

Jesus Transfigured

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[0 : 00] of Mark. Ready to do that? So if you have your Bibles, we're in Mark chapter 9. Oh, the children, yes. We forgot to dismiss the children to children's church. If there's any children that go to children's church, you can go at this time.

So in Mark chapter 9, last week, or I guess it was two weeks ago, we looked at just one verse, the first verse of Mark chapter 9, which really, as we talked about, probably best belongs in chapter 8 as the last verse of chapter 8 because it's really just a continuation of Jesus' discussion with his disciples. And Jesus is sharing some private things with his disciples about his upcoming death, that he's going to die. And then he tells his disciple, and oh, by the way, you're probably going to die too. And we're going to, when we go down to Jerusalem, they're getting ready to go down to Jerusalem, it's going to become intense and people are going to be after them. They're going to want to kill them. And he said, I'm ultimately going to die and many of you will die as well. And then he goes on to say, but some of you won't. And that's what we talked about a couple of weeks ago. Today, we're going to look at an event that happens just about a week later. And kind of the big picture is

Jesus takes some of his disciples, not all of them, up to a mountain and then he shines. We call it the transfiguration. That's just a big word. He was transformed. And then there's a couple of people, a couple of dead guys that Jesus talks to that we'll look into. And then the father speaks to the whole group. And then there's a question that kind of comes out of this really two, but one major question that comes out of this after this event that the disciples have. So that's what we're about specifically Elijah and what the prophet said about Elijah. So what we usually do, and we'll do that this morning, is we're just going to read through this section and then we're going to go back and just talk about it verse by verse. So Mark chapter 9 and verse 2. Now after six days, Jesus took Peter, James, and John and led them up on a high mountain apart by themselves, and he was transfigured before them.

His clothes became shining, exceedingly white like snow, such as no launderer on earth can whiten them. And Elijah appeared to them with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus.

Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, Rabbi, it is good for us to be here, and let us make three tabernacles, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah. Because he did not know what to say, for they were greatly afraid.

[3 : 07] And a cloud came and overshadowed them, and a voice came out of the cloud saying, This is my beloved son. Hear him. Suddenly, when they had looked around, they saw no one anymore, but only Jesus with themselves.

Now as they came down from the mountain, he commanded them that they should tell no one the things they had seen, till the Son of Man had risen from the dead. So they kept this word to themselves, questioning what the rising from the dead meant.

And they asked him, saying, Why do the scribes say that Elijah must come first? Then he answered and he told them, Indeed, Elijah is coming first, and restores all things.

And how is it written concerning the Son of Man that he must suffer many things and be treated with contempt? But I say to you, that Elijah has also come.

And they did to him whatever they wished, as it is written of him. So this is an event, like I said, that happens just a week later after Jesus' conversation that we looked at in the last few weeks.

[4 : 20] It says in verse 2, Now after six days, Jesus took Peter, James, and John and led them up onto this high mountain apart by themselves.

So it was away from anybody. It wasn't even away from some of his disciples. Jesus only took three with him. There's one little kind of apologetics note. We actually find this account in three of the

Gospels.

We have four Gospels in the Bible, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. And some of them have accounts that are only in one Gospel. Others, there are multiple witnesses.

You might have Mark and Matthew both speak to an account. In this case, both Matthew, Mark, and Luke all describe this account of the transfiguration. There is this one slight difference, though. And in the Gospel of Luke, Luke says that it wasn't six days. He says it was eight. And so people have, you know, jumped on that. People who are skeptical of the Bible and say, Ah, there's a contradiction or a, you know, two witnesses that have different stories here.

[5 : 30] And so, well, what's going on here? Was it six days or was it eight days? And so, you know, when it comes to numbers, sometimes people use numbers a little bit more loosely, right?

In fact, just this week, we were talking about how many days is it to the next birthday in our family. And somebody said, well, it's 30 days.

Another said, no, it's 29. It's like, well, which one is it? And they're both counting the same days, but we have different numbers. And well, why is that? Well, sometimes when we're counting, we include today, right?

And then sometimes we don't. And, you know, it's fine, right? It's not that big of a deal. And so it's very easy to see, right, that it could have been, you might just be using a round number.

Sometimes you just use a round number. Oh, it was about eight days or about six days or about seven days. But sometimes it's also, well, I'm including today and the day that we land on.

[6 : 30] And sometimes you don't. Sometimes you just count the days in between. So anyway, I think that's more of like a silly kind of issue with some of the details in the Bible.

But I figured I'd kind of speak to that. The other thing to bring up here is Jesus, there was this tremendous event that happened. And Jesus did not take all 12 of his disciples.

Isn't that interesting? He only takes three of them. If we look at the life of Jesus with his 12 disciples, we see that there's actually kind of a little bit of a hierarchy maybe.

