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Understanding Jesus In God's Plan

Mark 9:1-13
Part 1

INTRODUCTION

Each of us come into this room with an understanding of reality we have gleaned up until this point. I am thankful nobody here is starting from scratch.

Did I tell you Lori and I are grandparents? Kelci gave birth to Taj 3 wks ago tomorrow. Taj is starting from scratch.

There is danger if we stop learning in general.
Bigger danger if we stop learning important stuff.
Biggest danger if we stop learning truth about eternity.

Jesus ministered amongst people who knew what they knew up until He came. But what they knew had holes. Jesus set about teaching them the most important truths of all – truth about Himself and how God was using His presence for His plans.

Some learned from Jesus, others resisted new input – they thought they knew.

Let's continually listen to Jesus. Today we'll travel with Jesus as teacher, and we'll have on opportunity to continue learning from Him of Him.

I. Lessons from the Road to Caesarea Philippi

A. Peter Rightly Identified Jesus as the CHRIST (8:27-9:1)

1. Two Distinct Views on What “the Christ” Meant

a) According to Peter

(1) Probably some variation of Jesus as the new and improved King David who would throw off the Roman oppression and establish Jewish Theocracy.

(2) MK 8:30 -- Jesus did not want His disciples to tell others who He was because they did not yet fully understand what the Christ was to do.

b) According to Jesus (8:31ff)

(1) On What the Christ Would Do and Endure

(2) On What the Follower of Christ would do and Endure

B. Jesus Would Come In the GLORY of His Father with the Holy Angels (8:38b)

Speaks of a time when Jesus, referring to Himself as the Son of Man, “...comes in the glory¹ of His Father with the holy angels.”

1. What This Event Was

2nd Coming of Christ when He would come rendering judgment sending those judged “blessed of My father” (Mt 25:34) into ‘eternal life’ (Mt 25:46), and the others to ‘eternal punishment’ (Mt 25:46) – See Mat 25:31-46 (The Judgment where Jesus divides the peoples as the shepherd separates the sheep and goats. Read esp. v.31 referencing Jesus coming in glory with angels as in Mark 8:38).

This was a reference to the 2nd coming and judgment that Jesus would more fully develop with His disciples. (Cf. Mark 13:24-37 esp 24-27; Mat 24-25; 1 Thes 4:13-5:11, 2 Thes 1 6-10) In all these passages we see Jesus coming in glory with angels.

2. When This Event Was to Take Place

This event was sometime in the future to disciples journey with Jesus in Mark 8. But no indication was given that Jesus tried to pin this down more particularly as to exactly when in future it would take place. So it is hard for me, and I bet it was hard for the disciples to understand the timing of

this event with any precision. All they knew from these words was that sometime in the future Jesus would come in the glory of His Father with holy angels. And at that time (still future to us) Jesus will manifest His shame of those who in their lives were ashamed of Him.

C. The Kingdom Of God Would Come with POWER (9:1)

9:1 seems best to me as a continuation of the conversation Jesus is having with His disciples on the road to Caesarea Philippi. Jesus has just delivered a hard truth: He will suffer and die, those who follow Him face the same hardships and death. Here I can picture Jesus stopping His disciples on the road they are traveling on and delivering a hopeful part of the hard truth: **“Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who shall not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power.”** OK He is going to be rejected, suffer and die but still some of us will see the kingdom of God after it has come with power. There’s still hope.

1. What This Event Was

- As early as Mark 1:15 we have already seen that in Jesus’ coming the kingdom of God has come to earth. Yet Jesus is making it increasingly clear that the kingdom at first will not appear to be one of power, but one of suffering, rejection, death, before the “good stuff” (life).
- Here in 9:1 Jesus gives His disciples the hope that some will see in their life times the KOG come with power.
- This will prove to be an event that would prefigure Jesus resurrection and exaltation – I see it as a sneak preview of the ultimate reality to be realized in the future.
- Hurtado argues that since all the gospel writers follow this prediction of 9:1 with the account of Jesus’ transfiguration (9:2-13), Jesus and Mark intended us to see the transfiguration as the event Jesus was speaking about in 9:1.
- **“Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who shall not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power.”** And let me show you a peak of that kingdom... 9:2ff...

2. When This Event Was to Take Place

- Just “... six days later...” (9:2)
- Let’s read the account in Mark 9:2-9

II. Lessons From A High Mountain (Mark 9:2-9)

- So as I already mentioned, the **when** of the event was just 6 days after Jesus had predicted it would happen. The **who** of the event (**...some of those who are standing here...**) was Peter, James and John – Jesus’ inner circle – they got to see a sneak peak of the kingdom of God come with power. What happened?

A. Jesus Was TRANSFIGURED

- 9:2 starts out, “And six days later, Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John, and brought them up to a high mountain by themselves...” Before we read more of this passage we will benefit from catching Mark’s allusion to an OT event which served as a type of this event. We can appreciate how God worked with Moses and appreciate all the more how He worked in even greater ways through Jesus.
- Listen to Exodus 24:15-18...

1. Moses Met with God on A Mountain in Exodus 24:15-18

Background/Type

“...the point of the allusion is to alert the reader that what is about to take place is a manifestation of God (a theophany) like that mentioned in Exodus... and that a new revelation is here given that therefore surpasses the former one to Moses.”ⁱⁱ

Let’s go to our text in Mark 9:2 anticipating a Moses like encounter with God. “... And He was transfigured...” (9:2b–3)

2. Transfigured

a) Transformed in appearance

b) Mat 17 adds the detail that “...His face shone like the sun”

3. Garments became “way white”

- “no launderer on earth” can make clothes like they saw Jesus wearing. This was not an earthly experience. Peter, James and John were being allowed to see a supernatural reality – it was a glimpse of divinity unveiled.
- I think of Stephen who caught a similar glimpse in Acts 7:54-56 just before he gave His life for testifying of Jesus, “...he gazed intently into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus...” He said, “Behold, I see the heavens opened up and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.”
- This brilliance of Jesus appearance also reminds us of the vision Daniel saw of God in Daniel 7:9:

⁹“I kept looking

Until thrones were set up,
And the Ancient of Days took His seat;
His vesture was like white snow
And the hair of His head like pure wool
His throne was ablaze with flames,
Its wheels were a burning fire.

