



Chapter 9

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- Transfiguration
- Demon Possessed Boy Healed
“Help my unbelief”
- 2nd Prediction of the Cross
- First will be Last & Servant
- No Discrimination of Christian evangelistic methods
- Hell – a stark warning

Context of Chapter 9

1. Comes just after the Great Confession of Peter that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God.
2. Comes just after Jesus shocked His disciples by telling them for the first time in Chapter 8 that He must first Die and Rise Again after 3 days.
3. Comes just after extremely hard teachings on Discipleship and the cost of following Jesus.
4. The Disciples needed extra assurance that Jesus was who He said He was, and that it was God's will for Him to Die & reign as King.

Main Points of Chapter 9

1. Jesus is the glorious Son of God, what He says is consistent with Old Testament.
2. God commands us to listen to Him, particularly about His teaching that He must die.
3. The ability to hear, receive deliverance from Satan and receive eternal life depend entirely on God's grace, not on anything we do.
4. Cry for mercy, trust in Jesus' ability to help us even if we do not have the faith ("Lord, I believe, help my unbelief" v 24).

(Mark 9: 1-8)

Jesus Transfigured on the Mountain – God Speaks

Who Jesus Is

- **Son of Man** (Dan. 7), like the Ancient of Days and approved by Him
- **Son of God**, whom the Father loves (Mark 1)
- **Messiah**, who must be preceded by Elijah & announced by one crying in wilderness
- **Suffering Servant** (Isaiah 52 & 53)
- **Prophet** like Moses (Deut. 18)

Why Jesus Came

- **To reign in power**, but **He must suffer and die**.
- To be killed & rise again after 3 days (Mark 8:31) – why?
- It's God's will (Mark 9: 2-9, **God says "Hear Him" & the message**)
- It's man's need to break the power of Satan (Jesus begins to teach this in 9:29)

Man's Response

- **Follow & Listen** to His teaching about the **Cross, at any cost to self**. There is no other way to eternal life.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B6jDW36a3ps>

(Mark 9: 1-8)

Jesus Transfigured on the Mountain – Context

- Jesus promises in Mark 9:1 that some of the disciples will see a glimpse of the glory of the kingdom of God, probably to assure them that they can fully trust this difficult new teaching.
- As in Jesus' baptism, **God speaks** and acknowledges that Jesus who dies and rises again is Christ and the Son of God.
- Previously in Mark, not “seeing” the Redeemer led to not “seeing” God; but after Mark 8:29 and Peter’s acknowledgement, **having “seen” that Jesus is Christ and Redeemer, they now “see” He is God!**
- Transfiguration (*metamorphosis*) is a unique miracle that happens to Jesus Himself – even His clothes changed. (**Ex. 34:30; 2 Peter 1:16-18.**)
- **Links to Exodus 24:12-18** : 1) Time (6 days); 2) Mountain; 3) Cloud; 4) Face Shone/Glory; 5) God Spoke

Mark 9:1 – “Assuredly, I say to you that there are some still standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power”

- Jesus is referring to revelation of His power which would be witnessed on earth by some of those present with Him.
- Jesus was probably referring to the **transfiguration** to provide assurance to the disciples that the second coming would indeed happen and the message of the Cross and eternal life that Jesus had just started teaching was indeed from God.
- The delay in His second coming was one of the reasons Peter wrote his 2nd letter (2 Peter 3:4).
- When the voice from God said “**HEAR HIM**” (Mark 9:7), it was meaning to listen and understand what Jesus was saying about the **Cross** (since this is what He was just teaching and the main theme of the last half of Mark) to show them that this is not a terrible thing, but is **God’s will**. (Isa. 53; Ps. 22: Suffering Messiah)
- **Jesus comes in glory on the Cross itself.** (1 Cor. 1:18; Mark 14:62)

JESUS WILL COME IN GLORY, SO LISTEN TO WHAT HE SAYS ABOUT THE Cross!

