

Lightly Speak Evil of Me

Mark 9:1 – 50



~ We have been on the Mount of Transfiguration before in our Spiritual Safari, and Luke will take us there one more time after this. Interestingly, Mark, who is normally very brief with his accounts, gives the longest record of the transfiguration of the three Gospels. We now know the transfiguration sets forth the perfect humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is not given to demonstrate His deity; John, whose Gospel sets forth the deity of Christ, does not include this event at all in his Gospel record. We also know, from being here before in Matthew chapter sixteen, that God said, “some standing there would not taste death until they saw the Kingdom of Heaven coming.” Well, there have been many interpretations of that, including some who think this was the day of Pentecost; but, no, when Jesus said that, He spoke of the transfiguration. Peter said, “.... we have not devised cunning fables when we make known unto you the power and the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honor and glory when there came such a voice to Him from the Excellent Glory saying this is my beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased; and this voice which came from Heaven we did hear when we were with Him in the Holy Mount.” So, they were witnesses to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ – here – at the transfiguration....

1 And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.

~ Our so-called safari doesn't typically wax overly technical, but we need to internalize that the transfiguration was presented before His death and resurrection. Either way, the Kingdom is in His hands; but there is always an order to His revelation! Jesus could have just stepped off of this earth and back into Heaven; and that would have left me and you in a precarious position; but He would have still been the holy and sovereign ruler of this

universe! We won't develop that terrifying potential of an idea - but it's in verse one....

2 And after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them.

~ I don't think these three were chosen to go because they were superior or because Jesus liked them more than the other disciples. Frankly, these appear to be the weaker of the apostles at this time. Jesus carried them along like little babies; or they probably wouldn't have gone up with Him at all! This is not some exclusive group of outstanding theologians gathering information and facts for their upcoming Gospels and epistles. No, friends, this is something else altogether. Well, to be fair, they did write Gospels and epistles, and this is what Peter spoke of when he said, "... we were witnesses." The glorified Christ comes now to the earth!

It is a marvelous picture that tells us we shall be like Him some day. John says, "... we beheld His glory!" The glory as of the Only begotten of the Father. Transfiguration in our Greek text is metamorphosis. The transformation took place from within Christ. The light did not originate on the outside of Christ's body. This is the light that shone from within. As we have said before, I think Adam and Eve were clothed in a light just like this prior to the fall. Their clothing and covering were from within. This is why we conclude that the transfiguration sets forth His humanity and not His deity....

3 And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them.

4 And there appeared unto them Elias with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus.

~ We took this up completely and exhaustively in Matthew, so you may want to compare notes. Moses represents the law and Elijah represents the prophets; so, both the law and the prophets bore testimony at this time of the death of Jesus and that, of course, means Jesus is the Scripturally

eschatological Son of God! Luke will tell us they spoke about the death of Jesus. Hebrews chapter eleven tells us all about Moses understanding of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. All of the prophets spoke of His suffering and the glory that follows! ~

5 And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.

6 For he wist not what to say; for they were sore afraid.

~ Unfortunately, during the earthly ministry of Jesus, Simon Peter almost always spoke when he shouldn't have. If those who have nothing to say would refrain from saying it - particularly the religious man - then this would be a much better world. This is just one more time we catch Peter with his foot in his mouth. Well, God has a way of focusing the attention on the Lord Jesus. His Word is final; we don't elevate Moses or Elijah or anyone to the same plane as Jesus....

7 And there was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him.

8 And suddenly, when they had looked round about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves.

~ "Jesus Only" should be the motto, creed and guiding light of every believer today. Great and weighty words are placed in brief compass with that phrase....

9 And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead.

~ The death and resurrection of Christ is part of the transfiguration account and principle. The transfiguration does not save anyone; it simply presents an ideal and a goal for the believer, but that goal can only be reached through the death of Christ on the cross. The resurrection of the Lord Jesus

is part and parcel and the death, burial and resurrection always go together. The cross is not mentioned in this passage because this only speaks of His death....

10 And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean.

~ These men were abjectly ignorant of Christ's resurrection and the ramifications it would have on mankind. Remember, after His death, the apostles and the women all rushed to the tomb because NONE of them expected a Living Savior to be risen; they expected Jesus would be right there sealed in - dead! They weren't going to the graveyard to see a living Man, friends, they were going because they wanted to prove to themselves that Jesus was, in fact, not God....

11 And they asked him, saying, Why say the scribes that Elias must first come?

12 And he answered and told them, Elias verily cometh first, and restoreth all things; and how it is written of the Son of man, that he must suffer many things, and be set at nought.

