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Mark 9:1 - 9:13



Gospel of Mark - Steve Gregg

In Mark 9:1-13, there are varying interpretations about the specific event Jesus predicts, with some seeing it as referring to the end of the world while others see it as related to events in AD 70. The transfiguration of Jesus on the mountain, where his disciples were given a glimpse of his glorified state and his fulfillment of the law and prophets, is seen as a significant moment revealing Jesus' divine authority. John the Baptist is seen as fulfilling the prophecy of Elijah's coming, and the suffering of John and the Messiah are connected due to their similar persecution.

Transcript

Okay, let's turn to the ninth chapter of Mark. And the ninth chapter of Mark begins with this verse. And he said to them, Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power.

Now, this statement is found in all three of the Synoptic Gospels, though it's worded a little differently in each one. In Luke's version, instead of saying until they see the kingdom of God present with fire, it simply says in Luke 9, 27, until they see the kingdom of God. Present with power is not found in Luke's version, just until they see the kingdom of God.

But obviously, there's not much difference in the meaning between those two. Mark and Luke are pretty much the same in what they say, but Matthew words it quite differently. In Matthew chapter 8, excuse me, 16 and 28, Matthew has you saying, some of you standing here will not taste death until you see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.

Now, notice all three of the Gospels have Jesus making reference to the kingdom, but Matthew has a reference to Jesus coming in his kingdom. And that statement is one that has been an embarrassment for many Christians over the years because they believe that he was mistaken because they believe Jesus is predicting his second coming. Now, if we just had it the way Mark reads it or the way that Luke reads it, there'd be less difficulty because to say that some of you standing here will not taste death before you see the kingdom of God could simply mean, well, the kingdom of God obviously was

already present.

And to see it present with power as Mark has it, we could say that could be Pentecost, perhaps. Because the power of God came upon the church at Pentecost, and if the kingdom is somewhat associated with the church, then one could argue that they did see all of them except one was saying there did live to see that that one exception was, of course, Judas, who hanged himself before Pentecost and the rest of them did not taste death until they saw the kingdom come with power. That would be a very easy way to understand it, but the way Matthew has it, it's more difficult because it talks about you will see this the son of man coming in his kingdom.

Now, what makes it a little more difficult over in Matthew is because in Matthew chapter 16, just prior to that statement, Matthew records Jesus as saying something that seems like it's talking about his second coming. In Matthew 16 and verse 27, if you read 27 and 28 together, it says, for the son of man will come in the glory of his father with his angels and then he will reward each according to his works. Assuredly, I say to you, there are some standing here who should not taste death till they see the son of man coming in his kingdom.

Now, verse 27 certainly sounds as if it's a prophecy about the second coming of Christ. He says the son of man will come in the glory of his father with his angels and then he will reward each according to his works. That sounds very much like the same event spoken of in Matthew 25 in a very familiar parable there about the sheep and the goats, because that parable begins in Matthew 25 31 with these words.

When the son of man comes in his glory and all the holy angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory and then you read of the judgment taking place and the sheep going into everlasting life and the goats going into everlasting punishment. But notice the resemblance in Matthew 25 31. You've got the son of man coming in his glory and his angels with him and there's a judgment.

And so also in Matthew 16, 27, the son of man will come in his glory or the glory of his father, it says in this case, and his angels and reward each according to the work sounds like the judgment, too. So we have what looks like a fairly clear reference to the second coming of Christ at the end of the world to judge the world in Matthew 16, 27. And yet Matthew 16, 28 says something else.

Assuredly, I say to you, there are some standing here who shall taste death. So this is the son of man coming in his kingdom. Now, both verses speak of the son of man coming, and therefore, some have said that this some of you standing here will not taste death is a prediction of the second coming within the lifetime of those people.

And this assumption that Jesus predicted his second coming in the lifetime of those people has been taken more than one way by skeptics. It's just been taken to mean that

Jesus made a mistake. He expected his second coming to come in the lifetime of some of them, and it didn't happen that soon.

And this might even have led to what's some of the scoffing of the scoffers in second Peter, chapter three, second Peter, chapter three, says that scoffers will come in the last days. And where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. In other words, that generation is dead now.

Where is he? He promised to come. Now, the other way that some people take it is the way the full preterist takes it, and they say he was talking about 70 AD in both statements, that is, his coming in glory, his father's glory with his angels and rewarding everyone according to their works is really a reference to him coming and judging the apostate Jerusalem in 70 AD, coming in judgment. And that happened in the lifetime of some of those standing there.

And so there are some people who take it to be about the second coming and some who take it to be about 70 AD. Now, there's another there's another group. And I would be of this group that think he's talking about the second coming in verse 27 of Matthew 16, but not in verse 28.

That he does talk about ultimately the day will come when there will be a judgment, Jesus will come with the glory of God, with the angels, the end of the world will be everyone's going to be judged and consigned to their fate, just like the sheep and the goats. It's the same coming, of course, referred to in Matthew 25, where the sheep are sent to eternal life, the goats are sent to eternal punishment. That is, I don't believe that's a reference to 70 AD, although a full preterist does believe that.

I don't. I believe that that has not yet happened and that will happen when Jesus comes. But I don't believe that verse 28 is talking about the second coming.

Nor do any evangelicals, that is, they don't believe that it's talking about the end of the world, that Jesus mistakenly thought the end of the world would come in the lifetime of some of those disciples. Now, why would there be a difference in those two verses? Well, for one thing, if you look at the context in Mark and in Luke, it's different. Matthew has done something different here than what Mark and Luke have done.

