

*The Opportunity is at Hand*  
What has Been Prophesied is Coming to Pass  
*The Greatest Opportunity Series – Part 20*

Mk 9:1-13  
August 3-4, 2024

Introduction

- Do promises mean anything to you?
  - A promise is a *surety that something is going to happen*
    - Have you ever been let down from a promise?
  - God never breaks promises. The only question is what did He really promise. Too many of us are carrying around false traumas from God. We think that He was supposed to do things that He wasn't. We blame Him for things He never signed up for. Just because God CAN doesn't mean He SHOULD. God never fails.

GOD is a Man of His WORD

- Last Week – recap
  - Pastor Judah!!!
    - Covered a miracle of a blind man the great confession of Peter; a prophecy of Jesus' death and a vicious call to discipleship!
      - Talk about a loaded passage.
    - Here were some of his highlights along the way in case you missed it:
      - That BEFORE Jesus healed the blind man he **took him on a journey** (of faith) outside the city because **we want to be fixed, Jesus wants us to be transformed.**
      - That BEFORE the miracle was performed, Jesus wanted to **remove some of the yuck to make way for the miracle.**
      - It is **more important that you believe IN Jesus more than believe what Jesus can DO.**
      - **We cannot rise with Christ until we die to ourselves.**
  - This Week – One of the only times that Jesus revealed His deity on earth.
    - Turn with me to Mark, chapter 9, page \_\_\_\_\_
    - 3 Gospels tell this story – Matthew, Mark & Luke – they each add slightly different details to I'll include those while teaching through it.

Lesson

- Bucket List Item
  - Jesus Prophecies a Kingdom Experience

- Mk 9:1 – “And he said to them, “Truly, I say to you,<sup>1</sup> there are some standing here who will not taste death<sup>2</sup> until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power.<sup>3</sup>”
- ESV Combo Account – Matthew 17:1-9; Mark 9:1-10; Luke 9:27-36
  - “And he said to them, but I tell you truly, there are some<sup>4</sup> standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power.”
  - And he said to them - Jesus had just been talking to both His disciples and a crowd that had gathered about the price of discipleship. But now it seems that He shifts His attention to His inner group of guys (disciples).
  - “Truly, I say to you, - This phrase means (if Jesus was in the 70’s and 80’s), “listen up, this is deep, and you can take it to the bank”. These are the statements that Jesus makes it very clear that they need to pay attention because He’s saying something very important. There is both the idea of revelation AND promise/Truth in it.
    - The word ‘behold’ – means in essence ‘seriously, check this out...’ (see “Being Jesus” Series).
  - there are some standing here who will not taste death until<sup>5</sup> – There are some in the crowd, likely among the disciples, who will not die BEFORE something special happens. They will have a significant experience in this life. What can it be?
  - they see the kingdom of God – they will see the revelation of the Kingdom of God on earth. The Kingdom of God is a concept that loosely means, ‘the realization of reality as God wants it and He’s actively operating in a way where things are heavenly.’ In other words, ‘it’s a manifestation of God present and making things how they should be.’ Jesus came to bring the Kingdom of God here on earth in a new way. The Kingdom of God is spreading as believers are doing things God’s way. The healing, the exorcism, the freedom, the miracles, the love, the grace, all of that is the presence of the Kingdom of God. Although God is ALWAYS in charge in all ways (heaven and earth, no matter what dimension), there is His active rule and His passive rule. Here on earth

<sup>1</sup> “The solemn introduction with which Jesus prefaces his words, “Amen, I say to you,” guarantees their truthfulness. His promise is grounded upon absolute certainty.” NICNT

<sup>2</sup> “The Semitism “taste death” alludes to the harsh reality of violent death contemplated in Ch. 8:35b; men who are faithful to Jesus and the gospel will lose their lives. But they are given the assurance that this anomalous situation is for a determined period of time and they shall see an open manifestation of God’s sovereignty “with power.” NICNT Commentary, William Lane

