

## I. Days of Elijah

### A. Procedure

1. **Read Mark 9:2-13**
2. Play the song *Days of Elijah*, by Robin Mark
  - a. I had hoped that the background story for this song would segue nicely into the account of Jesus' transfiguration, but it does not.
  - b. Robin Mark wrote the song in 1994 and was not thinking of the transfiguration at all, though he was thinking of the impact of Elijah, Moses, Ezekiel, David, and the church of Jesus Christ on the world.
  - c. I left it in because I love the song and figured it would at least get us thinking about Elijah and Moses and pondering their presence with Jesus at His transfiguration!

### B. The presence of the Elijah and Moses in the transfiguration event begs two questions

1. Why are these two OT saints present at the transfiguration
  - a. What does their presence mean?
  - b. Why these two?
2. What do we care?
  - a. What difference does it make to us who shows up on the mountain that day, other than Jesus?
  - b. What encouragement or instruction or insight does their presence provide for us?
  - c. How should the presence of Elijah and Moses at the transfiguration of Jesus guide the way we love and follow Jesus today?

## II. Days of Elijah: Two Questions

### A. Why are Elijah and Moses present with Jesus at His transfiguration?

1. Jewish expectation, derived from God's word, that these two prophets would be integral in identifying the Messiah
  - a. Scripture precedents
    - (1) Moses - Deuteronomy 18:15-19 (ESV) <sup>15</sup> *"The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen—* <sup>16</sup> *just as you desired of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God or see this great fire any more, lest I die.'* <sup>17</sup> *And the LORD said to me, 'They are right in what they have spoken.*  <sup>18</sup> *I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.*  <sup>19</sup> *And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in*

- my name, I myself will require it of him.*
- (2) Elijah - Malachi 4:5-6 (ESV) <sup>5</sup> *“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes. <sup>6</sup> And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the land with a decree of utter destruction.”*
- b. Jewish expectation, derived from God’s word, that these two prophets would be integral in identifying the Messiah
- (1) Expectation
- (a) Messiah will speak the very words of God to the people as Moses did
- (b) Elijah will precede Messiah with a message of repentance and change of heart
- (2) Contemporary speculation
- (a) **Mark 8:27-28 (ESV)** <sup>27</sup> *And Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi. And on the way he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that I am?” <sup>28</sup> And they told him, “John the Baptist; and others say, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets.”*
- (b) **Mark 9:11 (ESV)** *And they asked him, “Why do the scribes say that first Elijah must come?”*
- i) Is Jesus the Messiah as Peter confessed or
- ii) Is Jesus the forerunner of the Messiah?
2. **NT Theology: The Law and the Prophets**
- a. **Luke 9:30-31 (ESV)** <sup>30</sup> *And behold, two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah, <sup>31</sup> who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.*
- (1) “departure” = Gr. exodos
- (2) An exodus, in this sense, is a God-ordained, God-empowered departure for the sake of setting His people free from slavery;
- (3) In other words this is a God-orchestrated salvation!
- b. And what function do the Old Testament Law and Prophets serve under the New Covenant?
- (1) Road to Emmaus
- (a) Disciples lamenting the events of Jesus’ death and pondering the empty tomb
- (b) **Luke 24:25-27 (ESV)** <sup>25</sup> *And he said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! <sup>26</sup> Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?” <sup>27</sup> And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all*

