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*God, through His Son Jesus, provides eternal grace for our failures and human limitations.*

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## Mark 9.

(2013)

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The Bible not only reveals God's eternal plans purposes and promises  
But also shows how you can know God for yourself.

***Teach it, don't demand it.***

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## Mark 9.

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### Topics

- The mountain of transfiguration.
- Some will not die until they see the Kingdom of God come with power.
- Are Moses and Elijah in heaven?
- Elijah must come first?
- Jesus heals a boy who was deaf and unable to speak.
- All things are possible.
- Faithless generation, how long am I to be with you?
- The Son of Man will be killed and after three days he will rise.
- The greatest and the least.
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- Whoever gives a cup of water to a disciple will not lose their reward.
- Where their worm dies not.
- Cut off your hand, your foot, and tear out your eye.
- If salt has lost its saltiness, how will you make it salty again?
- Have, salt in yourself.
- Everyone will be salted with fire.

**The Previous Chapter:** in the previous chapter Jesus fed a crowd of four-thousand and then went to Dalmanutha, where Jesus rebuked the people for seeking signs. Then he and the disciples left Dalmanutha and sailed to the other side of the Sea of Galilee when they arrived in Bethsaida. Jesus healed a blind man then they went to Caesarea Philippi where Peter said, "Jesus is the Christ." Jesus began to teach that the Son of Man must be killed and after three days rise again. He told his disciples if anyone is going to follow him they must deny themselves and take up their cross because the Lord when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels will be ashamed of those who are ashamed of him.

**NOTE:** for information concerning people, places and the meaning of words see Map Locations and People of the Bible, and Bible Dictionary on Website Menu.

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### The Mountain of Transfiguration.

Mark 9:1-10 ----- <sup>1</sup>And he said to them, "Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power." <sup>2</sup>And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured (changed) before them, <sup>3</sup>and his clothes became radiant, intensely white, as no one on earth could bleach them. <sup>4</sup>And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus. <sup>5</sup>And Peter said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good that we are here. Let us make three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah." <sup>6</sup>For he did not know what to say, for they were terrified. <sup>7</sup>And a cloud

overshadowed them, and a voice came out of the cloud, "This is my beloved Son; listen to him." <sup>8</sup>And suddenly, looking around, they no longer saw anyone with them but Jesus only. <sup>9</sup>And as they were coming down the mountain, he charged them to tell no one what they had seen, until the Son of Man had risen from the dead. <sup>10</sup>So they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what this rising from the dead might mean.

**Transfigured:** means to transform or change (i.e., a metamorphose).

**Some will not die until they see the Kingdom of God come with power:** Jesus statement that some standing in the crowd will not die until they see the kingdom of God come with power has the following two applications: -

1. To Peter, James and John who saw the glory of Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration.
2. To those who saw Christ after his resurrection.

The words "appeared to them" (v4) allows for the appearance of Elijah and Moses to be a vision, supporting this idea is (Matt. 17:9) in which Jesus tells the disciples as they are walking down the mountain not to tell any one the vision they have seen.

**Vision:** a vision can relate to a spectacle gazed at by the eyes or a movie played out in the mind. In most cases God gives the picture or vision then the prophet speaks or writes it in their own words. Sometimes the same biblical event or experience is spoken of as an actual and real event, while at other times the same event maybe recorded as a vision (an image or mental experience within the mind).

A biblical vision is always under God's control and can appear as a movie played out on the screen of the imagination of the mind (similar to a dream) or it may appear as a hologram appearing in the air that is actually seen by the eyes of the prophet or to whoever God chooses to give the vision to.

The vision communicates the LORD'S will or future events to the prophet who then proceeds to tell the vision to the people, sometimes in their own words and at other times in the exact words the LORD has spoken to them in the vision. Whatever form the vision took (maybe like a hologram) it is clear it appeared so real that Peter offered to make tents and their was such a powerful presence of God that Jesus garments became pure white and God out of a cloud declared Jesus his beloved Son and told Peter, James and John to listen to him then immediately the entire vision vanished.

### **Jesus, Peter, James and John descend down the Mountain.**

Jesus told Peter, James and John not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead. Though none of Jesus disciples understood what Jesus meant when he spoke of rising from the dead until they saw him after his death and resurrection that does not mean that prior to Christ's resurrection no-one believed in eternal life.

