

Mark 9:1-29: Biblical Reading and Reflections

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[0 : 0 0] Mark chapter 9 verses 1 to 29 And they were talking with Jesus 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 For he did not know what to say For they were terrified And a cloud overshadowed them And a voice came out of the cloud This is my beloved son Listen to him And suddenly looking around They no longer saw anyone with them But Jesus only 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 So they kept the matter to themselves Questioning what this rising from the dead might mean And they asked him Why did the scribes say That first Elijah must come?

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 But I tell you that Elijah has come And they did to him whatever they pleased As it is written of him And when they came to the disciples They saw a great crowd around them And scribes arguing with them And immediately all the crowd When they saw him Were greatly amazed And ran up to him and greeted him And he asked them What are you arguing about with them?

And someone from the crowd answered him Teacher, I brought my son to you For he has a spirit that makes him mute 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 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 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 And Jesus asked his father How long has this been happening to him?

[2 : 2 8] And he said From childhood 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 And Jesus said to him If you can All things are possible For one who believes Immediately the father of the child Cried out and said I believe Help my unbelief 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 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 But Jesus took him by the hand And lifted him up And he arose And when he had entered the house His disciples asked him privately Why could we not cast it out?

And he said to them This kind cannot be driven out By anything but prayer Mark chapter 9 Is a turning point in the narrative If the baptism of Christ Initiated the first phase Of Jesus' ministry The transfiguration Initiates the second In the first phase Jesus announced the kingdom And in the second phase He announces his coming death And a great shadow Will come over the story At this point Our passage begins With a strange statement About people not tasting death Until they've seen The Son of Man Coming in his glory In each of the synoptic gospels The transfiguration Comes after such a statement The transfiguration Seems to be an anticipation Of the later coming of Christ Daniel 7 And the glory of the Son of Man For instance It anticipates that It previews the glory Of the resurrected Christ And also the glory Of his later coming In 2 Peter chapter 1 Verses 16 to 18 Peter describes this

For we did not follow Cleverly devised myths When we made known to you The power and coming Of our Lord Jesus Christ But we were eyewitnesses Of his majesty For when he received Honour and glory From God the Father And the voice was born to him By the majestic glory This is my beloved Son With whom I am well pleased We ourselves heard This very voice Born from heaven For we were with him On the holy mountain In this passage Peter is arguing That even though People are saying That Christ may not Be coming after all That the disciples And the apostles Are dying out And Christ still Hasn't shown up That they saw His glory on the holy mountain And they know That Christ will reveal His glory In his coming Which I believe Refers in that context To the judgment Upon Jerusalem In AD 70 And the end Of the old covenant Leading to the establishment Of the new covenant On a new level It happens after six days And this chronological detail Is strange here I mean What is it being dated from

Is it really something That tells us anything Of any significance Maybe it's connected To the Sabbath After six days Is the seventh day Is the Sabbath It could also I think more likely Be associated with Exodus chapter 24 Verses 16 to 18 The glory of the Lord Dwelt on Mount Sinai And the cloud Covered it six days And on the seventh day He called to Moses Out of the midst Of the cloud Now the appearance Of the glory of the Lord Was like a devouring fire On the top of the mountain In the sight of the people Of Israel Moses entered the cloud And went up On the mountain Jesus brings with him Peter, James and John These are the three Key disciples The ones that He chooses in particular To be with him On specific occasions They're the ones That see Jairus' daughter Being healed Raised from the dead They're the ones That go with him To the Garden of Gethsemane And so they have A particular close access To him Peter will be The lead disciple In the ministry

Of the early church And James and John Also have pivotal roles To perform On the Mount Of Transfiguration Jesus is transfigured His glory is seen This is not just A reflected glory This is the glory Of Christ himself A glory from within And he's accompanied By Moses and Elijah Some have seen this As a reference To the law And the prophets They also have similarities They're great witnesses They're wilderness forerunners They go before Joshua Who enters into the land And Elisha Who performs great miracles Within the land And both of them Seem to be connected To the character Of John the Baptist Who is a forerunner Of Christ John the Baptist Is the one Who's in the wilderness He's associated With Moses In some ways there He's also one Who dresses like Elijah Who has conflicts With Herod and Herodias That are similar To the conflicts That Elijah had With Ahab and Jezebel Beyond this Both are associated With Theophanes At Horeb Or Sinai Moses goes up