- **“This is My beloved Son.** Hear Him.” (Mark 9:7; **Ps. 2:6-7**). In light of this, we must view the **“ransom”** of Mark 10:45 as an **incredible sacrifice** of God for mankind
- Jesus **clothes** are “shining, **exceedingly white**, like snow...” like those of the Ancient of Days in Daniel’s vision (**Dan. 7:9**).
- The Transfiguration occurred on a **“high mountain”** like Moses’ and Elijah’s visions of God (Ex. 24; 1 Kings 19) and like Moses vision at Sinai, it happens **6 days** after it was promised (Ex. 24:12-16) and is followed by an unbelieving generation (Ex. 32).
- **Moses and Elijah** (representing the Law & the Prophets, or the 1st and 2nd Exodus) confirm this is the One the Old Testament describes as the Messiah and the Christ.
- The **voice from the cloud** is like the Old Testament where God spoke from (**Exodus 13:21-22; 19:9; 24:15-18; Lev. 16:2; 1 Kings 8:10**, also **Mark 1:11**).
- Peter has still not comprehended the message that Jesus must suffer and die when he says he wants to build **3 tabernacles**, and he makes the **error of making Elijah & Moses equal to Jesus**.
- Tabernacle probably referred to the Feast of Tabernacles (not Mosaic Tabernacles), when Jews built shelters from branches and dwelled in them for the 7 day festival. This feast both looked back to the Exodus & forward to the Day of the Lord

- **Mark 9:9** – “He commanded them that they should tell no one the things they had seen, till the Son of Man had risen from the dead.”
 - The disciple’s response shows why Jesus told them this; they would not be able to fully understand and explain it until after the Cross & the empty tomb.
- **Mark 9:11** “Why do the scribes say Elijah must come first?”
 - Mal. 4:5 – says Elijah is the forerunner of the Messiah - The transfiguration proved to the disciples that Jesus was the Messiah, but since Elijah was only seen briefly on the mountain and John the Baptist was not recognized as Elijah, the disciples thought that the teachers of the law must be wrong. But Jesus says that the scribes were correct and Elijah must come first to “restore all things”, which means to “turn” in the sense of repent.
- **Mark 9: 12** - Jesus links that the Christ too will be recognizable by His death as well as by His life. All things will be restored only if the man Elijah comes and the Christ who He announces dies on a Cross and rises again. There is a significant distinction between the death and burial of John the Baptist of 6: 27-29 and the Death, Burial and **Resurrection** of Jesus (Mark 8:31, 9:31).
- **Mark 9:13** “But I say to you Elijah has already come,”
 - Jesus is clearly referring to John the Baptist (Luke 1:17 – “in the power and spirit of Elijah”, not a reincarnation of Elijah). Rather than refer to prophecies related to John’s preaching on repentance or the wilderness or John’s pointing ahead to the Christ, **Jesus says that John’s persecution and the manner of his death identifies him as the OT prophet Elijah.** Both Elijah and John suffered at the hands of a wicked woman and a weak king.

(Mark 9: 14-29)

Demon Possessed Boy

“ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE”

Notice the beautiful contrast of this passage from the Transfiguration scene:

Transfiguration	Demon Possessed Boy
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mountain	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Valley
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Glory	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Suffering
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Father Pleased	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Earthly Father Suffers
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Perfect Son	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demon Possessed Son
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3 Disciples with Jesus in Holy Wonder	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 9 Disciples without Jesus Struggling

Lesson isn't how to cast out demons, but if you ask in faith through prayer, Jesus will answer you.

WHY COULDN'T WE CAST IT OUT?

- Jesus and the 3 disciples return down the mountain (Luke 9:39 says “on the next day”) to the other disciples and a crowd and scribes who were arguing with them about why they couldn’t cast out a demon in a boy. (**like Moses coming down from mountain to a faithless people – Golden Calf scene – Exodus 32**)
- Their disappointment seems reasonable since Jesus had given them authority over evil spirits (Mark 6:7) and they had exercised it without any trouble (Mark 6:13).
- Jesus’ response to their failure was to harshly rebuke them in the same language as He used in Mark 8:39 (“**generation**” – **faithless, adulterous and sinful**).
- For 2.5 years the disciples learned by sight in the presence of Jesus, but they needed another **lesson on how to live by faith** when He was not there, and that our faith is sufficient.

BECAUSE “THIS KIND” OF DEAFNESS?