Most people from all nations believed in eternal life, but the common concept of eternal life to most was of the human soul ascending to another world or back to God and the world He dwells in (called heaven). Except for a few faithful prophets in the Old Testament the people generally had no concept of the mortal human body of flesh and bones being transformed into an immortal and eternal body especially after it had been killed. Following are two reasons Jesus often told people not to tell of their healings or the miracles they had seen: -

1. Because once people heard he could heal they would then come to him by the multitudes and the crowds would grow so large that neither he nor the disciples were able to get time alone or even time to relax, pray, eat and sleep and his primary ministry was not healing, but taking the Gospel to different cities, towns, villages and teaching the disciples. Miracles were not Jesus mission they were acts of his compassion and signs to confirm that he was the Son of God and sent by God.

2. To avoid stirring up the wrath of the religious leaders the chief priests, Pharisees and scribes and the Romans as it was not yet the right time for him to lay down his life.

### **Are Moses and Elijah in Heaven?**

The transfiguration is sometimes used to show that Moses and Elijah are already in heaven and therefore so are all the Old Testament prophets and saints, but this event is described as a vision and like John's vision of unfulfilled events in the book of Revelation, cannot be taken as a statement of the actual survival of Moses and Elijah.

Especially when we consider the book of Hebrews in which the writer to the Hebrews thinks of all the Old Testament heroes of faith, including Moses and the prophets, as having died, without receiving the promised reward. The writer of Hebrews says they desired a better country a heavenly one and therefore God has prepared for them a city (Heb. 11:16) and that some women received back their dead by resurrection, some were tortured, refusing to accept release, so that they might rise again to a better life (Heb. 11:35) and all these (OT saints) did not receive what was promised, since God had provided that apart from us (NT Christians) they should not be made perfect (in resurrection). (Heb. 11:39-40).

Added to this Paul says: -

- Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep in Christ, but will again be made alive but each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. (1 Cor. 15:20-23).

It can hardly be that Moses and Elijah had been resurrected to immortality in advance of Jesus the firstfruits from the dead.

**For further information see the title: -**

- Heaven in, Death (ON WEBSITE MENU).

### **Elijah must come First?**

Mark 9:11-13 ----- <sup>11</sup>And they (Peter James and John) asked him, "Why do the scribes say that first Elijah must come?" <sup>12</sup>And he said to them, "Elijah does come first to restore all things. And how is it written of the Son of Man that he should suffer many things and be treated with contempt? <sup>13</sup>But I tell you that Elijah has come, and they did to him whatever they pleased, as it is written of him."

In the book of Matthew and Mark Jesus says, "Elijah has come, and they did not recognize him, but did to him whatever they pleased and likewise the Son of Man will also suffer many things and be treated with contempt" (Matt. 17:12). John the Baptist had the same mission as Elijah which was to rebuke the religious leaders and to restore all things (Elijah destroyed the false prophets) it is in this sense that Elijah is said to come as John.

Both John and Elijah had the same passion toward God and the same mission (i.e. to restore all things) that is why they are likened to each other. Added to this Elijah suffered at the hands of Israel's king Ahab and his wife Jezebel and John suffered at the hands of the religious leaders (the Pharisees and scribes) and the worldly leaders (Herod beheaded him). These verses clearly show that Jesus understood that he was also going to suffer at the hands of the religious and secular leaders as did John and Elijah.

### **Jesus heals a Boy who was Deaf and unable to Speak.**

Mark 9:14-27 ----- <sup>14</sup>And when they (Peter James and John) came to the disciples, they saw a great crowd around them, and scribes arguing with them. <sup>15</sup>And immediately all the crowd, when they saw him were greatly amazed and ran up to him and greeted him. <sup>16</sup>And he asked them, "What are you arguing about with them?" <sup>17</sup>And someone from the crowd answered him, "Teacher, I

brought my son to you, for he has a spirit that makes him mute. <sup>18</sup>And whenever it seizes him it throws him down, and he foams and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid. So I asked your disciples to cast it out, and they were not able." <sup>19</sup>And he answered them, "O faithless generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you? Bring him to me." <sup>20</sup>And they brought the boy to him. And when the spirit saw him, immediately it convulsed the boy, and he fell on the ground and rolled about, foaming at the mouth <sup>21</sup>And Jesus asked his father, "How long has this been happening to him?" And he said, "From childhood. <sup>22</sup>And it has often cast him into fire and into water, to destroy him. But if you can do anything, have compassion on us and help us." <sup>23</sup>And Jesus said to him, "If you can! All things are possible for one who believes." <sup>24</sup>Immediately the father of the child cried out and said, "I believe; help my unbelief!" <sup>25</sup>And when Jesus saw that a crowd came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "You mute and deaf spirit, I command you, come out of him and never enter him again." <sup>26</sup>And after crying out and convulsing him terribly, it came out, and the boy was like a corpse, so that most of them said, "He is dead." <sup>27</sup>But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose.