Remember, Matthew arranges things topically. He doesn't always put them in the right order. In Mark, at the end of chapter eight, the last verse of Mark eight, verse 38 says, for whoever is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation.

Of him, the son of man also will be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his father with the holy angels. Now, there's the reference to him coming in the glory of his father with the holy angels. But it's not the same statement that Jesus is recorded as having

made over in Matthew's gospel.

Both statements have the reference to him coming with the glory of his father. Likewise, Luke has it like Mark does. That just before Jesus says some of you standing here will not taste death before you see the kingdom of God, both Mark and Luke have Jesus making this statement.

If you're ashamed of me in this adulterous generation, I'll be ashamed of you when the son of man returns. In the glory of his father and his holy angels. Now, it looks to me like like Matthew has taken a statement from elsewhere in Jesus teaching and has put it there, as Matthew sometimes does.

The gospels do not always record the things that Jesus did and said in the proper order. And Matthew especially is known to put things in topical arrangements. So we don't have Jesus in Matthew saying the one who is ashamed of me, he just predicts there will be a second coming.

Yet in Mark and Luke, it predicts there will be a time when the son of man comes, but some standing there will not taste death until they see the kingdom come, which is not necessarily the same thing as the second coming. It is perhaps the foreglimpse of the second coming. It is perhaps it is perhaps the down payment on the second coming.

The coming of the kingdom of God. Obviously, it was something that Jesus said would happen in the lifetime of those disciples. Whatever he's referring to, and we'll consider some theories about that in a moment, but that is the coming of the kingdom of God is not necessarily the same thing as the coming of Jesus at the second coming, unless we're premillennial, because premillennialists believe that the kingdom of God has been postponed until the second coming.

So they would put those two things at the same time, but it's not necessary to do so. The kingdom of God, Jesus said during his ministry, he said the kingdom of God was at hand. The kingdom of God has overtaken you.

The kingdom of God is in your midst. Obviously, it had not become visible, but he said some of you standing here will not taste death before you see the kingdom come in power. The coming of the power of the kingdom could certainly be talking about some event that would happen within the near future from the standpoint of the disciples, but it would only be a foreglimpse of the ultimate judgment of the world and the what we could say is the fulfillment of the kingdom.

Jesus could certainly predict both at the same time. He could be saying the day will come at the end of the world when all people will be judged and the Son of Man will come in the glory of his father and the angels. There'll be a great universal judgment.

Now, that's not going to happen right away, but something is going to happen right

away, something that is like the first down payment of that. The kingdom of God, which already had come in the time of Jesus, but not visibly yet, was like a mustard that would grow and grow and grow. And when it was fulfilled, then Jesus would come at the end of the world.

But there would be something the disciples could look forward to, not the end of the world in their lifetime, but something that is the kingdom of God coming in power or which, as Matthew puts it, was the Son of Man coming in his kingdom. Jesus could predict his second coming in one breath without any suggestion that it's going to be soon and in the next breath say, but you will see something in your lifetime that is going to be sort of a confirmation of this sort of a near term down payment on this. And therefore, I believe that Jesus was talking about something different in the second thing within the first statement, but the two are related to each other and that one is the next advance on the kingdom's progress, as opposed to the ultimate consummation of the kingdom at the second coming of Christ.

Now, as far as what that next advance would be, what that is, that thing that they would see in their lifetime, that would be the Son of Man coming in his kingdom. There are different opinions. I've already mentioned that the day of Pentecost is certainly an opinion that is worthy of some consideration.

Since it's worded in Mark, you will see the kingdom of God come with power. And Jesus later, after his resurrection, said, you must remain in Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high and you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. So the power of the Holy Spirit could easily be spoken of in these terms.

And there are some who think that Jesus is referring to Pentecost. It would work out reasonably well because one of them did die before then. So not all of them died.

Some of them, one of them tasted death, but not all of them. And so that is one theory that is not unreasonable. A theory that seems to hold more weight in the minds of many evangelicals than that one, though, is that he's talking about the Mount of Transfiguration.

And for those who take this view, they say that the disciples, three of them, saw the glory of Christ. He came in his glory, so to speak, on the mountaintop. And therefore, they saw the Son of Man come in his kingdom in sort of a visionary experience on the Mount of Transfiguration.

Now, why would they associate with that? Well, the main reason would be that all three of the Synoptic Gospels record the prediction. And then all three of them skip over the next week of Jesus life and then record the Mount of Transfiguration. In other words, they record nothing that happened between the prediction and the Mount of Transfiguration.

But they all put those two things in the same juxtaposition as if to suggest this transfiguration was the fulfillment of the promise that he made. So many believe that that's the case. Now, there's even one other reason to suggest this, that they give.

And that's found in 2 Peter, chapter one. In 2 Peter, chapter one, Peter is recalling the Mount of Transfiguration and. In verses 16 through 18, Peter says, for we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to 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'm well pleased. And we that is he and James and John heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with him in the holy mountain. He's remembering the Mount of Transfiguration, but notice how he refers to it in verse 16.

We spoke to you about the coming of Christ, the power of Christ. Now, depending on which gospel you read, the prediction is you won't taste death before you see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom or you'll see the kingdom with power. These words are found in Peter's.