[7 : 23] On the mountain And he sees God's glory At the top of Mount Sinai And Elijah Meets with God At Mount Horeb As well And sees the glory of God So they're both Witnesses to the glory of God And they join Christ Who is the glory of God Both Furthermore Are associated With the last days In various ways A prophet like Moses Who will arise According to Deuteronomy Chapter 18 And then Elijah Who was to come As spoken of By Malachi In Christ We see the glory Of the last Adam And of the second man He's the glorified Radiant Son of man The one who comes Into God's presence Into the presence Of the ancient days And inherits All kingdoms Sinai was associated With a number Of key things It was associated With the theophany As Moses saw The glory of God On the mountain The cloud The fire And all these other things It was associated With the tabernacle And the formation

Of that realm Where God would dwell With his people It was associated Also with the gift Of the law And we see These different elements Here played out In different ways Peter wants to Build tabernacles If the purpose Of the tabernacle Was to be a sort Of movable mountain A portable Sinai Peter wants to Move around The reality Of this transfiguration The reality Of this appearance Of God's glory And take it with them As they move Throughout the land And so the purpose Of the tabernacles Is to transport This theophany Peter longs To retain the reality Of that place But yet God's own Cloud overshadows God's theophanic cloud Is far more glorious And powerful Than any tent Would be Any tabernacle Would be And that is what Will lead the way We also see in Christ He is the high priest With glorious garments He is dressed like The high priest In his glorious clothes Dazzling white And he is the one Who will perform Atonement for his people

Just as the high priest Was called to do Sinai was also The site Where God gave the law His word To his people And here we see Something similar It is the one occasion In scripture Where God declares Directly Concerning Christ In his own words From heaven His beloved son Listen to him This is the word Of God To humanity His son Who has been given To us We must listen To him So we see themes Of tabernacles See themes Of the law See themes Of theophany And all these things That connect us With Sinai Going up After the sixth day All of these things Should remind us Of what happened there Jesus is accompanied By Moses and Elijah But he is greater Than Moses and Elijah He alone Is the one Who will remain With them They are the forerunners He is the one Who is God's son He is the one Who will lead them Into the future Jesus tells his disciples To keep the vision

Under wraps Until after the resurrection There are things That can only properly Be known In their own time And the significance Of the transfiguration Will only become apparent From the vantage point Of the cross And resurrection However The cross Becomes clearer From the vantage point Of the transfiguration When you see That Christ Is the glorious High priest The one Who is all powerful The one Who is the beloved son When he goes To the cross It becomes clear That he is doing That willingly And intentionally He is not someone Who is overtaken By events He is not someone Who fails And is outwitted By his enemies He is one Who is doing this Purposefully To redeem And atone For his people The disciples Puzzle about The resurrection At this point They don't truly Understand what Jesus is talking about They also wonder About the meaning Of Elijah That was to come There seems to be Conflict between The statement That Elijah Will restore all things And that the son of man

[12 : 27] Reminds us of the awestruck Character of the people In chapter 34 When Moses comes down the mountain With his face shining After seeing God's glory there Perhaps we're supposed to connect These two things together Jesus like Moses Left his disciples And other people under him In control in his absence And he comes back To find that they have failed The disciples haven't been able To cast out this demon And in the same way Aaron made the golden calf For the people Whether we're supposed to Stretch the analogies further And see the similarities Between the way that the demon Casts the child Into the fire And into the water And the way that the golden calf Was cast into the fire Came out of the fire As the form of the golden calf And was then cast into the water To be drunk I'm not sure My suspicion is that This would be too speculative Nevertheless There do seem to be Clear connections And the Mosaic themes Are strong throughout Jesus refers back To the words of Moses In places like

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