A man tells Jesus that his son has a spirit that from childhood has often caused the boy to fall to the ground, suffer convulsions foam at the mouth and cast the boy into fire and into water to destroy him. This illness is referred to as being an unclean spirit. Throughout the New Testament unclean spirits and demons are interchangeable terms.

Jesus generation believed that any mental or physical illness they did not understand including deafness, blindness and leprosy was caused by evil gods called demons also referred to as unclean spirits. Jesus rather than try to explain why the boy was unable to hear and speak and why he was having what we would today most likely call an epileptic fit simply spoke to the people according to what they believed and showed them that the power of his God was far greater than the evil gods they called unclean spirits and demons.

**For further information see the title: -**

- Demons in, Satan and his Family (ON WEBSITE MENU).

### **All things are Possible.**

Jesus tells the man, "All things are possible for one who believes" and immediately the man asks Jesus to help his unbelief, but Jesus ignores the man's unbelief and heals the boy, but not because the boy's father reached a state of perfect belief, but because the crowds were running toward them no-doubt to see what Jesus was going to do. The statement, "All things are possible for one who believes," refers to Jesus, not the father, the only faith the father had was that Jesus might be able to heal the boy, we know this because he say to Jesus, "If you can do anything help my son" and Jesus basically says, "You say if I can! Don't you know all things are possible for the one who believes (i.e., Jesus)," and the father replied, "I believe you can, but help my unbelief" (v22-23).

**NOTICE:** (v25) this boy is deaf and mute, he cannot speak obviously because he cannot hear speech, the people believed evil gods called demons (also called unclean spirits) caused the boy to be deaf, mute and have what we most likely would call today an epileptic fit. Jesus speaks to the illness as he did with most sickness's and the boy is healed by his spoken word, regardless of what the cause of the boy's illness was the power that healed this man's son was not the father's faith, but the spoken word of Christ, his compassion and his faith.

**"O faithless generation, how long am I to be with You?"**

When Jesus, Peter James and John came toward the other disciples they see the scribes (religious leaders) arguing most likely with the disciples, so Jesus asks them what are they arguing about and a man tells them the religious leaders were arguing over the man's sick and suffering son, because he was deaf, mute and suffered seizures. This is most likely why Jesus said, "O faithless generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you?" (v19).

Instead of having compassion for the boy and showing him mercy the scribes and no-doubt the disciples are arguing over the boy's sickness, because they believed the boy had demons and an unclean spirit dwelling in him it is possible they were arguing over whether they should even be near the boy let alone touch him.

### **The Son of Man will be killed and after Three Days He will Rise.**

Mark 9:28-32 ----- <sup>28</sup>And when he had entered the house, his disciples asked him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?" <sup>29</sup>And he said to them, "This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer (Matthew adds and fasting) (Matt 17:21) <sup>30</sup>They went on from there and passed through Galilee. And he did not want anyone to know, <sup>31</sup>for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, "The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him. And when he is killed, after three days he will rise." <sup>32</sup>But they did not understand the saying, and were afraid to ask him.

This kind cannot be driven out by anything other than prayer, this is because prayer embraces the idea of a person being in constant union with God and in His Spirit (i.e. compassion and mercy) contrasted to being legalistic, lacking compassion and arguing about a thing as the Scribes were doing with the disciples over the boy who they believed was full of evil gods called demons and unclean spirits.

**Jesus did not want anyone to know** (v30) where he and the disciple were because once people heard where he was they would come to him by the multitudes and the crowds would grow so large that neither he nor the disciples were able to get time alone or even time to relax, pray, eat and sleep and his primary ministry was not healing, but taking the Gospel to different cities, towns, villages and teaching the disciples the Gospel.

### **Three times Jesus said he would be Killed and Rise after Three Days.**

- First time in (Mark 8:31).
- Second time in (Mark 9:30-31).
- Third time in (Mark 10:33).

Jesus finally gets some alone time with the disciples and tell them, "The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him and after three days he will rise." They had no idea of what Jesus meant.

Prior to the resurrection people believed in eternal life, but there concept of eternal life was of the soul leaving the body and ascending into some kind of heavenly or spiritual world.

No-one (except for a few prophets in the Old Testament) had any concept of the mortal human body being raised from the grave as an immortal body to live in an eternal world. The twelve apostles only understood this when they saw Christ after his death and resurrection.