Jesus had 12 disciples. He had actually more disciples than just the 12, right? So there were many people that followed him. In fact, there's one account where it says that Jesus sent out 72 of his disciples to go preach the gospel of the kingdom throughout Israel.

But there were 12 special disciples that were part of his smaller group. But even among the 12, we find that there were three that Jesus treated in an even more special way.

[7 : 39] Here is one time where that happens. There's two other times where I found that Jesus treated these three, these same three, in a little bit more of a special way.

We read about this when we were in Mark chapter 5. Jesus was asked to go to the house of a guy named Jairus because his daughter was sick. When they came, they found that she was dead.

She had died. And when Jesus went into the house, he went to the place, the town where they were at. And then when they arrived at the house, he said, everybody stay outside.

All the people around, including my disciples, except for three. He only invited Peter, James, and John into the house with them. And when he did that miracle of raising that little girl from the dead.

The other one is when Jesus, and this is later in the future from where we're at here in Mark, is when Jesus, right before he was, it was the week of his crucifixion, he went to the garden, the garden of the Gethsemane to pray.

[8 : 41] And all 12 disciples, they went to the garden. But the nine were left behind and he went a little bit further with the three. And he told them to watch and pray.

And they didn't do a great job of that. But there's some special treatment here of the three. And then we kind of see Peter as an even smaller group.

Jesus seemed to have an especially intimate relationship with Peter. And this is how it is with relationships, right? You can't be friends with hundreds or thousands of people.

But you can know lots of people, right? But as our relationships are more intimate, that group of people that were intimate becomes smaller the more intimate we are, right?

You can only have a very, very intimate relationship with just a handful of people. And so it's the same thing in the life of Jesus. And why is it that Jesus chose these three?

[9 : 39] You know, we're not really told. And so it could be that maybe they were more mature. Maybe they wanted to be closer to Jesus than the other ones. Maybe they desired it.

Maybe they pursued a closer relationship than the others did. It's not clear. It says, back to verse 2, it says that he was transfigured before them.

In the next verses, it describes a little bit about what that means. Transfigured is not a word that we use regularly. It's just a word that means transformed. That would be a word that we would use more often. And so we actually see the same word used in a few other places in the Bible.

It just means to be changed, to be transformed. One example of the same kind of Greek word is in Romans chapter 12. And it says, do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed. Be changed through the renewing of your mind.

And that's talking about not a physical change, but a change in your inner person. Be changed on the inside. In this case, the transformation is happening on the outside.

[10:46] Jesus, his clothes, and his face. And so that's what it says in verse 3. His clothes became shining exceedingly white like snow, such as no launderer on earth can whiten them.

It says it doesn't matter how many times you put your whites through the wash, right? They're always not quite as white as they were when they're brand new, right?

But it says here that his clothes were shining. There's the parallel account that talks about this same thing in Matthew chapter 17. And it includes his face as well.

It says this, And he was transfigured before them. And his face shone like the sun. So you can imagine this. The disciples are up there.

They go up to the mountain with them. They're not sure. I don't know if Jesus told them what was going to happen. Probably not. And all of a sudden, Jesus starts to glow and shine so bright.

[11:48] It's whiter than any white you've probably ever seen. And his face shines like the sun. One of the things that this reminds me of as I read about this account was something very, very similar happened to another person in the Old Testament.

If we go back to Exodus, we read about Moses. And Moses was famous for what?

Two tablets of stone that he carried down from a mountain, right? We call it the Ten Commandments. In Exodus chapter 34, you can turn there because we're going to read a section here.

Exodus chapter 34, verse 29. Exodus chapter 34, verse 29. It describes something that happened to Moses after he came down from the mountain or while he was on the mountain and when he came down.

It says this, Exodus 34, 29. Now it was so when Moses came down from Mount Sinai and the two tablets of the testimony were in Moses' hand when he came down from the mountain that Moses did not know that the skin of his face was shown while he talked with him.

[13:11] So he was up there talking with God. And his face started shining, but Moses didn't realize it, right? He didn't have a mirror. He didn't see his own face.

So when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone and they were afraid to come near him. We have the same thing happen, right?

Jesus' disciples, this is kind of a freaky thing. If you saw someone and all of a sudden their face started shining like bright light, that would be strange.

It's not something you see every day. It's not something you see ever, right? But the same thing happened with Moses. Verse 31, Exodus 34, 31, And then Moses called to them and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned to him and Moses talked with them.

And afterward, all the children of Israel came near and he gave them as commandments all that the Lord had spoken with him on Mount Sinai. And when Moses had finished speaking with them all, he put a veil on his face.