*the Scriptures the things concerning himself.*

- (2) Paul on the function of the Law
  - (a) **Galatians 3:24-26 (ESV)** <sup>24</sup> *So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith.* <sup>25</sup> *But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian,* <sup>26</sup> *for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith.*
  - (b) Law had to functions
    - i) To bring us to Christ, the Savior,
      - a) through a knowledge of sin
      - b) through a need for faith (since works of law didn't transform the conscience or relieve guilt)
    - ii) To restrain us from utter depravity -
      - a) set moral boundaries and
      - b) described the consequences of sinful practice
- 3. **On the mountain**
  - a. The representative of the Law and the prophets speak to Jesus of His impending substitutionary, atoning death, just as they have done all along
    - (1) In this action, with Jesus,
      - (a) they effectively complete their mission
      - (b) they relinquish their authority to Him
    - (2) God certifies this transition when He says of Jesus, "Listen to Him!" and not "Listen to them."
  - b. Jesus neither rejects or obliterates these servants from the past.
    - (1) He accepts their fellowship
    - (2) He accepts the content of their instruction
    - (3) He releases them from the burden of the present into the joy of eternity.
    - (4) Contract Fulfilled
      - (a) **Matthew 5:17 (ESV)** *"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.*
      - (b) A car loan (or a mortgage) expires once the final payment is made and the terms are met.
- 4. **Why do Moses and Elijah appear on the mountain with Jesus?**
  - a. To point to a pivot within the realm of time that has eternal implications
  - b. To testify to His identity as the Christ, the Son of God, the one sent by God and anointed by God to be the Savior, the One Who delivers the people of God from the threat presented by sin.

**B. The Second Question: What do we care?**

1. **Asked another way:**
  - a. What difference does it make to us who shows up on the mountain that day, other than Jesus?
  - b. What encouragement or instruction or insight does their presence provide for us?
  - c. How should the presence of Elijah and Moses at the transfiguration of Jesus guide the way we love and follow Jesus today?
2. **Two Implications for Us**
  - a. If Moses, who died, and Elijah, who was translated, show up on earth on a mountain, with Jesus, where disciples can see and identify them, then there is life after death and we need to get ready.
    - (1) **Hebrews 9:27-28 (ESV)** <sup>27</sup> *And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment,* <sup>28</sup> *so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.*
    - (2) We must prepare for both death and the judgment that follows!
      - (a) We will either provide our own answer for our own guilt and suffer the punishment our rejection of our Creator deserves or
      - (b) We will humbly bow in thanksgiving, having embraced in life through faith, God's answer for our sin
        - i) Jesus Christ, the innocent Son of God
        - ii) Jesus Christ, the acceptable Lamb of God
        - iii) Jesus Christ, the risen Glory of God
  - b. If the Law and the Prophets yield to Jesus, then He alone is the means for salvation and we must put our faith in Him!
    - (1) **Hebrews 10:26-27 (ESV)** <sup>26</sup> *For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,* <sup>27</sup> *but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries.*
    - (2) Does not mean there is no hope.
      - (a) It means there is only One means of salvation
      - (b) Only one Savior
      - (c) Only one sacrifice: the death of Jesus on the cross.
    - (3) It means you cannot find another sacrifice in another system.
    - (4) **There is only one way to peace with God and that is through the crucified and risen Savior, Jesus Christ, the Son of God.**

### III. Conclusion

**A. The presence of Elijah and Moses on the Mount with Jesus**

1. Testifies to the identity of Jesus as the long awaited Savior
2. Calls us to put our faith in Him and follow Him
3. Reminds us that
  - a. we will one day die and stand before God who will rightly and justly judge our hearts and the burden of sin guilt we bear
  - b. We have the opportunity in this moment to settle once and for all what we will do with our sins
    - (1) Hold on to them and be judged for them
    - (2) Leave them at the cross where God will judge them in the death of Christ and go free in peace, forgiveness and new life.

**B. To each God gives both the privilege and the responsibility to choose.**

1. **2 Corinthians 2:14-16 (ESV)** <sup>14</sup> *But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere.* <sup>15</sup> *For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing,* <sup>16</sup> *to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things?*
2. Some
  - a. will be repulsed at the idea they are sinners and stand guilty before God
  - b. They will turn away from what seems to them a stench of death of self-determination and pride
3. Others
  - a. Will smell the divine fragrance of love, mercy, compassion, grace, forgiveness and opportunity
  - b. They will turn to Christ with their whole hearts, loving Him and loving God for sending Him to take away their sin and guilt.
4. The real question for each of us today is, which will we be?