### **Whoever would be First must be Last of all and Servant of All.**

Mark 9:33-37 ----- <sup>33</sup>And they came to Capernaum. And when he was in the house he asked them, "What were you discussing on the way?" <sup>34</sup>But they kept silent, for on the way they had argued with one another about who was the greatest. <sup>35</sup>And he sat down and called the twelve. And he said to them, "If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all." <sup>36</sup>And he took a child and put him in the midst of them, and taking him in his arms, he said to them, <sup>37</sup>"Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me, receives not (only) me but him who sent me."

**Capernaum:** was a city on the shore of the Sea of Galilee in Palestine and the headquarters of Jesus and his place of abode. Several of his disciples were from Capernaum and many miracles were performed here.

## **The Greatest and the Least.**

On the way to Capernaum those with Jesus had been arguing amongst themselves who was the greatest? So Jesus calls the twelve together and tells them whoever wants to be the greatest must be the least and servant of all. This means to be considered great (important) to God a person will have to accept that they will be considered the least (most unimportant) to the world, because to be at the top in God's Kingdom a disciple must be humble and the servant of others whereas to be at the top in the world's system a person has to be a ruler of the people.

This does not mean a disciple cannot have a very successful ministry or business, the focus is about attitude and pride (i.e. the desire to be the top dog or most important contrasted with being humble and serving).

## **Whoever Receives a Child in my Name Receives Me.**

Jesus tells his disciple that looking after and caring for children in his name is serving him, he is teaching the disciple that serving him is not about mixing with people in high places or positions of authority and importance, rather serving Christ is about receiving and serving the helpless and needy and in these verses he is using a child to make the point.

**NOTICE:** receiving Jesus automatically means a person receives the Father a person cannot belong to Jesus and not belong to his heavenly Father.

## **Anyone who is Not against Us is for Us.**

Mark 9:38-40 ----- <sup>38</sup>John said to him, "Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us." <sup>39</sup>But Jesus said, "Do not stop him, for no one who does a mighty work in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me. <sup>40</sup>For the one who is not against us is for us.

This is a great principal, the disciples wanted to stop a man who was doing the work of the Lord, because he was not a follower of their group, but Jesus basically tells them to leave the man alone. Jesus is saying to his disciples if the man is doing it in Christ's name then he is not against what he is doing and therefore is not his enemy. Jesus is saying, regardless of what group people belong to if they are doing the work of the Lord then they are in agreement with him and therefore are not his enemy so leave them alone and focus on what your group is doing.

## **Whoever Gives a Cup of Water to a Disciple will not lose their Reward.**

Mark 9:41-42 ----- <sup>41</sup>For truly, I say to you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you belong to Christ will by no means lose his reward. <sup>42</sup>"Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him if a great millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea.

These verses shine a spotlight on the truth that there are rewards for those who help Jesus disciples in their ministry. By extension this principle extends to any person who helps those who belong to the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus statement, "Whoever causes one of these little ones to sin" refers to children (v36-37). It would be better for those who entice a child who believes in Christ to sin to be thrown into the sea and drowned shows how much God cares for innocent and helpless children.

## **If your Hand causes you to Sin, Cut it Off.**

Mark 9:43-50 ----- <sup>43</sup>And if your hand offend you, cut it off: it is better for you to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell (Gehenna), into the fire that never shall be quenched: <sup>44</sup>Where their worm dies not, and the fire is not quenched. <sup>45</sup>And if your foot offend you, cut it off: it is better for you to enter into life lame, than having two feet to be cast into hell (Gehenna), into the fire that never shall be quenched: <sup>46</sup>Where their worm dies not, and the fire is not quenched. <sup>47</sup>And if your eye offend you, pluck it out: it is better for you to enter

into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell (Gehenna) fire: <sup>48</sup>Where their worm dies not, and the fire is not quenched. <sup>49</sup>For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt. <sup>50</sup>Salt *is* good: but if the salt has lost his saltiness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another.

### **Hell (Gehenna).**

Gehenna was a valley near Jerusalem which formed part of the border between Judah and Benjamin. It was also called the Hinnom valley after the son of Hinnom. In Gehenna Ahaz and Manasseh sacrificed their sons to Molech, and Jeremiah prophesies a great slaughter of people in Gehenna during the siege of Jerusalem. (Jer 19:1-13) (Jer 32:35). Hell in the Old Testament comes from the Hebrew word Sheol which means grave and Hell in the New Testament comes from the Greek word Hades which also means grave.

After the Old Testament period, Jewish apocalyptic writers began to call the valley of Hinnom (Gehenna) the entrance to hell, (i.e. the entrance to Sheol meaning the grave and later Gehenna became called hell itself). Gehenna was later used figuratively as a name for the place (or state) of the everlasting dead. Gehenna in Jewish usage of the first century AD referred to an intermediate state of the godless dead, but there is no trace of Gehenna as a place for the godless dead in this sense in the New Testament Scriptures.