[14:16] He covered his face. But whenever Moses went in before the Lord to speak with him, he would take the veil off until he came out and he would come out and speak to all the children of Israel, whatever he had been commanded.

And whenever the children of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face shone, then Moses would put the veil on his face again until he went to speak with him.

And him is talking about the Lord. So when he would go to speak to the children of Israel, what the Lord gave him to speak, his face shone. And he had to put a veil because it was too bright.

I don't know if it was the fear or just the brightness. But he had to put a veil over to cover up what is referred to as the glory of God. This is the glory of God that shone through Moses' face.

Let's continue on in Mark in verse 4 of chapter 9. It says this, And Elijah appeared to them with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus.

[15:23] So they see Jesus, he's shining bright, and then all of a sudden there appears, and I don't know if just pop, there they are, or they come walking up from somewhere, I don't know.

But they just appeared there on the mountain, these two guys, and they're identified as Moses and Elijah. Pretty familiar with Moses. He brought the Ten Commandments, he brought the Jewish people out of Egypt and into the Promised Land.

Elijah was one of the primary prophets. He's probably considered one of the top prophets, Elijah. In fact, one thing that happened to him that was tremendous was that God actually, it seems that Elijah didn't die.

He was taken up into heaven in a chariot of fire. That was something that we don't see with any of the other prophets. Well, how did the disciples know that it was Moses and Elijah?

Had they seen pictures of them before? No, they didn't have photographs back then. So how did they know who it was? Well, it could be that Jesus introduced them, right?

[16:32] Jesus says, hey guys, meet Moses. And Elijah. That would be shocking, right? Either that or they had name tags on. Maybe they had name tags on, I don't know.

But they knew who it was and we see actually Peter later on describe them by name so it wasn't like Jesus told them afterwards. They knew who it was as this was happening.

The other question to ask is, well, why Elijah and Moses? You know, there's this whole thing, this is an interesting event happening. He could have picked anybody from the Old Testament to kind of bring on the scene here. Why Elijah and Moses?

Just was it because God liked them, you know, really well? Maybe, that's possible. There could be some symbolism involved here. Jesus a lot of times talks about the law and the prophets.

He talks about, hey, the law and the prophets spoke of me. And of the two people in the Old Testament that could be figureheads for the law and the prophets, it would be these two.

[17:36] Moses is a lot of times spoken of in place of the law. When the Bible, when Jesus spoke of the law, he just said Moses, right? And Elijah is seen by many as kind of a figurehead for all of the prophets of the Old Testament.

So that could be a part of it. The other interesting thing to note is that both Moses and Elijah in the Old Testament had these tremendous experiences with God where they met God on mountains. We just talked about the one and read about the one with Moses. But Elijah, remember, he had this event where he actually called down fire from heaven to consume a sacrifice and ended up slaughtering all of these false prophets.

And then what happened after that? Well, this lady named Jezebel did not like what was happening. And her and her husband Ahab ended up going after him and he fled and he went up to this place called Mount Horeb.

And he actually had this encounter with God there. And so I don't know if that plays into it or not or what, but I find it interesting. And then it says that they were talking with Jesus.

[18:50] And when I read this, I think, what were they talking about? And you know, it doesn't say here, but if we go over to Luke, it actually describes, at least gives us a little bit of what they were talking about.

It says this in Luke 9, verse 31. It says, who appeared in glory and they spoke of his decease, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.

It seems like the focus of their conversation was on Jesus' impending death. He was going to die soon. And why?

Why would they have that discussion? Why would Jesus talk to them? Why would they talk to Jesus? Couldn't Jesus just talk to the Father about that?

Couldn't Jesus just talk to his disciples about that? Well, I think we find, right, Jesus had just told his disciples in chapter 8 that we read about his upcoming death.

[19:56] And what did we find? They didn't really get it, right? They didn't understand. I mean, you're the Messiah. You're supposed to come and establish your rule on the earth.

What is this thing about you dying? That's not something really the Messiah is supposed to do. The Messiah is supposed to come and rule and reign. They didn't get it. We'll find later in this section that we're reading today that they still don't get it.

So Jesus could call back from death these two men to talk to them about what's going to happen, what's about to happen.

You know, when you're about to go through something hard, sometimes it's really nice to talk to somebody about this thing that you're about to go through, especially somebody that you're close with or maybe even somebody who's experienced what you're about to go through.

And I think about Elijah and Moses, and both of them experienced intense persecution in their life. We just talked about, you know, Moses with Pharaoh and Elijah with Jezebel and Ahab.

[21 : 03] They experienced their life being on the line. And we know from Moses anyway that he actually experienced physical death. It wasn't at the hands of his persecutors.

He died somewhat of a natural death right before Israel entered the promised land. But I think, you know, this is an opportunity for Jesus to talk to somebody about what's about to happen in very plain terms and just get some encouragement from them.