13 But I say unto you, That Elias is indeed come, and they have done unto him whatsoever they listed, as it is written of him.

~ Some people say Jesus couldn't have established the Kingdom at this time because Elijah had not come. Jesus makes it more than clear that if they had accepted Him, He would have established the Kingdom, and this would have been the fulfillment of that prophecy! The problem was: they didn't believe. Again, we went over this in Matthew and it should all be considered together for a complete examination and inspection; with Matthew being the key record of the transfiguration account....

14 And when he came to his disciples, he saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them.

15 And straightway all the people, when they beheld him, were greatly amazed, and running to him saluted him.

16 And he asked the scribes, What question ye with them?

17 And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit;

18 And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him: and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not.

~ Well, our safari comes down off that mountaintop of glory with a thud - and right into the depths of defeat! We can look at this in light of the Kingdom today. Christ has gone ahead of us into the presence of the Father and Jesus is there in a glorified body right now. With Jesus are His apostles. Of course, they have already gone over, and most of the church today has, also, I am sure. Moses and Elijah are there today with Jesus in Heaven.

But then we look at this poor earth today. The boy here is symbolic of an earth gone mad; and if we could step back and perceive this earth as God sees it, we would reach the conclusion that man on this earth has gone totally mad. The way we act and the things we do down here are COMPLETELY demon possessed. The sad thing is that this man says he brought his boy there, but no one can do anything for him. The church today is HELPLESS in the presence of a desperately needy world. The organized church is reaching out right now in desperation; protesting and marching and getting involved in all kinds of things and criticizing everyone in the world for not becoming more involved. Well, that's not our business; as a church we ought to be able to help a demon possessed world. That means presenting a Savior to them that will make them rational and realistic. We should be helping them find a right relationship with God - not a tranquilizer. The apostles can't do it. It seems Christians attempt to do everything except bring lost men to the Lord Jesus Christ today....

19 He answereth him, and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him unto me.

20 And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming.

21 And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child.

~ While this is a very bad case, I do not consider it as bad as the case of the Gadarene man among the tombs. That was a grown man that had been possessed his entire life; this is just a boy. If the boy had grown up in this condition, he probably would have gone on to be worse than the man in the tombs – but not at this time. Well, this man just casts himself upon the Lord Jesus; and when we cast our selves upon Christ, friends, He'll do something for you! When you ask God for help – He'll help! ~

22 And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us.

23 Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.

24 And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.

~ So, this is not a question of whether the Lord Jesus can do this thing; this is a question of faith on the part of the father of this boy. Unbelief is the one thing that restrains the power of God in our life. This man makes a desperate confession of unbelief! When we can do that, then the Lord Jesus will move into action....

25 When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him.

26 And the spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead.

27 But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose.

28 And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out?

29 And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer.

~ When the little boy arose, I think that gave us another confirmed raising of the dead; but we won't dogmatize that point. In verse twenty-nine – as in Matthew – I have omitted the word "fasting" because it is not in the better manuscripts and because fasting is never a condition of God answering our prayer. The flesh is only weak today because prayer is sickeningly weak in the church and in the personal lives of believers....

30 And they departed thence, and passed through Galilee; and he would not that any man should know it.

31 For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day.

32 But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask him.

~ Well, Jesus has just announced that He is going to die for them, but they don't understand Him. They're only interested in who will be greater in Heaven. We have a whole bunch of shameful jockeying for who will be greatest today amongst teachers and preachers. It is alarming and it is certainly sinful and shameful. The apostles should have been ashamed of their conduct - but they have no clue; they all think they are better than the others at this point. We're going to come back to this topic in Luke with a vengeance, so we'll just leave it alone here today....

33 And he came to Capernaum: and being in the house he asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way?

34 But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among themselves, who should be the greatest.

35 And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all.

36 And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them,

37 Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me.

38 And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbad him, because he followeth not us.

39 But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me.

40 For he that is not against us is on our part.

41 For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.

~ This is a rebuke of any sectarian spirit that may exist. We have the good will of people in all denominations - and of no denomination; I speak rather plainly of my viewpoints of all groups as their examples arise in Scripture....

42 And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea.

43 And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:

44 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

45 And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:

46 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

47 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire:

48 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

49 For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.

50 Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another.

~ So, our safari winds this report down with the “gentle Jesus” talking all about hell and damnation - hell fire. Jesus is the ONLY One in the Bible that speaks of hell, friends! No one else in the entire Word of God talks about hell! Hell is a very real place, and this is where we have to leave off in our expedition; we’ll take up chapter ten in our next report ~