Fire is linked with Gehenna because in the Old Testament it had fires burning to pagan gods and was a place of enormous grief sorrow and brutal pagan sacrifice. In the New Testament it became a place of refuse for the city of Jerusalem's garbage and dead and decaying bodies so it also had continual fires burning, much like our rubbish dumps today.

### **For further information see the titles:-**

- Hell.
- Gehenna.
- Death (what happens when we die).

All three titles are in Death (ON WEBSITE MENU).

- Molech, in Various Topics (ON WEBSITE MENU).

### **Where their Worm Dies Not (v48).**

Jesus words:-

- Where their worm dies not (v44).

Alludes to the following verse of Isaiah: -

- They shall go out and look on the dead bodies of the men who have rebelled against me. For their worm shall not die, their fire shall not be quenched, and they shall be an abhorrence to all flesh (Isaiah 66:24).

In this verse their worm shall not die, their fire shall not be quenched relates to those who: -

- Have chosen their own way.
- Delight in their wickedness.
- Did what was evil in God's eyes.
- Chose to do what God does not delight in.



Isaiah begins by saying that the Lord will come in fire and fury and show judgment and indignation to his enemies, those slain by the Lord will be many and they will be put to shame. The nation of Jerusalem will be brought forth in one moment and the Lord will make a new heaven and a new earth. Isaiah pictures the surviving nations being carried by Jerusalem like a baby on a nurse's hip and all nations coming to worship before the LORD.

Then in the final verse of the final chapter of (Isaiah 66) Isaiah says: -

- And they shall go out and look on the dead bodies of the men who have rebelled against me. For their worm shall not die, their fire shall not be quenched, and they shall be an abhorrence to all flesh (Isaiah 66:1-24).

Their worm shall not die is a picture of the battle of Armageddon, when Christ returns and destroys the armies that comes against him. There will be dead and decaying bodies lying everywhere with no one to bury them. Neither Isaiah nor Christ is picturing an unseen place of torment for the dead, because he says, people will look at these dead and decaying bodies. It is hardly likely the redeemed are going to be able to peer over a cliff edge and watch humans being cruelly and brutally tormented throughout eternity (as some mistakenly believe).

It is a picture of dead bodies being eaten with worms because there is no one to bury them, to the Jew it was an absolute insult and abomination to leave a body on the surface of the earth to decay and rot or be eaten by wild animals and birds. Thus Gehenna is a symbol of the horror of sin, with its end result of a shameful and horrible death. Both Isaiah and Christ are using lofty and graphic language to depict the shameful death of the wicked that rebel against God and the Lord at his return.

**Cut off your hand:** (v43) the hand in this context is a symbol of what a person does, it is an idiom for saying, if what you are doing causes you to sin stop it.

**Cut off your foot:** (v45) the foot in this context is a symbol of a person's lifestyle; it is an idiom for saying, if the way you are living causes you to sin, change it.

**Tear out your eye:** (v47) the eye in this context refers to what a person sees or craves after it is an idiom for saying if what you see causes you to crave after sin stop looking at it.

**If Salt has lost its Saltiness, how will you make it Salty again?** (v50).

Salt preserves food, makes it taste better and also makes people thirsty so that they want more, so salt symbolises a preserving and cleansing agent that makes people want more of something else. Jesus has just finished telling the disciple to cut off their hand and foot and tear out their eye if they are causing them to sin therefore the phrase, "If salt has lost its saltiness, how will you make it salty again? Means if a disciple has turned from the Lord and become a sinner again how will they be restored, it refers to those who haven't cut off their hand their foot or torn out their eye, but rather gone back to their old corrupt and sinful lifestyle.

**NOTE:** John in his epistles says, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us, but if we confess (acknowledge) our sins the Lord is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness, but if we say we have not sinned, we make the Lord a liar, and his word is not in us. (1 John 1:8-10) clearly showing us that Jesus is not saying that those who belong to him will never sin, but rather that they will not make sin the practice of their life or their lifestyle.

**Have, salt in yourself:** means, let the fruits of the Spirit dwell in you, be merciful, kind, humble, caring, patient forgiving and loving, do not give up the faith or stop doing good to others but rather wherever possible strive to be at peace with each other.

**Everyone will be salted with fire:** means, everyone will be judged.

**For further information see the titles: -**

- Devil and Demons in, Satan and his Family (ON WEBSITE MENU).
- Visions in, Various Topics (ON WEBSITE MENU).

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End