The other thing, going back to a lot of times when we're going through something difficult, it's just good to talk with friends, right? And you know that Jesus was friends with Moses and Elijah?

He was friends with him. And sometimes I think we think, oh, God is so big. And you know, Jesus is God. Sent from heaven.

God the Son, as we call him. And we see actually many times in the Old Testament where a divine figure appeared to certain men. And many theologians say, that's Jesus.

[22 : 18] That's God the Son. This is the Son of God appearing to these men before his incarnation. But God developed friendships with these men.

He got to know them. In fact, the Bible specifically says, about Moses in particular, this is Exodus 33, 11, so the Lord spoke to Moses face to face as a man speaks to his friend.

God develops friendships with people. And it can be a close friendship or, you know, can be not so close sometimes. But Jesus really knew these guys.

He had known them a thousand years before. And he got to know them and build a friendship and a relationship with them. And now he's going to get some encouragement from his friends.

And it reminds me that God likes to build friendships with us. To the extent that we're willing, we can have a friendship with God that can grow and grow.

[23 : 29] To the extent that we're willing and to the extent that we pursue that. Verse 5 in Mark chapter 9. Then Peter answered and he said to Jesus, Rabbi, it is good for us to be here.

And let us make three tabernacles. One for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah. And because he did not know what to say, for they were greatly afraid. Peter has one of those personalities.

Right? There are some people who don't know what to say and so they don't say anything. And then there are those people who don't know what to say and they still say something. Right? And Peter is one of those types of personalities.

Notice how it says, then Peter answered and said. Notice how nobody asked a question. But Peter answers anyway. And so it's interesting to me.

You know, sometimes we think, especially those of us who are not as boisterous, we don't talk as much, but there are some people we do. And sometimes for those who are quieter, who keep to themselves, who aren't as...

[24 : 30] Some people, what do they call them? External processors. They use their words to think. And so you're having a discussion and they just say everything that comes into their mind. And sometimes there are those who don't do that, who kind of keep their words to themselves and only speak when they've kind of already put together their thoughts.

And we think, oh, well, you know, they just talk too much. I find it interesting that this is basically Jesus' favorite guy. And he does get into trouble with his words, right?

But Jesus likes Peter and he likes his personality. So if that's your personality and you're the kind of person that processes everything, you know, out loud and speaks all the time and says everything, I think God likes that.

He's the one that created our personalities, isn't he? And yes, our personalities can get us into trouble, so we have to be careful. But at the same time, our personalities are unique and on purpose.

Part of God's design. So anyway, I don't know if Peter's... He's not getting into too much trouble, but he is kind of... He's like, I got to say something. I got to do something here. So he asks this question.

[25 : 41] He says, hey, Rabbi... Rabbi just means teachers talking to Jesus. Hey, it's great for us to be here and let us make three tabernacles. Well, what in the world is he talking about?

Tabernacles? That sounds like some big, you know, huge thing. Think about the Jewish tabernacle that they made that was so ornate and large where they did the sacrifices and all that. But tabernacle just means tent.

That's all it means. It's just a tent. And there's actually a Jewish feast called the Feast of Booths or the Feast of Tabernacles, which was celebrated every year. It was a way to celebrate the... or to remember the Jews while they were in the wilderness. And they didn't live in houses because they were basically full-time campers.

And they just lived in tents. It was for 40 years from when they left Egypt until they arrived in the Promised Land and finally established a home for themselves. They just lived in tents. And so there's this annual feast that was established as part of the Law of Moses in which they would build these, sometimes called booths, they're these tents, just these little makeshift tents.

[26 : 51] And part of that feast is just remembering that time that Israel was in the wilderness. And so, I don't know what Peter's thinking. He's like, well, we've got to do something here.

We'll make some of these little tents or booths for all three of you. And I'm imagining what Peter and the other two disciples are thinking. Like, Jesus is shining.

Elijah's here. Moses is here. And Jesus, the Messiah, is supposed to bring the kingdom of God to Israel. This is it.

Maybe that's what he's thinking. This is it. And so, hey, we've got to do something for these guys. You know, maybe this is the time in which Jesus is going to, the Messiah is going to establish his kingdom. But, it says that he didn't really know what to say so he's just coming up with something. So that's Peter. It says that they were all greatly afraid. Verse 7 says this, And a cloud came and overshadowed them and a voice came out of the cloud saying, This is my beloved son.

[27 : 51] Hear him. Now, as Peter's talking and offering, you know, to build some tents, all of a sudden, a cloud comes on the scene.

And this, again, is another echo, excuse me, another echo to what happened with Moses. If you remember when Moses went up onto Mount Sinai to get the Ten Commandments, what was up there?