Remembrance of the of the amount of transfiguration. And so the close juxtaposition of that event with the prediction. Coupled with the way that Peter words that passage when he's reminiscing about the Mount of Transfiguration has led many evangelicals to assume that the event that would happen within the lifetime of some of those standing there was the Mount of Transfiguration.

But one obvious objection comes up, and that is that none of them died between those two events. In fact, the Mount of Transfiguration was only one week afterward. And it seems like an overstatement to say some of you standing here will not taste of death before you see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom, because none of them tasted death before the transfiguration.

On the other hand, those who take that view have an answer for that, too. They say, well, all of them, except those three did taste death without seeing the glory, Jesus coming glory, because this because the second coming of Christ and glory did not happen in their lifetime. But some of them did not taste death before it, because those three saw the glory on the mountaintop and therefore, nine of them did taste death before seeing that.

In fact, they still haven't seen it. They will see it when in the resurrection, when Jesus comes back. But those three did not taste death before seeing it.

So that, you know, that it seems like they got a lot of the bases covered there. For that interpretation, and that is probably the interpretation as the most people, you know,

advocating it in evangelical circles. Now, there is another view, and it strikes me as having even something more in its favor than that, and that is that he's referring to his coming in judgment upon Jerusalem in 87, but not as not not his second coming.

Now, see, this is 70 AD is the event that preterists point to as the fulfillment of this prediction, both full preterist and partial preterist. Now, if you don't know the word preterist, a preterist is somebody who believes that certain prophecies were fulfilled in the past, which perhaps other Christians feel will be fulfilled in the future. Prophecies like those in the Book of Revelation or those in the Olivet Discourse, which are popularly applied among evangelicals to the second coming in the end of the world.

Preterists are people who believe those prophecies really were fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem in 87. And there are partial preterists and there are full preterists. And the full preterists believe all prophecies were fulfilled by AD 70 and no later.

Partial preterists believe that some of these important prophecies were fulfilled in AD 70, but not all prophecies were and a partial preterist believes there is a future second coming at the end of the world. I'm a partial preterist, so that's the view I take. I believe there is a future second coming at the end of the world.

But I also believe that Revelation and the Olivet Discourse and some of these other passages have their primary fulfillment in AD 70 and that those are not passages about the end of the world. So there's these different viewpoints, but whether a person is a partial preterist or a full preterist, they believe that when Jesus said, some of you standing here will not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom, that that's referring to AD 70 when Jerusalem was destroyed. Now, it may sound then that the preterist is saying that Jesus actually came back in AD 70 and that is what the full preterists say.

I'm not one of them. My understanding is this, that the reference to the Lord coming is a figure of speech. It's a figure of speech found very frequently in the Bible.

It's not always a reference to the second coming. I do believe there will be a second coming because in Acts chapter one, when Jesus ascended and the apostles watched him disappear into the clouds, two angels stood there and said, you men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing into heaven for this same Jesus? Whom you've seen ascended to heaven will come again in like manner as you saw him go. And I don't believe that has happened.

I don't think Jesus has come back in the same way that he left. So I believe that the second coming is future and will happen at the end of the world. But what needs to be understood is that the term coming of the Lord, coming of God or coming of Jesus are terms that the Bible sometimes uses when they're not talking about the second coming.

They're talking figuratively. It's not uncommon in the Old Testament for God to say that he has visited or that he has come or will come. In judgment upon a nation.

The most famous passage that is usually pointed to in the Old Testament because of its close resemblance verbally with the New Testament language is in Isaiah chapter 19 and verse one, which is a prediction about the Assyrian conquest of Egypt. Which, of course, happened back in the eighth century B.C. And Isaiah is on time. And in this prediction that the Assyrians will conquer Egypt, Isaiah 19, one says the burden against Egypt.

Behold, the Lord rides on a swift cloud and will come into Egypt. Now, notice, here's the Lord, he's on the clouds and he's coming to Egypt. But this is not talking about the second coming.

It's not talking about the first coming. In fact, it's not coming about. It's not talking about a literal coming of God at all.

It's talking about armies of Assyria coming as agents of God's judgment. It is as if God himself is coming through the armies that he is sending to judge Egypt. Now, this kind of language is something that the Jews would have understood not as a literal appearance of Yahweh on the clouds, but rather as a poetic statement.

It's a figurative expression. It's apocalyptic. It's not it's symbolic.

Now, Isaiah spoke of Yahweh coming on the clouds to Egypt, and he really meant the Assyrian armies are coming to Egypt. It'd be possible certainly for Jesus to talk about the Lord coming on clouds to Jerusalem and mean the Roman armies are coming to Jerusalem as agents of God's judgment. And there are times when that is apparently what he's talking about, one of which is in Matthew 24.

Or we could look at the parallels in Mark 13 or Luke 21. But we're looking at Matthew at the moment. I think last time I looked at anything, we're in Matthew 24.

Matthew 24, 30 says, then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the heaven and then all the tribes of the earth or the land. Tribes of the land of Israel will mourn. And they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

I don't have time to go over this passage in detail, as we will when we come to Mark 13. We're only a few chapters from there in our studies of Mark. But I would point out here that talks of the Son of Man coming on clouds, just as Isaiah 19, one talk about God coming on clouds.

What's more, in verse 34, Matthew 24, 34, Jesus said, Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things are fulfilled. Now, here we have essentially the same prediction that Jesus made about six days or seven days before the Mount of Transfiguration. It's in different words, but it's not very different.

