

# QUANTOCK MINISTRIES

www.quantockministries.org.uk

---

*A Bible teaching and preaching ministry  
for the Christian community*

**D M HERRING**  
**45 LUXBOROUGH ROAD**  
**BRIDGWATER**  
**TA6 7JN**

**01278 451297**  
**qmings@aol.com**

## **Mark 9 v 1 – 13 – The true nature of the Lord’s presence on Earth**

These are brief notes on this passage, following a study shared at Edington Chapel on 26 June 2022.

While at the heart of this passage Mark records what we call “The Transfiguration”, it is part of the greater body of teaching which the Lord was giving His disciples at the time. To do so, the Lord wanted a measure of privacy, away from the crowds, and so He took them to the far north of the country to the region of Caesarea Philippi. Here are the headwaters of the River Jordan, and towering in the distance is the mighty Mount Hermon, over 9000 feet high. Jesus wanted to hear the disciples’ confession of belief in Him as the Christ (Messiah), so that He could begin the explanation of why, as the Christ, He was here on Earth amongst them at that time. This teaching would be foundational to His whole ministry, His death and resurrection, and the truth underlying the future Church, which they were to lead.

As Jewish men, the disciples were well-taught in the Old Testament prophecies concerning the coming of a messiah as a reigning king on David’s throne, bringing about a worldwide kingdom of peace and harmony. But now, in chapter 8 v 27 to 38 (and elsewhere in the Gospels) Jesus moves them on from their profession of belief in Him as the Christ to show them that at this point actually He would be the suffering servant, also foretold by the Old Testament prophets. That didn’t fit within their hopes of earthly glory, and Peter rebuked Jesus, who in turn rebuked the satanic influence underlying Peter’s thinking. Jesus then started His general teaching to everyone regarding being ready to follow him in dying to self. By way of some reassurance, in 9 v 1 Jesus tells them that some there would indeed see the coming of His kingdom with power (following Pentecost), but at that point it would be a spiritual kingdom. As He tells us in Luke 17 v 21, the kingdom in this church age is within us, as we each personally own Jesus as Lord and Saviour and are endued with the Holy Spirit. We also know from later teaching that He will certainly return, with us as His Bride, to establish and reign over a full physical and millennial kingdom on Earth.

Verses 2 to 7 cover the details of the Transfiguration itself. Here are a few brief points by way of explanation.

1. This was roughly a week following the teaching in Caesarea Philippi and could have been at one of two possible locations: Mount Hermon if they were still in the north; or Mount Tabor (about 2000 feet) on the plain of Jezreel back in Galilee. What is important is what happened on the mountain, not so much which mountain it may have been.
2. Those chosen to witness this confirmation of His divine glory as the Christ were Peter, James and John. Peter was to be the initial leader (the “Rock”) of the Church after Pentecost and in the meantime seemed to be the spokesman for the group of disciples. James and John were closest to the Lord as they were possibly His cousins in the flesh because their mother, Salome, was very likely a sister of Mary. John through his writings and testimony would have a vital part to play in influencing the world throughout subsequent history of the divine status of Jesus as the Christ.

3. The Lord was engulfed in a dazzling glory – His by divine right, and He could experience this on Earth due to His sinless life. His glorious transfiguration proved He certainly was divine, the Christ indeed. John saw this again in His revelation on Patmos and records it in Revelation 1 v 12 – 17.
4. Contrary to some commentators this was not a vision or out-of-body experience, but it was a real event: Jesus was talking with Moses and Elijah; Peter made a definite comment; and Jesus told them not to share it until after His resurrection (v9). It was for them only at this stage in their education.
5. God the Father links this revelation of His Son with the occasion of His baptism by speaking out loud, this time emphasizing the importance of listening to what Jesus is telling them.
6. The presence of Moses and Elijah confirms that in His messianic suffering servant role, Jesus is the complete fulfilment of the Law (Moses) and the Prophets (Elijah). The final words of the Old Testament foretell this (Malachi 4 v 4 – 6).
7. A cloud brings the glory of the transfiguration to a conclusion, as it did when Jesus’s work on Earth was complete, ascending back to the heavenly realms (Acts 1 v 9). The cloud will also part when He returns in the air for us at the Rapture (1 Thessalonians 4 v 17), and again when he returns to Earth as the reigning king and every eye will see Him (Revelation 1 v 7).

In verses 8 to 10 we see that the glorious vision could not be made permanent with the creation of “shelters”. The experience was to be part of their education and understanding while they were being taught God’s redemptive purposes in preparation for this new era of human history. Peter confirms this with his comment in 2 Peter 1 v 16 – 18. Sometimes the wonderful spiritual experiences we have in our own present lives cannot be permanent but are given from time to time for our growth, encouragement, faith, and sanctification. However, at all times we must remember that our Christian walk is not primarily a matter of routine, tradition, organisation or religious rules, but it is to see Jesus with spiritual eyes and enjoy the reality of His presence in our midst. Sadly, we often leave a service or gathering no more spiritually blessed than when we came in at the beginning.

Verses 11 to 13 bring in the concept of the “Elijah who must come first”. In verse 13 Jesus refers to the life and death of John the Baptist, the forerunner of this whole era of the Christ as suffering servant. Matthew 11 v 11 – 15 adds clear teaching to this fact. Actually, the parallels are very telling: Elijah was persecuted by Ahab and Jezebel; John the Baptist was persecuted by Herod and Herodias. This leaves us with the thought that as we near the end of the church age, and the end signs as taught by Jesus are very evident, is there an “Elijah” promised for today? Unless one emerges very soon, we should probably conclude that this task is down to all of us as “Watchmen on the wall” (Ezekiel 33 v 1 – 9). The growing and very evil events causing much fear at present throughout the world are not the full judgements due in the Tribulation period but are the foreshadowing of those judgements – events that are yet to come on a vast scale. It is our task to tell the world that this is so, and the only means of escape is to receive Jesus now, as Saviour and Lord.