

WHERE'S ELIJAH?

INTRODUCTION:

The Lord Jesus had begun to teach His disciples that He must suffer and be rejected by the religious leaders and be killed and on the third day rise from the dead. The truth of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ would become the distinguishing mark of the true church. But before the cross, the followers of the Lord Jesus found this teaching of Christ's death to be unacceptable, even repulsive, because it went against everything they had ever been taught concerning the Messiah. This teaching confused them, and it frightened them. The transfiguration had helped to alleviate three of the disciples' shock and disappointment concerning the Lord's death by giving them a preview of the coming glory. Our passage this morning gives us the aftermath of the transfiguration as Jesus continues to tell the three disciples with Him the importance of His death.

I. THE COMMAND OF JESUS (Mark 9:9-10)

- a. This passage begins with Jesus leading Peter, James, and John down off the _____.
- b. Mark writes that Jesus "...gave them orders not to relate to anyone what they had seen, until the Son of Man _____ from the dead." (Mark 9:9b, NASB95) (Luke 9:36)
- c. Mark records about the three disciples, "*They seized upon that statement, discussing with one another what rising from the _____ meant.*" (Mark 9:10, NASB95)

II. THE CONFUSION ABOUT ELIJAH (Mark 9:11-12)

- a. This idea of the death and resurrection of the Messiah was hard for the disciples to accept, they remained _____ by this teaching.
- b. Mark writes, "*They asked Him, saying, 'Why is it that the scribes say that _____ must come first?'*" (Mark 9:11, NASB95) (Malachi 3:1; 4:5-6; Isaiah 40:3-4)
- c. The disciples had declared by faith that Jesus was the Messiah, they had seen the manifestation of His _____.

- d. But then Jesus went on to make them understand that there was something that they had _____. (Psalm 22; Isaiah 53; Zechariah 12:10)

III. THE COMING OF ELIJAH (Mark 9:13)

- a. Jesus closed this conversation with this statement, "*But I say to you that Elijah has indeed _____*" (Mark 9:13a, NASB95) (2nd Kings 1:8; Mark 1:6)
- b. In the parallel passage to this one in Matthew we are informed that the disciples realized that Jesus was referring to _____ the Baptist (Matthew 17:13).

CONCLUSION:

If the religious leaders and the people had realized who John was and accepted his message, he would have been the Elijah who was to come. But since they did not, John the Baptist was a preview of another who will come in the spirit and power of Elijah before the second coming, even the literal Elijah as possibly one of the two witness that will appear during the tribulation. We read about them in Revelation 11:3-6, "*And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for twelve hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth. And if anyone wants to harm them, fire flows out of their mouth and devours their enemies; so if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this way. These have the power to shut up the sky, so that rain will not fall during the days of their prophesying; and they have power over the waters to turn them into blood, and to strike the earth with every plague, as often as they desire.*" (Revelation 11:3-6, NASB95)

The biblical pattern is clear. The prophet Elijah was rejected and persecuted; Messiah's forerunner, was rejected and killed, and the Messiah Himself was rejected and murdered. Out of this suffering comes the glory, and in the future the prophesied Elijah will come, and then the Lord Jesus will return in all of His glory, and conquer and destroy His enemies, and then the kingdom so longed for by the disciples will be established.