

GOSPEL OF MARK
Chapter 9

vs. 1:

Jesus is concluding, in the first verse, His declaration of His death and their need to be prepared. Concerning the immediate need, He states that some of those present that day would see the Kingdom of God come with power. The fulfillment of that prophecy would have been on the day of Pentecost (about 8 months later) when the Holy Spirit came with the sound of a mighty rushing wind and the apostles declared in the languages of the people, the good news of Jesus Christ!

vs. 2-13:

Six days after Jesus' foretelling of His death, He took Peter, James and John upon a mountain and there His appearance changed. He became radiant and shining (Moses had become radiant when He met with God; Exodus 34:29-35). This occasion was different for Jesus was not speaking with God, rather He being God was speaking with Moses and Elijah (Moses representing the era of the Law and Elijah representing the era of the Prophets; these being the 2 major forms of revelation as the Jews reckoned). We find from Luke's record (Luke 9:29ff) that Jesus was speaking with Moses and Elijah about His upcoming death at Jerusalem.

When they were finished speaking, Peter suggested making shelters for Moses, Elijah and Jesus. That way they would be able to dwell together for a longer period of time. A cloud then enveloped them and God spoke saying, "This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to Him!" The cloud left and only Jesus remained with the three disciples. In this way, God was making clear that Jesus spoke with authority and that His teachings carried even more weight than the Law and the Prophets that the Jews had followed for centuries!

Jesus instructed these 3 not to inform anyone of these events until after He had risen from the dead (His disciples did not yet understand about the resurrection and kept discussing it). One of the 3 inquired concerning the prophecy that Elijah must come first. Jesus explained that Elijah (John the Baptist was the fulfillment, carrying out the same duties) came to lead people back to God and to prepare their hearts. In such a time, Jesus then asks why must He suffer and be rejected (if the people had truly turned back to God, and He was God's Son). He then told them that Elijah had come and that the people had done away with him, just as they wanted (referring to John's execution).

vs. 14-32:

Upon returning, Jesus and the 3 found the teachers of the law arguing with the remainder of the disciples and surrounded by a large crowd. Attention quickly turned to Jesus. Jesus inquired as to what was going on and a man came forward. He stated that his son was possessed by an evil spirit that has caused him to be mute and to lose control of his body. He had asked the disciples to cast it out, but they couldn't.

Jesus saw the unbelief and reprimanded the people for it. When the boy came, the evil spirit took control and the boy fell to the ground. Jesus cast the demon out, after reminding the father of the

need for faith. Jesus then raised the boy up.

Jesus' disciples asked why they had not been able to cast it out. Jesus replied that this type demanded extra power that comes through prayer (fasting is also included in some translations).

Jesus tried to remain isolated with His disciples so that He would be able to make it clear concerning His coming death and resurrection. Even so, the disciples still failed to understand.

vs. 33-37:

On the way to Capernaum, the disciples discussed as to which one of them was the most important. Upon arriving, Jesus asked them about what they had been talking about. He then told them that the greatest is the one who is willing to serve the most. He then took a child and held him in His arms and told them that we need to learn to accept everyone (including the little children) if we want to truly express our love for Him and His Father.

vs. 38-41:

Later, John bragged to Jesus how they had prevented someone from casting out demons in Jesus' name since they were not part of their select group. Jesus rebuked him and told them that when miracles are done in His name is working for Him and should not be hindered. He also praised all those who would minister to His disciples in various ways (ex. giving a cup of cold water) and how they will be rewarded.

vs. 42-50 Jesus warned them about leading others into sin and the greatness of punishment for such an action. The penalty for sin is eternal death (separation from God and torment). He taught them that it would be better to get rid of parts of our body, so that we could not sin, than to sin and be condemned.

He reminds them that they are like salt (preserving and bringing out the best). He tells them to be true to this role and to live at peace, otherwise they too, will be rejected!

STUDY GUIDE

Mark 9:

1. What did Jesus say that some people would see before dying?
2. What happened on a high mountain?
3. What did God say from the cloud?
4. How did people respond when they saw Jesus?
5. What was the problem with the boy?
6. What did Jesus say was possible to the one who believes?
7. What causes the spirit to come out of the body?
8. What did Jesus try to teach His disciples? (See vs. 31)
9. What did Jesus say about those who want to be first?
10. Who would be better off with a millstone around their neck and thrown into the sea?
11. How were they to be with each other? (See vs. 50)

BONUS:

1. Is Jesus more important than the Law and the Prophets? If so, of what value are they to Christians?
2. Cite some examples of "impossible" things that can be done if one would believe.
3. What guidelines do verses 38-41 teach us about our attitudes towards other churches?