In Matthew 16, 28, he said, Some of you standing here will not taste death. In Matthew 24, 34, he said, This generation will not pass away. Isn't that kind of the same prediction? If some people now living will not die before a thing happens, that means this generation will not pass away completely before that happens.

And then both passages talk about the Son of Man coming. In Matthew 16, 28, him coming in his kingdom. In Matthew 24, the Son of Man coming on a cloud.

But the point here is, if in the earlier statement, Jesus was predicting the Mount of Transfiguration, why would he make essentially the same prediction again after the Mount of Transfiguration? If when Jesus said, Some of you standing here will not taste death before you see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom. If that was fulfilled six days later in the Mount of Transfiguration, why would he at some time later than that, given the Olivet Discourse, make the same prediction? It would appear that the Mount of Transfiguration was not the fulfillment of this, notwithstanding the evidences that have been brought forward to say that it is. And if you look at, for example, Mark 13, which is Mark's version of the Olivet Discourse.

Mark, Chapter 13, you'll see again in verse 30, Mark 13, 30. As surely I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place. That's, of course, the same as we saw in Matthew 24, 34.

This is parallel to Matthew 24. But look at earlier in the in the chapter, Mark 13. Verse one, then, as he went out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, Teacher, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here.

They're talking about the temple complex. And Jesus answered and said to him, Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone shall be left upon another that shall not be thrown down. So he just he predicts the destruction of the buildings of Jerusalem.

Verse three. Now, as he sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John and Andrew asked him privately, tell us when will these things be? And what will be the sign when these things will be fulfilled? What are these things? What are these things? The destruction of these buildings. Yeah, exactly.

These stones, not one stone will be left standing on another. That's the only thing Jesus predicted here. And they said, well, what when will these things be in us? When will these stones be cast down, as you said? And what sign will there be that these things are going to be taking place? That's what they asked.

And he gave an answer in the following chapter. That is, through through Chapter 13, the whole discourse, at the end of which he said, as we saw in verse 30, I surely I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place. These things, that's what they asked, when shall these things be? He said, well, this generation

will not pass before these things take place.

There's never any point in the gospel, in Mark 13, where they asked about anything other than the destruction of Jerusalem or where these things has changed in subject matter. And so what Jesus predicted in Mark 13 was that within that generation, the temple would be destroyed, Jerusalem would be destroyed. And it did happen in 87, just 40 years after he predicted it.

What's more, in the poetic language of that passage, he referred to it as the Son of Man coming. So the prediction that he made before the Mount of Transfiguration is the same in content, essentially, some of you standing here will not taste death before you see the kingdom coming with power. That is, the destruction of Jerusalem would be the manifestation that God's kingdom has replaced the kingdom of Israel.

And the power of God's kingdom has, as it were, been manifested in the overthrow of the old oppressor, because Jerusalem was the oppressor of Christ's kingdom. Jerusalem killed Jesus, killed Stephen, killed James, would have killed Peter if he hadn't escaped, sent Saul and Tarsus out to arrest other Christians. And then when he became a Christian, Jerusalem sent people out to try to kill him, too.

Jerusalem was the great persecutor of the church in the early days. And with its fall, the victory of the kingdom of God was seen over its first great persecutor. And that could be said to be seeing the kingdom of God present with power.

Obviously, there's other possibilities. You could take it to be about the Transfiguration if you want to. But I think that I think it's not likely that Jesus would make the same prediction, essentially, after the Mount of Transfiguration if he had made that same prediction earlier and meant Mount of Transfiguration.

In any case, that's about all we can spend time on this particular prediction. In fact, it's more time than we probably could afford. But Mark 9, then verse 2 says, Now, after six days, Jesus took Peter, James and John and led them up on a high mountain apart by themselves, and he was transfigured before them.

Now, I want to point out that the interval between the last thing mentioned and this was it says after six days. That's also what Matthew says. It says after six days.

But it looks parallel. Which is Luke 9, 28. It doesn't say after six days, it says now about eight days.

Later, this has troubled some people. They thought maybe this is a contradiction. Actually, I think it's a very powerful witness to the independence of these accounts, because scholars often think that both Matthew and Mark Matthew and Luke copied from Mark.

But if Luke copied from Mark, why wouldn't he have said the same thing Mark did after six days? Why did Luke say about eight days? It sounds like Luke's source is independent of Mark. That means that we've got two witnesses about this. Now, you might say, yeah, but they contradict.

No, they don't. What day would be after six days? Well, the seventh day would be after six days. If something happened after six days, it would presumably happen on the seventh day following.

Now, Luke says about eight days later. Well, he didn't say it's eight days and about eight days. He didn't know the exact number of days.

It was around eight. Well, how what would that what would be the closest possibilities to be around eight days? It would be seven or nine or maybe eight itself. But he wasn't sure about that.

But seven days is about eight. If we're not going to be right on the money, right on number eight, seven is about as close as you can get. If it was after six days, it was on the seventh day.

That was about eight days. And although it may seem strange that Matthew and Mark would say after six days and Luke would say about eight days, what it shows is that Luke definitely was not depending on Mark as his source. Luke had other sources for his information.

And if he was relying on Mark, he would just copy the same thing Mark says. But he didn't. Anyway, we can say it's a week later, give or take a day.

And so Jesus took Peter and James and John. These are the same guys that we refer to as the inner circle. They're the same ones that he took into the house of Jairus when he raised his daughter from the dead.

