

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Mark: Jesus The Perfect Servant Of God

Part II: The Perfect Service Of Jesus, The Perfect Servant Of God, Mark 1:1-10:52

GG. Christ's Work To Clarify The Historical Importance Of The Cross Before The Crown (Mark 9:9-13)

I. Introduction

- A. We learned in our first lesson in this series that Mark's Gospel presents the perfect service of God's Perfect Servant, Jesus, with Mark's focus of having rebounded unto upright service from personal failure.
- B. Whatever led Mark to abandon the ministry in Acts 13:13, it would have included his failure to focus upon and so value the eternal rewards that awaited his enduring whatever ministry difficulty he faced.
- C. Jesus' disciples held to the Hebrew scribes' teaching that Messiah would reign when He appeared, not suffer, die and be raised before He ruled. Thus, they needed to be taught of the historical importance of the cross before the crown not only for Jesus, but for God's saints throughout history, including them in Mark 9:9-13:

II. Christ's Work To Clarify The Historical Importance Of The Cross Before The Crown, Mark 9:9-13.

- A. While Jesus and His disciples were descending from the Mount of Transfiguration, He charged them to tell no one what they had seen until the "Son of man," a messianic term (cf. Daniel 7:13), was risen from the dead. Jesus was obviously teaching them of the coming of His cross before His Messianic crown.
- B. However, the disciples, reflecting their Orthodox Judaism, believed Elijah or one like Elijah would come as the Messiah's forerunner, that the Messiah would then appear and, connected with the Kingdom, the godly dead would be raised to enter that Kingdom, Daniel 12:13. Thus, when Jesus, Who had just been confirmed by the vision on the Mount of Transfiguration to be the Messiah, told of His rising from the dead, they were not sure if He somehow referred to the resurrection of these deceased Old Testament saints, or of some other event in a figurative sense, Mark 9:10; Bible Knowledge Commentary, New Testament, p. 143.
- C. Thus, they asked Jesus why the scribes said Elijah must come first, Mark 9:11. Their thinking was as follows: "(t)he presence of Elijah at the transfiguration (v. 4), the confirmation of Jesus as Messiah (8:29; 9:7), and His reference to the Resurrection (v. 9) suggested that the end of all things was near. If so, where was Elijah who must come first to prepare the nation spiritually for the Messiah's coming? (cf. Mal. 3:1-4; 4:5-6) Perhaps the disciples thought Elijah's work of renewal would mean the Messiah would not need to suffer," Ibid.
- D. Jesus realized His disciples were affected by the teaching of the scribes, but He could not let them think that He or God's saints in general were not to suffer before the crown. Thus, He clarified the timetable of events, sharing great insight on God's program of all believers to suffer before a crown, Mark 9:12-13:
 - 1. First, Jesus supported the scribes' claim that Elijah must come first, before the Messiah, and that he spiritually restores all things "through spiritual renewal (Mal. 4:5-6)," Ibid., p. 143-144; Mark 9:12a.
 - 2. Second, Jesus added that the Scriptures predicted that the Messiah, the "Son of man," must suffer many things "and be treated with contempt," Mark 9:12b ESV. The scribes knew this, but thought that the Messiah would vanquish His foes who mistreated Him and so establish His Kingdom in His first advent.
 - 3. However, using the strong adversative particle, "*alla*" that we should translate "But **rather**" (U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 158; Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 37-38), Jesus strongly stated that, contrary to their awareness and the realization of the Hebrew scribes, and likely contrary to the knowledge of even John the Baptizer himself who denied that he was the predicted Elijah in John 1:19-21, John the Baptizer had indeed come in fulfillment of the arrival of Messiah's forerunner as a type of Old Testament Elijah (as clearly stated in Matthew 17:12-13), but Israel's rulers had done unto him whatever they wished as it was written of him in the sense of the mistreatment Old Testament Elijah had received at the hands of Israel's evil rulers in Ahab and Jezebel, Mark 9:13 Ibid., Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 144.
- E. Christ's implication was clear: just as men mistreated and slew John the Baptizer, the Elijah who was to come as the Old Testament Elijah was mistreated, so they would slay the Messiah before He rose from the dead!

Lesson: Jesus taught that He was to suffer and die before rising and ruling akin to how John the Baptizer, the predicted Elijah to come, was mistreated and slain and how Elijah himself had been mistreated by Israel's rulers.

Application: (1) May we realize that God's program has long included His saints bearing a cross before the crown, that we willingly bear our cross today. (2) As John likely did not know he was the Elijah to come, we may not know the importance of our own ministry efforts, so may we eagerly bear what cross assignment we have of God!