- Mark provides an unusual amount of detail about this demon - Boy was possessed with an EVIL, Destructive demon since childhood that had prevented the boy from speaking or hearing, and whose aim was to KILL the boy by throwing him in fire and water (which implies not just physical death but judgement).
- Second example in Mark of a child who is demon possessed (first was 7:25-30). **Illness here is linked to the demonic.**
- Deliverance from this demon was like raising someone from the dead (v.26-27) & was permanent (v.25 “...enter him no more.”)
- **Unbelief** on the part of the disciples (v.19 “faithless generation”) and the father (v.24).
- The man asks Jesus to “help us”, and **the help the father receives (with belief) is implicitly compared to the help the boy receives.**
- Jesus looks to the father for his faith, not the boy. Unlike the Leper of Mark 1:40 who asks Jesus “if you are willing”, here the man asks Jesus “if you can”.
- Therefore, “**this kind**” of demon possession is a picture of every man’s captivity to Satan from birth, causing **UNBELIEF and DEAFNESS** to God’s Word, leading to death and hell if not redeemed.

CAN ONLY BE CAST OUT BY PRAYER

“Help my Unbelief”

- The **ANSWER** to the disciple’s question in v. 28 (“Why could we not cast it out?”) is because they **DIDN’T PRAY in FAITH**.
- Jesus’ conversation with the father explains what prayer means:
 - **Dependence on Jesus** – Father brings the boy to Jesus.
 - Father Prays to Jesus (v. 24) “Help my unbelief!” – It isn’t that the father is helped to believe in the sense of freedom from doubt, but **belief in the sense that he is guilty of unbelief (confession of sin), and then crying to Jesus for underserved mercy.**
- V. 24 “Help my unbelief” shows the same pattern as Chapters 1-8, taught in Chapter 4:11-12, and shown most recently with the Gentile woman in Chapter 7: 27-28: that “**insiders**” are those who believe, apart of God’s mercy, they are helpless “outsiders”.

All Things Are Possible

- Mark 9:23 “**All things are possible to him who believes.**”
Mark 10:27 “**With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible.**”
- The “**all things**” should be interpreted to all things **in God’s Word, His promises to us**, not all things with respect to our selfish desires.
- **Faith is the key that unlocks God’s power. If God promised it in the Bible, and if we believe (even with faith as small as a mustard seed), God is faithful to keep His promises.**
- **It’s not the amount of faith you have, but the OBJECT of your faith.** Jesus wasn’t put off at all that the father has little faith (Jesus knows that as imperfect humans, it’s impossible for us to have perfect faith), but was pleased that the Father cried out in tears to Him for help.

TAKE UP YOUR Cross, DENY YOURSELF & CRY TO JESUS FOR MERCY

- This passage on the demon possessed boy and the disciple's failure is significantly sandwiched between 2 teachings on the Cross: 8:31-9:13 before this passage and in 9:31 immediately following this passage.
- Mark seems to **compare the disciple's failure to pray and surrender with their failure to accept what Jesus said about the Cross**, both His and their Cross. They rejected the Cross because they **underestimated both the strength of Satan** ("this kind " of demon) **and their own weakness** ("help my unbelief").
- **Sharing the gospel without the Cross isn't enough**, and the Cross is essential to make preaching effective against the deafness Satan imposes on people.
- This was a hard lesson for the disciples because after over 2.5 years of being with Jesus, He tells them if you only had as much faith as this humble father (who prayed, depended on Jesus – denying himself, and cried out for mercy) you could have cast out the demon.
- **Note of Fasting:** The King James and NKJ versions include "prayer and fasting" in v.29 while many versions exclude the "fasting". Some old manuscripts have the word fasting and some do not. It appears that since the time of the King James version, earlier manuscripts have been found that exclude it, and scholars have generally agreed that the inclusion of "fasting" may be due to church practices in the time of writing rather than the original intended meaning by Jesus.

(Mark 9: 30-32)

Jesus Predicts His Death & Resurrection (2nd Time)

- The structure of this passage and the one following in v. 33-37 is similar to 8: 31-38.
 - Prediction of the Cross—Christ must die & rise on the 3rd day (8:31 & 9:30-31) (**Hosea 6:2**)
 - Disciples misunderstand (8:34 & 9:32-34)
 - Jesus' Cross is the example for followers – take up your Cross (8:34 & 9:35-37)
 - There are only 2 ways; choosing the wrong way will be fatal (8:35-38 & 9:38-50)
- **“The Son of Man will be betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him.”** (9:31)
This emphasizes that Jesus' death will be man's responsibility, and not just because of Judas or the Jewish authorities, but to **all of us**.
- **“Betrayed”** in Greek translation means **“handed over”** or **“delivered up”**. It is used to describe John the Baptist (1:14) and Judas (3:19). The same word is used of God handing man over to judgement (Rom. 1:24-28) and handing Jesus over to the Cross (Rom. 4:25). Since Jesus does not say who does the “handing over” to men, this suggests that it may be implying that it was a deliberate act of God to fulfill His will.
- The present tense in v. 31 **“...is being betrayed...”** expresses certainty of the Cross and that the “handing over” of Him by God has already begun.
- In v. 32 the disciples “did not understand.” and are still spiritually blinded and this leads perfectly to the following passage.