Those three same disciples went in. The same three went into Gethsemane with him in the end of his earthly life and prayed with him in Gethsemane or slept while he prayed. And then we just saw a moment ago in Acts or Mark 13, that when Jesus took Peter and gave all of it discourse, it was privately, it says to Peter, James and John and Andrew.

So Peter's brother, Andrew, got in on that one. But on other cases, it was just Peter, James and John. So these guys were closer to Jesus.

He was vouchsafing more more information to them than to the others, letting them see things that the others weren't saying. I'm not sure why. I don't know why he didn't take all the disciples up here to see what was seen.

But three was enough in the mouth of two or three witnesses. Every word should be

established, the Bible says. So he always had at least those three.

And it says he was transfigured before them. Now, the word transfigured is a word that we probably don't know, except from the Bible. And we only know it from the story of the transfiguration.

Well, transfigured is not a word that we would use in ordinary English. In the Greek, the word is metamorphic metamorphic, which obviously sounds like an English word of ours, metamorphosis. It's metamorphosis, m-o-r-p-h-o-o.

And it is, in fact, the root word of our word metamorphosis. Now, metamorphosis, as we use the term, speaks of a total transformation of one thing into something very much different by nature. The most common use of the term in modern English would be the transformation of a caterpillar as it goes into the chrysalis and comes out as a butterfly.

That process is called metamorphosis. Now, that's a remarkable thing when you think about it, because the caterpillar is a different kind of an animal than a butterfly. A caterpillar is more like a worm.

Butterfly is an insect. Worms are mollusks. Insects, you know, have three body parts with six legs and wings and so forth.

Worms don't have any of those things. Now, a caterpillar isn't a worm. It's an insect larva.

But it looks like a worm more than it looks like an insect. And yet it goes into a larval stage. Do you know what happens inside the chrysalis? It liquefies.

The whole creature turns into liquid, into a nutrient broth, which over a period of a few days reorganizes itself into a different kind of animal. An insect with six legs, wings, you know, the three parts of body. I mean, just a typical insect.

But the metamorphosis from a caterpillar into a butterfly is, well, it's from one kind of animal into another. In fact, the caterpillar is a menace to a garden because it destroys plants. But a butterfly is no menace to a garden.

It actually pollinates plants. It's actually life promoting. It's a different kind of animal.

It's an entirely different kind of impact. Now, the reason I bring that up is because the word metamorpho is only used in two ways in the Bible. One is in the accounts of the Transfiguration.

Jesus was metamorphosized in front of the disciples. The other way it's used is of us. Apart from the two times that the Gospels refer to Jesus being metamorphosized, that is, the two different Gospels in parallel accounts both use the word metamorpho, there's only two other occurrences of that word in the whole Bible.

One of them is in 2 Corinthians 3, verse 18, where Paul said, But we all with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror, the glory of the Lord are being transformed. It's metamorpho, the same word, 2 Corinthians 3, verse 18. We with unveiled face, beholding as in a glass, in a mirror, the glory of the Lord are being metamorphosized into the same image, that is in Christ's image, from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

So the Spirit of God is metamorphosizing us into the image of Christ. That is a different species because we were in the image of Adam. We were destructive pests before.

Now, hopefully, we'll be like Jesus, life-giving, life-promoting species, a different species like Jesus. But the only other time the word metamorpho is used in the Scripture is in Romans, chapter 12, which is also about us. And it says in verse 2, Do not be conformed to this world, but be metamorphosized, transformed by the renewing of your mind.

Now, twice, Paul talks about us being metamorphosized, the same word that's translated transfigured when used of Christ. In one place, we saw 2 Corinthians 3, verse 18, Paul said that we're metamorphosized from glory to glory into the image of Christ. In Romans 12, too, he said that we are metamorphosized by the renewing of our minds.

The change is a spiritual change, takes place as our minds take in and process and digest and grow from truth that changes our minds and metamorphosizes us into the image of Christ, gradually from glory to glory. Now, in this case, Jesus is metamorphosized and in that he probably didn't look human. He looks he looks human most of the time, but he probably looked more like an angel or a god at this time, because the way he's described in Mark 9, 3, is his clothes became shining, exceeding white like snow, such as no launderer on earth could whiten them.

And in the other gospels, it gives more detail that his face shone like the sun. So he glowed, his skin glowed and shone like the sun. His clothes even glowed or glistened.

Actually, whitened glistening is the term that one of the gospels use of his clothing. And so that must have really freaked the disciples out, because, I mean, John on the island of Patmos saw Jesus with his face shining like the sun, and he fell down like a dead man before him. And it's so overwhelming.

Jesus didn't look like a mere human anymore. He looked like a being from heaven. Of course, that's what he was and all they really saw.

Jesus didn't really change. He just showed what he really was like. It's it's what was really inside of there.

Perhaps that's why John, who was one of them there, later wrote in John chapter one, the word was with God, the word was God and the word was made flesh and dwelt among us. And we beheld his glory. He dwelt among us, God in the flesh, and we beheld, we

saw his glory.

Perhaps it's referring to him and his companions here on the mountain, seeing Christ's glory unveiled for a moment, not fully unveiled, but a glimpse of it. And Elijah appeared to them with Moses, verse four, and they were talking with Jesus. Now, Mark doesn't tell us anything about the conversation contents.

The subject matter. But Luke does in Luke chapter nine in verse thirty one. The parallel, it says that Moses and Elijah appeared with Jesus there on the mountain, and they were talking about, as Luke puts it in the Greek, the exodus that Jesus was about to accomplish in Jerusalem.

Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem to die, as he had already announced once to his disciples at Caesarea Philippi. They hadn't received that very well. But he's already told them one time he's going there to die.

Moses and Elijah are there to give their endorsement of him. Moses representing the law. Elijah representing the prophets.

In other words, the chief representatives of the Old Testament authority come to put their endorsement on Jesus, as the Old Testament does, of course. The law and the prophets do speak of Christ. They do give their endorsement of Christ as the Messiah.

And that's what these two men did. And they were talking, interestingly, about the exodus that Jesus was going to accomplish in Jerusalem and that Moses, who led the children of Israel in the first exodus, would be among those talking to Jesus about the next exodus, which would be, of course, a spiritual exodus. Deliverance not from Egypt, but deliverance from sin, which later New Testament writers often used as an image for our salvation.

It is like an exodus. The Jews were saved in the exodus from their bondage in Egypt. We have been saved by Christ from our bondage in a second exodus, a spiritual exodus.

And that's what was discussed there by Moses and Elijah talking to Jesus. Now, Peter said to Jesus, Rabbi, it is good for us to be here and let us make three tabernacles, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah, because he did not know what to say, for they were greatly afraid. And a cloud came over and came and overshadowed them.

And a voice came out of the cloud saying, this is my beloved son. Hear him. Suddenly, when they had looked around, they saw no one anymore but Jesus with themselves, only Jesus with themselves.

Now, what was this about? On the one hand, it was obviously a display of the glory of Christ to human eyes, such as was unparalleled in his lifetime. His glory was seen in his activities, we might say. He glorified God and he himself was glorified in the eyes of his

disciples and of the crowds.

They all glorified God and Jesus for the miracles they did. But this time there was a visual revelation of his glory given to these disciples. But why? What was it about? Well, I believe the main emphasis of this vision was not so much just to say, well, look, there's the glory of Jesus that you've read about.

Actually, these guys got a glimpse of it and saw it. I mean, it was that and that certainly is not a small matter. But Moses and Elijah's presence are very significant because they represent, I believe, the law and the prophets.

And Peter's reaction was, let's build three tabernacles, three booths, like they did. The Jews did this at the Feast of Tabernacles. They would take branches and twigs and so forth.

They'd make booths, which they called tabernacles. And they would there at the Feast of Tabernacles, they would just kind of camp out in Jerusalem and his big family camp out for a week to remember the time they spent living in tents or in tabernacles while they wandered in the wilderness. And so Peter and the disciples were accustomed to making makeshift booths.

They'd probably done it from their childhood on at the Feast of Tabernacles. But now this isn't the Feast of Tabernacles. We think, why don't we make some overnight structures here and we'll keep Moses and Elijah and Jesus here overnight and we'll have more of this great camp meeting, inspirational preaching going on tomorrow, too.

What it appears that Peter was saying, although he didn't know what to say, the Bible says he didn't know what he was saying. He appeared to be saying, wow, you know, Moses and Elijah. I mean, what can I say? No one in my generation has ever seen these guys alive.

They died hundreds of years ago and here they are right before our eyes talking with Jesus, our friend. Let's keep these guys around. Let's prolong this as long as we can.

In fact, my impression is that Peter may have been more impressed with them than with Jesus. After all, Jesus and he'd been hanging out casually for years. I'm sure he was very impressed with Jesus, but Jesus was quite familiar.

But Moses and Elijah, wow, you know, who would have thought he'd run into them up there in the mountains, you know, and he wanted Jesus and Moses and Elijah all to linger, to stay, to spend the night. And instead, a cloud came over them and Jesus alone was left there. Moses and Elijah left.

And a voice from heaven said, this is my beloved son. Hear him. Now, I believe the message to the disciples was this.

You have been Jewish men all your life. In the synagogues, you've heard Moses and Elijah, as it were, the law and the prophets as the authority for you to follow. But they have just come here to give their endorsement to Jesus and to go away.

That's what they're here to do. They're going to not stay here because we're not going to keep the law and the prophets around. Jesus is the fulfillment.

Their endorsement of him is the proof of that. But now only Jesus is going to remain. And this is my beloved son.

Here's the one that you're going to hear from now on. The idea being that while you men have been accustomed to living under the authority of the law and the prophets from your upbringing in the Jewish religion, from now on, there's a new authority from now on. There's somebody new that you'll be listening to instead.

My son and Jesus alone was left. And I think the value of this was to show. That there was a passing of the baton, as it were, to the Jewish remnants represented by these three disciples, that they had always in their faithfulness of God followed the law and the prophets.

But now God was passing the baton. Actually, the law and the prophets themselves were passing the baton to Jesus. And now the disciples were simply to follow him.

And that seems to be what the meaning of that statement is that God made hear him. See, if God had just said, this is my beloved son, he would have simply said, Peter, my son is superior to these two guys here. But in adding hear him, this is the essential message of the vision from now on.

Listen to him. He is the authority now. He is the one that you're going to be following.

He's the one whose instructions and teachings you will be guided by from this point on. That is, I believe, what the message of this vision was. And so, verse 9 says, Now, as they came down from the mountain, he commanded them that they should tell no one the things that they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

Now, back when Jesus was at Caesarea Philippi and said, Who do you say I am? And they said, You are the Christ, the son of the living God. He said, Don't tell anyone that I'm the Christ until after I rise from the dead. And he told them on that earlier occasion at Caesarea Philippi that he was going to die and rise from the dead.