It was a cloud. And that one was actually a dark cloud. It doesn't say here whether this is dark or what. It says it's a thick cloud. In one of the other parallel passages, it calls it thick.

But when Moses was up on the mountain getting those Ten Commandments to meet with God up there, it was a cloud. And we actually see that a lot. When the Israel was going, traveling around the wilderness, they were being led by a pillar of fire at night.

And then what during the day? A pillar of cloud. And it was to represent God's presence. We also see when the new temple that was built by Solomon was established and kind of coronated or introduced, the ribbon-cutting ceremony, if you will, that something happened.

[29 : 07] It says that a mist or a cloud or like a smoke filled the temple. and it was the glory of God, it says.

And it says the people that were in the temple, they couldn't even stand up to do their jobs to minister, it says, because of the intensity of the glory of God.

And it was really what we call a manifestation, evidence of God. God is not the cloud itself, but it is a kind of a sign that God's presence is here. And so we see that a lot.

And so a physical cloud comes in and it envelops them. Luke 9, verse 34, the parallel passage says, a cloud came and overshadowed them and they were fearful as they entered the cloud.

So you can imagine kind of like, I would think, a very thick fog. Have you ever been in a fog so thick that you can barely see in front of you? And I think that's what happened here.

[30 : 04] This thick fog comes in and you can barely see anything and we'll see why that, kind of what comes out of that.

And there's a voice that comes out of the cloud. And it says this, this is my beloved son, hear him. Just two things, two points. Two things he has to say. This is my son, whom I love. Hear him. Listen to him. And this again echoes back to when Jesus was baptized in water, when he was first introduced in his earthly ministry.

He went to John the Baptist and he went down to the Jordan River to be baptized by John and the clouds opened and a voice came, the voice of the Father that says, this is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased.

Hear him. And so, basically a similar thing is happening here. And who is God speaking to?

[31 : 13] Well, he's talking to everybody there, but I think this is especially for the disciples to hear. And just talking about kind of the two things that are brought up, it's a very short message.

It says, this is my beloved son. He wants to make sure that these disciples, you know who this is. This is the Father. Just like Moses went up on the mountain to meet God, God the Father is right here.

And he's telling you, this is my beloved son. Take him seriously. He is who you already said he was. Remember, just in chapter 8, Peter asks his disciples, who do men say I am?

And then what about you? Who do you say that I am? It was Peter that said, you are the Christ. And then he says, the son of the living God. So here is the Father himself confirming what they had already said.

And then the last part of it is hear him. It's so important. Don't just know who he is. Listen to what he says and do it.

[32 : 22] And they're about to, the disciples are about to go through something really difficult in Jerusalem. And this is a confirmation for them that, hey, we're following the right guy. And we need to make sure that we hear him and listen to what he has to say to us.

The other thing that this points back to is something that Moses said. In the book of Deuteronomy, Moses is talking to the whole nation of Israel. He says, listen up.

there's somebody, there's a prophet that's coming after me. Right now, I'm the prophet. I'm the guy that you need to listen to. But in the future, there's somebody else coming and you have to hear him.

You have to hear him. And I'm telling you now so that you won't forget. This is in Deuteronomy 18, verse 15, and this is exactly what it says. The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren.

Him you shall hear. And here we have Jesus shining just like Moses on a mountain with a cloud. Do we think that maybe this is the guy that Moses was talking about?

[33 : 46] There's a prophet coming who will be like me. Hear him. Don't ignore him. It says in verse 8, suddenly when they looked around they saw no one anymore but only Jesus with themselves.

I can just imagine the cloud, the thickness of the cloud dissipating and all that's left is Jesus and themselves. Verse 9, now as they came down from the mountain he commanded them that they should tell no one the thing they had seen till the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

This is interesting. He only takes three of his disciples and he tells them I don't want you to tell anybody about what you've seen today. Not right now anyway.

wait until after I've risen from the dead. And from what it appears this includes the other nine disciples. I want you to keep this just among you three.

Now one, I imagine this is a hard kind of secret to keep to yourself, right? They get back and the disciples well what happened? Where'd you guys go? Well I can't tell you anything. It'll be hard to do.

[35 : 04] And why would he, why would, the question is why would he do this? Jesus has said this many times. In fact, one of the commentators I read said this is the last time where Jesus said don't tell anybody anything.

We see this throughout. You know, Jesus does a miracle and he tells, hey don't tell anybody. And again, I think it goes back to what Jesus is doing. He's trying to manage the conflict that he's having with the leaders of Israel who want to kill him.

And the more, the intensity of who he claims to be kind of gets more in your face and the miracles that he does gets more in their face the more the intensity of them wanting to murder him arises.