(Mark 9: 32-37 – this teaching continues to 10:31)

Who is the Greatest? (First shall be Last, like a Child)

- Mark sets two of the disciple's failures side by side:
 - Failure to understand the prediction of the **Cross** (9:32, 8:32, 9:10)
 - Failure to understand about **greatness** (in spite of the teachings of 8:34-38, 9:24, 29)
- Disciple's misunderstanding that Jesus would be the worldly king who wouldn't need to die and that they'd be "great" from their close association are related.
- Mark 9: 35 **"If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all."**
- Jesus teaches that to be his follower, we must not only "be little" ourselves, but welcome the "little" ones. Children have little honor and are weak.
- **Humility** is the lesson of what it means to be follower of Christ. Man's sinful nature is dominated by pride. He teaches it by precept and by example (washing feet, Cross)
- Jesus states a **general principle** in v.35-36, then illustrates it in an acted **parable**.
- The **principle** is that both Jesus and the disciples must surrender their will and suffer (Mark 8:34 – **"Deny yourselves..."**)

(Mark 9: 32-37 – this teaching continues to 10:31)

Who is the Greatest? (First shall be Last, like a Child)

- On the Cross, Jesus, the greatest of all, becomes “little” and the “last of all” in order to serve and welcome the “little” and He will explain this in Mark 10:32-45.
- If we do not become “little” we will not benefit from the Cross, and to be “little” means welcoming and serving the least of the other “little” ones.
- **There is a distinction here between being “little” and admitting it.** While everyone is a helpless sinner in need of a saviour, not everyone (even those who welcome others) acknowledges their need (Mark 9:38-10:31).
- This incredibly important message of the way of the Cross is a matter of life and death (Hell) as Jesus will describe next, and He teaches here how **humility, self denial and servanthood** to the “little children” (the least) **is what it means to be a follower of Christ.**
- Humility (the opposite of pride) is difficult for humans, and is part of **sanctification**. The world tells us we need more “self-esteem”. This is our problem to begin with!
- **As soon you think you have it (“I’m finally humble”), you’ve lost it. Keep your thoughts on Jesus and you can keep it!**

Mark 9: 38-41

Jesus Forbids Discrimination

- Wasn't uncommon for people to do exorcisms using the names of prophets.
- Irony is this man was successful while the disciples had just failed in exorcising a demon.
- By using Jesus' name it was obvious the person did not oppose Jesus and was fighting against evil.
- Rather than reject this person (who is giving you a cup of water), show kindness.
- Therefore, never discriminate against someone doing the Lord's work in the name of Jesus.

Question: Are we sometimes guilty of this when we judge the evangelistic methods of others?

Mark 9: 42-50

Jesus Warns of HELL

- V. 42 - **HARSH WARNING** – if anyone (us), causes a believer to fall into sin and fall away from Christ (“stumble”), the penalty is horrific....eternal damnation in hell!
- **How might we be guilty of causing a believer to sin?**
- V.43 – body parts are used as metaphors for the danger of falling into sin. Not meant to be taken literally, but to emphasize that the **hand, foot and eye that cause us to stumble** should be turned away from the alluring things causing us to sin.
- V 47 – “Kingdom of God” is paralleling “life” in vs. 43 & 45 as ETERNAL LIFE
- **Hell = Gehenna** – site of human sacrifice in ancient times and the place where the garbage of Jerusalem was burnt.

Mark 9: 42-50

Salt

- V49 – salt is a purifying agent used in burnt offerings (**Ezek. 43:24**) and is image of a disciple as a sacrifice to God and the process by which God purifies one's life through sanctification, trials and suffering.
- Salt cannot lose it's flavour, however may contain impurities. It's a warning that **God expects His people to make a difference in the world** and be at peace with one another, unlike the disciples who were just in conflict and debating one another.
- **“You are the salt of the earth”** Matthew 5:13