And that's when Peter rebuked him. But now he mentions again his rising from the dead. Don't tell anyone what you've seen here until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

So they kept this word to themselves, questioning what the rising from the dead meant.

They thought, Well, he's not speaking in literal terms, certainly. Well, he was on this occasion.

But notice, they were accustomed to him speaking in parables and in, you know, Jewish idioms and apocalyptic language and things like that in his different teaching. So they thought. And even when he had said, Beware of the leaven of the scribes and Pharisees, they had taken him literally.

And he said, Oh, I wasn't talking about literal leaven. You know, they're more often they're trying to learn, OK, when do we take him literally and when do we not take him literally? And here he said, When the Son of Man rises from the dead, then you can tell people that wonder what he meant by rising from the dead. They just weren't getting it.

But you know what? You can't really blame them for not knowing if he is using literal language or not at this point, because he sometimes did and sometimes did not. When he said, for example, Destroy this temple in three days, I'll raise it up. The Jews took him literally.

They started with the physical temple. He was talking about his body. That wasn't understood by the disciples, even after until after he rose from the dead, then they remembered this thing.

But when he said to the woman, Well, I'll give you living water. She said, Well, where's your bucket? Where's your where's your rope? When he said to Nicodemus, You'll be born again. Nicodemus said, Well, can a man go into the womb and be born again? People had a tendency to take Jesus literally when he wasn't being literal.

And now he is being literal and the disciples don't know whether he's being literal or not. I wonder what he means when he says risen from the dead. So they kept this word as he told them to didn't speak about it.

And they asked him, saying, Why do the scribes say that Elijah must come first? Now, no doubt, seeing Elijah there in that vision reminded them, Oh, yeah, we've always been taught by the scribes in the synagogues that before the Messiah comes, Elijah is going to come. Come to think of it, Lord, you're the Messiah. How come Elijah hasn't come? Now, one could argue, well, he did just now on the mountain, but he didn't come as a forerunner before Jesus showed up.

Jesus had been preaching for years and Malachi chapter four, verses five and six said, Behold, I send you Malachi. I send you Elijah, the prophet. He says before me.

To turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, the hearts of the children of the fathers, lest I smite the earth with a curse. So Elijah is supposed to come as a forerunner ahead of the Messiah. And the disciples are saying, well, Lord, you're the Messiah and you've been around for a while, but how come Elijah hasn't come yet? Why do the scribes say

Elijah is supposed to come? Are they wrong? In other words, are the scribes wrong? And Jesus says, no, they're not wrong.

Elijah does come first and restores all things, just like the scribes said he would. However, he says, and how it is written concerning the son of man that he must suffer many things and be treated with contempt. But I say to you that Elijah has already come, has also come, and they did to him whatever they wished, as it is written of him.

Now, it doesn't say so here, but in the parallel accounts, it says then they knew that he spoke of John the Baptist. And Jesus had earlier spoken the same way about John the Baptist on an earlier occasion. That earlier occasion is found in Matthew chapter 11, when John had sent messengers to Jesus from his imprisonment and said, are you the one who is to come or do we look for another? And after the messengers had been sent away with Jesus' answer, Jesus began to eulogize John.

And in verse nine of Matthew 11 says, Jesus, what did you go out to see a prophet? That is when they went out to see John. Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet for this is he of whom it is written. And now he quotes Malachi three one.

Behold, I send my messenger before your face who will prepare your way before you. I surely I say to you among those born of women, there has arisen none greater than John the Baptist, but he who is the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. For from the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffers violence and the violent take it by force for all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.

And if you are willing to receive it, he is Elijah, who is to come. He who has ears to hear, let him hear. Now, when Jesus said that he that has ears to hear, let him hear, as he did from time to time, he meant whoever has their spiritual ears on, let him hear what I've just said, because it's going to take spiritual understanding.

If you can receive it, John is Elijah, who is to come. Now, remember what Paul said over in first Corinthians to 14, he said the natural man cannot receive, does not receive the things of the spirit of God because they're spiritually discerned. A person can't receive spiritual things unless they're spiritual.

And Jesus said to his disciples, if you can receive it, John is Elijah. What do you mean if you can receive it? If you are spiritual enough, you can receive it because it's a spiritual truth. John isn't Elijah, the man.

He isn't the Tishbite who prophesied of the days of Ahab and Jezebel. He is a different man, but he has come, as it says in Luke chapter one, in the spirit and the power of Elijah. And he is Elijah, who was to come.

That is, he is the Elijah that was prophesied to come in Malachi chapter four. So the scribes are not wrong in saying that Elijah is coming. He does surely come, but he did

come and they didn't recognize him.

And he came in the person of John the Baptist. And Jesus had told the disciples that on an earlier occasion, but they apparently had forgotten it on this occasion. And so he said, well, why do the rabbis say that he's coming? Because he does.

It is predicted of him in Malachi. Now, what is difficult about Jesus answer, I find, is in the meaning of verses 12 and 13 of Mark nine, Mark nine, 12 and 13, where he said, Elijah does come first and restores all things. And how it is written concerning the son of man or how is it written? This is a question concerning the son of man that he must suffer many things and be treated with contempt.

But I say to you, Elijah has also come and they did to him whatever they wished, as it is written of him. Now, what I don't know is where is it written of Elijah or John that he would be treated the way he was. The truth of the matter is that John is mentioned in three Old Testament passages.