And so he's trying to manage that conflict. And so we actually find that all of this conflict with the leaders comes to a head when Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead.

And he doesn't say don't tell anybody. He's like, let everybody know. I just wrote, you know, rose somebody from the dead. And that's when all hell breaks loose and the demons of hell come out of the woodwork to go after Jesus.

[36 : 07] And that's when he is ultimately crucified and killed. But it says in verse 10, so they kept this word to themselves. So they kept it a secret until later.

Obviously now, we're in on the secret, right? We know, we talked about the book of Mark was written by John Mark who was friends with Peter and it's very likely that John Mark was not part of Jesus' entourage but Peter was.

And so Mark's gospel here is very likely what he got firsthand from Peter. So Peter shared this after Jesus rose from the dead. But so they kept this word to themselves and it says this, questioning what the rising from the dead meant.

Again, just another reminder, they didn't, they didn't understand what was going to happen. They just didn't get it. And so, just going back to a summary, what was the purpose of this whole transfiguration event?

One, I think it was beneficial to Jesus to receive encouragement. To receive encouragement from two of his close friends, Moses and Elijah. And also, he received some encouragement from the Father.

[37 : 20] And then, the second purpose, I think, was for the three disciples, for them to be a witness of what happened. That this Jesus is the one like Moses. We went up on a mountain.

There was a cloud. Jesus shone just like Moses did. His clothes and his face. And they could be witnesses of what was, of who, the identity of Jesus.

And then, also, this was a preview to them, I think, of the, you know, the glory of Jesus in the future. When he would come to earth as the, as the Messiah to, to rule and reign over the earth, which is going to happen still to come in the future.

Well, the last couple of verses here, there's a question that comes up. And it says, they asked him, saying, why do the scribes say that Elijah must come first? This is curiosity.

They just saw Elijah. And so, they said, you know, we've heard from the scribes that Elijah must come first before the Messiah. So, the Jews taught for many hundreds, thousands of years that the Messiah was going to come because that's what the prophets and the law speak of.

[38 : 38] A Messiah who's going to come and establish justice in the earth. And so, they see Elijah and this prompts this question. One of the things that I think with this is, you know, the twelve disciples, they're not academics.

They're not scribes. They're not theologians. They heard something from the scribes, some theological detail, and they're kind of not sure about it. And even though they're not theologians, these are the guys that Jesus picked to be his disciples, to be his followers.

Notice how Jesus didn't pick twelve scribes. He didn't choose twelve academics. And one of the things I find, and I don't know if anybody else has noticed this, with a lot of people, and it's not a hundred percent across the board, but there's a tendency for those who become very academic and cerebral, you might call it, in their faith, a lot of times, they don't follow the Lord.

they're not the faithful ones. There's a verse in 1 Corinthians 8 that says, knowledge puffs up, but love builds up.

And knowledge, having a lot of knowledge, tends to make people prideful. And that's, God doesn't like it when we're prideful. He wants us to be humble. And so while it is good to study, you know, I consider myself kind of a theology geek, you know, I really love to study the Bible, and we should study the Bible, but be careful.

[40 : 13] Knowledge puffs up. We want to know the Word of God so that we can live the Word of God, so that we can know Him, not so that we can be prideful about how much we know.

That's a lot of times what happens when we become more knowledgeable of things. But they said, but Jesus says, He answered them and He says, indeed, Elijah is coming first and restores all things.

Now, what were the scribes talking about? Well, it doesn't tell us and it's not clear what they're referring to, but what they're probably, what the scribes are probably referring to is the very last couple verses in the whole Old Testament.

It's in this book called Malachi. And here's what it says, the last two verses in the whole Old Testament. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord, and he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to their fathers lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.

This is what Malachi said, before the coming day of the Lord, and that has a linkage to the Messiah coming, I'm going to send Elijah first and he, it says this, it uses this phrase, he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the children of the fathers.

[41 : 33] And I don't think that reads quite right to us. It sounds like he's restoring some relationships between parents and children. But some commentators say it's probably better either translated or interpreted as turning the hearts of the fathers and the children or as the children and the same, and vice versa.

Basically, turning the hearts of the people to who? To God. So Jesus confirms this. He says, indeed, Elijah is coming and restores all things and how is it written concerning the Son of Man that he must suffer many things? That second sentence in that passage, when I first read it, it's like, what is he talking about?

How is it written? And some commentators say this might be better translated as, it is also written. Hey, yes, the prophets talked about Elijah, but don't forget, the prophets also talked about the Son of Man and that he must suffer many things and be treated with contempt.

So don't forget that part. Verse 13, but I say to you that Elijah has also come and they did to him whatever they wished as it is written of him.

