

A Study of Mark – Lesson 26

Mark 9:2-13 The Transfiguration

9² After six days / Jesus took Peter, / James and John with him / and led them up a high mountain, / where they were all alone. / There he was transfigured before them. /³ His clothes became dazzling white, / whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them. /⁴ And there appeared before them / Elijah and Moses, / who were talking with Jesus.

⁵ Peter said to Jesus, / “Rabbi, / it is good for us to be here. / Let us put up three shelters/ —one for you, / one for Moses / and one for Elijah.” /⁶ (He did not know what to say, / they were so frightened.)

⁷ Then a cloud appeared / and covered them, / and a voice came from the cloud: / “This is my Son, / whom I love. / Listen to him!”

⁸ Suddenly, / when they looked around, / they no longer saw anyone with them / except Jesus.

⁹ As they were coming down the mountain, / Jesus gave them orders not to tell anyone / what they had seen / until the Son of Man had risen from the dead. /¹⁰ They kept the matter to themselves, / discussing what “rising from the dead” meant.

¹¹ And they asked him, / “Why do the teachers of the law say / that Elijah must come first?”

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¹² Jesus replied, / “To be sure, / Elijah does come first, / and restores all things. / Why then is it written / that the Son of Man must suffer much / and be rejected? / ¹³ But I tell you, / Elijah has come, / and they have done to him / everything they wished, / just as it is written about him.”

Vocabulary

1. **Transfiguration:** n. A dramatic change in appearance, especially one that glorifies or exalts somebody; the transfiguring of somebody or something, or the changed state that results
2. **Dazzling:** adj Spectacularly skillful or impressive; bright enough to deprive somebody of sight temporarily
3. **Shelter:** n. A structure or building that provides cover from weather or protection against danger; an establishment providing accommodations and food for people who need to leave a violent or otherwise dangerous situation; an establishment that takes in and looks after lost or unwanted animals; the protection, cover, refuge, or safety that a shelter provides; a place to live, considered as one of life’s necessities.

Questions

1. What does transfiguration mean?
2. Who is the inner circle of disciples? Why would Jesus take them to the mountain with him?
3. Historically, we think this took place on Mt. Herman. Why does god seem more real in the mountains?

4. Jesus had told the disciples he would suffer and die. Could they understand this?
5. It was how many days later?
6. Moses represents the Law and Elijah represents the prophets. Why was it important to Jesus to talk with them?
7. Peter's offer seems foolish. (Verse 5) Was it realistic?
8. God spoke to Moses in a cloud. What did he say to Jesus and the other three?
9. This passage shows us a mystery or a miracle of the Bible. How could this help Jesus with the coming suffering and crucifixion?
10. Did the disciples believe Jesus could "rise from the dead?"

Notes

1. Remember that Jesus and the disciples are still in the region on Caesarea Philippi, in the area ruled by Philip, not Herod Antipas. He is out of Judea, but apparently, he has walked 6 days toward the Galilee area.
2. The inner circle of the disciples of Jesus consisted of Peter, James and John. They went with him into the high mountain. Perhaps among the snows of Mt. Hermon which is 9,200 feet high.
3. The *transfiguration* did a great deal for Jesus. He was facing the greatest test or decision of his life. He knew he would have to die a horrible death. On the mountain top, Jesus received affirmation of this path.

4. Moses represents the *supreme lawgiver* of Israel. Elijah was the *first and greatest of the prophets*. They gave Jesus the blessing to continue.
5. In addition, God spoke to Jesus. He knew he was acting fully in the will of God.
6. The disciples, Peter, James and John also received affirmation. They were witness to the transfiguration and to a deeper understanding of who Jesus was. He was not to be a Military Messiah, but the spiritual leader to turn people to God.
7. The *Elijah* that came first was John the Baptist. This is why he is called the forerunner of Christ. John the Baptist is considered the last of the great prophets.
8. Jesus tried to destroy all the preconceived notions of the Messiah so his disciples would truly understand that Jesus acted in obedience and in the will of God.



Transfiguration by Lodovico Carracci,
1594, depicting Elijah, Jesus, and Moses
with the three apostles