and the boy becomes as a corpse.
- 19) The boy is then brought to his feet and the incident is brought to an end.
- 20) Later, Jesus enters a house along with His disciples and they finally get a chance to ask the question – why could they not cast out the demon.
- 21) At first glance, in context, Jesus’ answer is rather puzzling – we are not told that He prayed before casting out the demon, although He may have.
- 22) The implication is that they had become to self-confident.
- 23) The disciples had faith in their own ability. They were depending on themselves rather than praying for God’s help in removing the demon.
- 24) In Matthew’s account of this, he says:

Matt 17:19-20 (NASU)

- 25) I personally see the issue here as being one of, “the leader is gone but we can handle this”.
- 26) The scribes ask a tough question and obviously, the disciples were not able to handle it correctly and the argument ensued.
- 27) The man asked them to cast out the demon and trying to do it themselves they failed.
- 28) Looking at what Jesus tells them in Matthew’s account, had they turned to God for help in the smallest way, then both situations could have been handled.

Gospel of Mark – NOTES

If we look at the nine disciples who are at the heart of the chaos and the failed demon removal, do we see ourselves?

Being the “DIY” kind of people we are, how do we combat this issue within ourselves

- Prayer is a demonstration of faith!
- LABC comments:
 - When Jesus faced a particularly tenacious demon, he talked to God the Father all the more. We can pray, too, and should every day
 - that doubts about God's power be wiped away. God can and will put down all demons and raise us to life.
 - that doubts about Jesus vanish. He is the true Messiah, sent by God, our Savior and Lord.
 - that fears evaporate. In a showdown of power, God will have the final word.
 - that greater reliance on Jesus will make our service more effective.
 - When we feel like arguing, retreating, or resigning, it's time to pray. If the demon has frustrated you, let Jesus give you new confidence.
 - Pray often. That's your source of power.