[42 : 51] So he's saying, yes, they've talked about Elijah and he will come, but he has already come. And who's he talking about? Well, John the Baptist. John the Baptist was somebody who came, the Bible says, in the spirit of Elijah.

In fact, when the angel came and told John the Baptist's father about his birth, this is what the angel said, Luke 1, 16, and he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God.

He will turn them to the Lord their God. He will also go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

That was John the Baptist. That was his role to prepare the hearts of the people for the coming of the Messiah. And so, that was his job. And, you know, he went out into the wilderness, the people came out to him and he told them, repent, turn to God.

Remember, repentance is turning to God. Turn back to the Lord. And so, that was his role. Let's just finish up there.

[44 : 11] And there's another, just one last sentence here. This last sentence says, and they did to him whatever they wished as it is written of him. And they did to him whatever they wished as it is written of him.

I think he's talking about John the Baptist. When he says, they did to him whatever they wished, they basically, what happened to John the Baptist? He was beheaded. He was killed. And then it says, as it is written of him.

So, he's referencing, there's some kind of something in the Old Testament that was written about what would happen to John the Baptist. But when you scour through the Old Testament, there's nothing written about Elijah being beheaded or killed or anything like that.

So, what is this? And I think there are these illusions, these similarities between what happened to Elijah and what happened to John the Baptist that we can kind of point to.

Remember what happened to Elijah? We already talked about it. He had the prophets of Baal. They all tried to make God, you know, burn a sacrifice. Elijah called fire down from heaven and the prophets of Baal could not.

[45 : 24] Anyway, Elijah had all these false prophets killed and then Jezebel, the wife of the king, and Ahab, the king himself, they went after him. And in this case, remember, who was kind of running things between Ahab, who was the king, and his wife Jezebel.

It was kind of Jezebel, right? And she would tell him, you need to do this and you need to do that. And, so, Elijah fled and if you read the story, it was Jezebel that went to Ahab and said, we have to kill this guy.

And Ahab's like, okay, let's do it. Well, what happened to John the Baptist? He was killed by who? King Herod, another king.

But was it Herod's idea? No. Who was it? Herodias, his wife. It was a wicked woman.

Isn't that an interesting parallel between Elijah and John the Baptist? And so I think that's the illusion that kind of Jesus speaks to here. That kind of the, what was written of him.

[46 : 39] What was written of Elijah, we kind of see the same thing with John the Baptist. Well, we're going to end kind of our study there. But I'd like to kind of mention a few things and I'm going to have the elders come up.

Today we're going to take the Lord's Supper. And so if the elders will come up and kind of prepare. I'd like to finish this up by going back to what the Father said from the cloud.

He said, this is my beloved son. Hear him. And Moses, we talked about, Moses spoke of the one who was coming, the prophet who was coming, and you must hear him.

And so, for all of us today, the people in this room, the people who are outside of this room, the most important thing to do with Jesus is to hear him. To hear him, what he has to say to us. And I want to look, and this is what we're going to be focused on at the end of this service here, is what he said about himself. In John chapter 6, verse 47, it says this, most assuredly I say to you that he who believes in me has everlasting life.

[48 : 04] If you want to live forever, believe in me. That's not something that Moses ever said. It's not something that Elijah ever said.

Jesus is unique. Moses didn't say, believe in me. He said, believe in God. Elijah didn't say, believe in me. He said, believe in God. Jesus said, believe in me.

That is where your eternal life hinges. He goes on to say, I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness and they are dead.

This is the bread which comes down from heaven that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever.

I am the bread that you must eat of and if you eat of this bread, you will live forever. And the bread that I shall give is my flesh, my body, which I shall give for the life of the world.

[49 : 10] this prophet that Moses spoke of so important for Israel and for all of us that this prophet would not just be like any other prophet, he would give his own life for us that we could live forever.

forever. The last part of this section says, whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life and I will raise him up at the last day.

What was Jesus speaking of? He was speaking of his death. If you partake of my death, of my flesh, my body broken, and my blood spilled out for you, if you partake of that, you can live forever.

And what we're going to do this morning is remember what it was that Jesus did for us. But as Moses said, hear him. We have to do something with Jesus.

And if there's anybody in this room who has not done that, this is the message of Jesus. Hear me. My blood was spilled for you. My body was broken for you.

[50 : 23] And if you will partake, and what does that mean? Just believe. That's what Jesus started at. Whoever believes in me, just believe, just trust that what Jesus Christ did for you is enough.

And if you'll do that, you can have eternal life forever with him. That's the message that is so important that we all must hear and believe.

So let's transition now. We're going to take, take a, some people call it communion, the Lord's Supper. There's different names for it. But we're going to do this together. And so I'm going to go ahead and have the elders pass this out.

So we'll pass out the, both the bread and the juice. And while they're doing that, I'm just going to give some instruction on kind of how this works. Every church does it a little bit differently.