All this brightness and glory coming from the man Jesus shows that He was not just human but divine! Peter, James and John were not just seeing a particularly well qualified man for the job of Christ, they were seeing something more, this man looked like Daniel's vision of God Himself.

- Not only do we have this transfiguration of Jesus shining forth the glory of God, but look who He is talking to in Mark 9:4. [read]

B. Jesus Spoke with ELIJAH and Moses

- Elijah and Moses. These two are the dominant figures of the OT. Effectively Jesus picks up the endorsement of Moses the mediator of God's Law and Elijah the chief of God's prophets. These two are standing with Jesus while He alone is glowing with divine glory.
- In Deut 18:15 Moses says God will raise up a prophet like him that the people will listen to; and in Deut 18:18 God promises to do just that. This informed the Jewish expectation that the Messiah would be one like Moses. After healing the lame beggar in Acts 3, Peter preaches his second sermon and references Deut 15:15,18 helping his readers understand that Jesus is the prophet like Moses that God has now sent. Acts 3:11-26 is a 2.5 min sermon inspired by the Holy Spirit making this point clear and is worth the read here if there is time.
- This was just way to much for poor Peter. Seemingly stumbling over himself and clearly confused and shaking in his sandals (9:6), putting both feet in his mouth he comes up with the best response he can at this holy conference of the giants of the faith. 9:5-6 says... [read 9:5-6]
- Over the confused inappropriate babble of Peter, out of a cloud that had provided the setting for God's voice countless times in the pastⁱⁱⁱ, comes the clarifying voice of God... [9:7]

C. God Identifies JESUS

1. as His beloved Son

"... My beloved Son..." is a unique identifier. Other's have been called God's son speaking metaphorically. God has referred to no other as His "beloved Son." This title and this reality belongs to Jesus alone.

2. as the One who we should listen to

- "Listen to Him!" This is a command from God the Father to Peter, James and John and to each of us.
- Let's stop coming up with our own good ideas about what we think Jesus should do and how we could respond. Let's build this ministry or that one so we can do – well, something; we've got to do something. No. Be quiet. Shhh! The first thing we need to do today and everyday and every moment is **LISTEN** to Jesus. There is none wiser, none whose voice is more important, none who's word's to you will be more meaningful. None whose love for you will ever be more perfect or more wonderful to enjoy. Jesus stands alone.

- And what has He said that the disciples needed most to listen to? Closest to context here, He, the one they rightly regard as the Christ, He must suffer and be rejected and killed and then rise again (8:31) and they must pick up their crosses and follow Him in these sufferings and possibly even death if they are to be called His disciples at all (8:34ff). That is what they need to listen to and know and do now, saving the glory and the powerful establishment of the Kingdom of God that they had been expecting for later, in God's timing, according to God's way.
- This is a beautiful drama that has been performed in front of our eyes: brilliant lights, star studded cast, deep rumbling voice of God establishing for all looking on that Jesus is the focal point; the spotlight is on Jesus, the others slip into the shadows and off the stage.
- 9:8 "And all at once they looked around and saw no one with them anymore, except Jesus alone." No one ... except Jesus alone.^{iv} The OT giants have conversed with Jesus and God has chosen to let Jesus alone remain to do what only He can do. The Law and the Prophets pictured in part what only Jesus can do in full. He must become and remain our central point of focus. It was true then and is true now and for all eternity.
- They had a lot to think about from their mountain experience with Jesus. 9:9-13 records Jesus continuing to teach His disciples as they try to get their heads around all that is unfolding. [read 9:9-13]

Let's pray!

Stayed tuned for Part 2 next week (April 26)....

Endnotes

ⁱ Re Glory -- ⁱ Glory of the Lord --

<http://www.biblegateway.com/keyword/?search=glory&version=49&searchtype=all&limit=none&wholewordsonly=no>

Glory of God --

<http://www.biblegateway.com/keyword/?search=%22glory+of+God%22&searchtype=all&wholewordsonly=yes&version=49&spanbegin=55&spanend=58>

See also Mat 10:23 with huge list of x refs. Pointing to the return of Christ.

Here language sounds similar to return of Christ language but not as clear by this ctx that return of Christ is in view. Partial List:

<http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=mat%2010:23,%2024:3,%2027,%2037,%2039,%2026:64,%20Mark%208:38,%2013:26;&version=49;>

ⁱⁱ New International Biblical Commentary, Mark, Larry W. Hurtado: Hedrickson Publishers, Peabody MA, 1989 p. 144

ⁱⁱⁱ The clouds as the setting from which God's voice has been heard by His people in the past – Ex 16:10; 19:9; 24:15-18; 34:5; 40:34-38 -- <http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ex%2016:10,%2019:9,%2024:15-18,%2034:5,%2040:34-38&version=49>

^{iv} Be who He has designed and enabled you to be.

Do what He has already called you to do.

Do you know what He has said?

Do you know who He has designed you and enabled you to be?

Do you know what He has called you do?

If not, talk less and listen more to Him – listen to Jesus in the pages of Scripture, depending on the Holy Spirit to reveal truth. If you know what He's said, keep listening to the fine tuning continually transforming Word of God who intends to push out even more of the old man and complete His work in you making you of one mind with Christ Jesus.