Isaiah 40, which says a voice of one crying in the wilderness, make straight the path for the Lord. But that doesn't mention them doing anything to him. And then there's Malachi chapter three in verse one, which says, behold, I send my messenger before your face will prepare the way before you.

That's directly quoted by Jesus in Matthew 11, as being about John the Baptist. In fact, Mark has even quoted that earlier in Mark chapter one at the very beginning of the Gospel of Mark. He said, as it is written in the prophets, behold, I send my messenger before your face will prepare your way before you.

That's Malachi three one referring to John the Baptist. But that doesn't mention them doing anything to John or Elijah. Also, you have in Malachi four versus five and six, the reference to Elijah coming, which is about John, but also doesn't say about them doing anything to him.

I don't know of any Old Testament passage that predicted that Elijah or John or the forerunner who came before the Messiah would be treated any particular way. We're never actually told in any of those prophecies what the response would be of the people or what his fate would be. And yet Jesus talks as if what they did to John the Baptist was what was written of him.

And I guess perhaps what there's different ways to look at this. Perhaps the hymn at the end of verse 13 means the Messiah. Because he does say in verse 12, it is written concerning the Son of Man that he must suffer many things.

And he may be saying, and also John ended up suffering as it is written of the Messiah that is written of the Messiah will suffer. And people did the same thing to John that they're going to do to the Messiah, which is not surprising because he's a forerunner of

the Messiah. He may not be saying that there's anything written of John about what would happen to him, but it looks like he's saying there is.

But as it is written of him at the end of verse 13 could be written of the Son of Man mentioned the previous verse, and that would possibly make some sense of it. And all that he said about John is that Elijah did also come and they did to him whatever they wished. Just as it was written would happen to the Son of Man.

So in other words, the predictions were about how the Son of Man would suffer, as he says in verse 12. But John, by being teamed up with the Son of Man, ends up suffering similarly. Either that or else Jesus considers that the coming of John is a part of the coming of the Son of Man.

After all, every one of the Gospels in telling the story of Jesus starts by telling the story of John. Every one of them starts with John the Baptist before getting around to the story of Jesus as an adult. And therefore, it's possible that he's seen John's coming and his coming as two parts of one thing, one visitation of God.

You might remember if you've read Luke anytime recently that when John the Baptist was born, his father Zacharias prophesied on the occasion of John's birth, not Jesus's birth. But in Luke chapter one, excuse me, verse 76, Zacharias predicted. Well, actually, even earlier in verse 68, he said, Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people.

Now, Jesus wasn't born yet. John was born. But with the birth of John, it was seen as God visiting and redeem his people and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David.

Well, that's what Jesus was. But Jesus wasn't born yet. Zacharias, the prophet, is seeing the birth of John as the raising up of the Messiah, not because John is the Messiah, but because the Messiah comes in two waves, the forerunner and and the Son of Man.

And notice, he says in verse 76, then you child will be called the prophet of the highest, for you will go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways. So he knew John wasn't the Messiah. He knew he'd go before the Messiah to give knowledge of salvation to his people by the remission of their sins through the tender mercy of our God, with which the day spring, which means the dawning day from on high has visited us.

Now, the birth of John, the Baptist occasion, all these prophecies about how God has visited the dawn, the day has dawned, you're going ahead of the Lord. But basically, God has in the birth of this child raised up the horn of salvation in the house of David. It sounds like the birth of John is not really separated from the rise of the Messiah.

It's like two parts of one thing. So that Jesus could be saying just as it is written that the Son of Man would suffer, you might as well take that also as a prediction that Elijah will

suffer, too, because he's connected at the hip with the Messiah and the two of them will suffer. Similarly, that's possibly what Jesus meant.

I have to say, I'm just guessing here because I don't know. I'm just thinking of things that might work because I don't know of any commentator that's ever been able to say anywhere in the Old Testament that said that Elijah would suffer when he comes. Although there is another thing just crossed my mind, it may be the best answer of all.

Elijah has come in the person of John the Baptist, and he suffered a fate similar to that which was written of the original Elijah in the record of Elijah's life as it was written of him, of who Elijah, the Tishbite. What happened to him? He was persecuted by Ahab and Jezebel, a henpecked king. John was persecuted by a henpecked king, too.

Herodias persuaded Herod to imprison and kill John. There are many similarities between John the Baptist and Ezekiel, I mean, not Ezekiel, Elijah, but one of them was certainly that Elijah was persecuted by the king at the instigation of his wife, Jezebel. Ahab was a weak king, and he just kind of did what Jezebel wanted.

Well, so was Herod, a weak king, and he did what his wife Herodias wanted. And so John and Elijah were both persecuted similarly. And Jesus could be saying, Elijah came, that is, in the person of John the Baptist, and he has suffered a fate similar to what was written of Elijah in the book of 1 Kings, where it tells about what happened to him.

That's even another possibility here. So there's some possibilities as to what is meant here. It's a difficult statement because it's not clear what he means as it is written of him, but it could mean as it was written of Old Testament Elijah.

So it has happened to the New Testament Elijah, John the Baptist. Anyway, that's the end of our treatment tonight. We're not going to try to take any more material tonight, it's gone late, but I guess it's a shame to have to leave the lecture with something so undecided as, you know, the meaning of the passage we just were talking about.

But sometimes that's just what you got to do. At least I do. So we'll stop there and we'll take the healing of the demon to this point next time.