And so I'm just going to give some instruction as we do this. So go ahead, guys. And we'll pass these out at the same time. Just hold on to the bread and the juice and we'll take it together at the end.

[51 : 25] So go ahead. So, a couple of questions.

We're taking this bread and juice as a memorial. Israel. This isn't something that we do to gain salvation, to gain entrance with God in some way, to gain eternal life.

This is just something we do to remember what Jesus did for us already. And so there are some churches that teach when you take the wine or juice and the bread that you're like receiving the grace of God or you're receiving something.

And that's just not true at all. This is just a time for remembrance. In fact, that's what Jesus said. He said, do this in remembrance of me. Who should do this?

This is anybody who's a believer. Anyone who's trusting in Christ. You don't have to belong to our church. You don't have to, you know, be baptized or any of these things.

[52 : 35] This is for any believer who wants to remember Christ and what he did. Well, what about children? Is it okay for children to do this? Some churches teach, well, you have to wait until they're older or they're baptized or something like that.

Children can remember what Jesus did for them, right? And so, but some people may, you know, want to wait for their children. We let our children do this with us. That's totally up to the parents.

There are two reasons why we do this in what Jesus said. He said to remember him in his death. Jesus said to remember me and what I did for you. And then two, to proclaim his death until he comes. Jesus is coming again and we're proclaiming his death.

That is the, that is our salvation. Jesus' death is our salvation. We're going to proclaim that until he comes again. what this is not for is to make you acceptable to God.

[53 : 36] Drinking this juice, eating this bread does not make you any more acceptable to God than you already are. It doesn't take away any of your sins. Jesus already did that.

It doesn't impart more grace. It doesn't make you any more whole or complete. This isn't a time to remember our sins.

Sometimes our sins, right, can be very prominent in our memory. Something we did a year ago, ten years ago. Maybe something we did even last night. But this is a time to focus on him and what he did for us.

That those sins that maybe we committed many years ago or maybe even very recently is covered. It's done away with. It's no more. No longer can those sins, whether they were committed an hour ago or a year ago, separate us from God if we just trust him.

There's a verse, one of my favorites, Romans chapter 8, says, there is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus. If you are in Christ, if you're a believer, there is no condemnation.

[54 : 57] Our sins no longer have any power to condemn us. God considers us righteous and holy in his sight. Isn't that incredible? Because of his body broken and his blood shed for us.

So let's do this together. Are everybody good?

Alright, I'm going to read the passage where we're reminded to do this regularly to remember the Lord. This is what Paul says in 1 Corinthians, For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which he was betrayed he took bread. And when he had given thanks he broke it and he said, Take, eat, this is my body which is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me.

And in the same manner he also took the cup after supper saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood.

[56 : 29] This do as often as you drink it in remembrance of me. For as often as you eat of this bread and drink of this cup you proclaim the Lord's death till he comes in remembrance of him.

Amen. God is so good to us, isn't he? What he's done and accomplished for us and offers to us free of charge.

So we're going to have a meal together. Before we do though, one of the things that we traditionally do is we take up an offering. We don't usually take up an offering but we have what we call the Elder's Benevolence Fund.

And this is a fund where we just have some money set aside where there are needs either in our congregation or among the community and we try to be wise about this, not just giving hands out to anybody but people who we think will really benefit from a financial gift.

Maybe they're they got an unexpected expense that came up that they're really having trouble meeting that need. And so this Benevolence Fund is for those needs. And so we're going to go ahead and take up that offering.

[57 : 45] This is for people in our church, regular members. If you're visitors, you know, please don't feel any obligation to give. But I'd like to sing a song as we take up this offering. Oh, how he loves you and me.

If you have your hymnal, it's number 349 but I think many of us know it. So thanks for playing that for us, Steve. Oh, how he loves you and me.

Oh, how he loves you and me. He gave his life.

What more could he give? Oh, how he loves you and me.

Oh, how he loves you and me. One more time. Oh, how he loves you and me. Oh, how he loves you and me. Oh, how he loves you and me.

[58 : 58] He gave his life. Oh, how he loves you and me. Oh, how he loves you and me.

Amen. Amen. Let's end with a word of prayer. We'll pray for the meal. And by the way, please, again, even if you didn't bring any food or whatever, please join us. We'd love to have you come and hang out with us for a while.

Father, we thank you for all that you've done for us, for the body that you broke for us, for the blood that was shed on our behalf. And we want to constantly remind ourselves of what you've accomplished in the eternal life that we have because we trust in you.

Thank you for the food that we're about to eat, the physical food. But at the same time, we thank you for both the physical food and the spiritual food that we can ingest on a regular basis. In Jesus' name, amen.