<sup>3</sup> “It has been shown that in the Gospel of Mark the Kingdom of God and the person of Jesus are so integrally bound together as to be inseparable. This has important bearing on Ch. 9:1. The concept of “the Kingdom of God come with power,” like the concept of the Son of Man coming with glory (Ch. 8:38), has a strictly Christocentric orientation. It refers to an event which provides an open manifestation of Jesus’ dignity.” NICNT

<sup>4</sup> “A. Moore, op. cit., p. 127 n. 4 rightly stresses that in Ch. 9:1 it is not said that death will exclude some of those present from seeing the announced event. All that is required by Jesus’ statement is that “some” will see a further irruption of the power and sovereignty of God before they experience the suffering foreseen in Ch. 8:34–35. The basis of selection is left entirely unspecified.” NICNT

<sup>5</sup> “The immediate sequel to Jesus’ solemn promise is the account of the transfiguration (Ch. 9:2–8). This indicates that Mark understood Jesus’ statement to refer to this moment of transcendent glory conceived as an enthronement and an anticipation of the glory which is to come. It is instructive to compare 2 Peter 1:16–18, which speaks of “the power and the parousia of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Peter made known to his churches the power that was to be revealed at Jesus’ coming in terms of the glory which had been revealed in the transfiguration. This expresses precisely the relationship between Ch. 8:38 (parousia) and Ch. 9:1 (transfiguration). The transfiguration was a momentary, but real (and witnessed) manifestation of Jesus’ sovereign power which pointed beyond itself to the parousia, when he will come “with power and glory” (Ch. 13:26).” NICNT

things are happening that God is not pleased with (sin, suffering & death). He is ALLOWING it to happen but is not okay with it. He will shut it down but to do that means a ceasing of this world, which means the end of the human race as we know it. The Bible tells us that He's waiting to do that until all that will come to a knowledge of Him (all those who would be saved) are in, then He will close up shop here and start again with a new heavens and new earth. Until that point, there are breaking-in points, where heaven invades earth. That was Jesus' ministry and our job now. So, what type of Kingdom of God manifestation will they get to see?

- after it has come with power – it's going to be a power move. It's going to be a significant enough expression/manifestation of God breaking through into our dimension with His presence and power that it's going to be notable. I wonder what it could be????
- Tide Country
  - Jesus is Transfigured Before the Inner 3
    - Mk 9:2-3 – *"And after six [to 8] days Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain by themselves [to pray]. And [as He was praying] he was transfigured<sup>6</sup> before them [Luke - the appearance of his face was altered and shone like the sun,],<sup>3</sup> and his clothes became radiant, intensely white [white as light], as no one on earth could bleach them."*
    - ESV Combo Account – Matthew 17:1-9; Mark 9:1-10; Luke 9:27-36
      - Now about six (to) eight days after these sayings Jesus took with him Peter and James, and John his brother, and led them up on the high mountain by themselves to pray. And as he was praying, he was transfigured before them, the appearance of his face was altered and shone like the sun, and his clothing became radiant, intensely dazzling white, white as light, as no one on earth could bleach<sup>7</sup> them."
      - And after six days – Luke says that it's about 8 days so clearly Mark and Luke can't agree how long it was, but it wasn't much after the conversation. The point of highlighting this is that it was WHAT Jesus was referring to. Whatever Jesus predicted in that prophecy was going to be fulfilled in this situation.
      - Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, - This is another introduction and highlight of the 'Inner 3'. Those were the ones that Jesus brought the closest. They are the key leaders that He will put the most authority upon. Looking back in history they were all significant in different ways: 1.) James was the first apostle to be martyred. He was the oldest 'son of Thunder' so was likely a ringleader that others followed. 2.) Peter became the de-facto leader of the whole team. It's possible that was due to either his age or his personality (loud mouth and bold). He was so significant that for the last 2,000 years Christian leaders believed him to be the first infallible POPE. I don't believe that at all, but it does

<sup>6</sup> Gr. μεταμορφώθη describes a transformation that is outwardly visible. Cf. J. Behm, TWNT IV (Eng. Tr. 1967), pp. 755–759: "The miracle of transformation from an earthly form into a supraterrrestrial, which is denoted by the radiance of the garments, has nothing whatever to do with metamorphosis in the Hellenistic sense but suggests the context of apocalyptic ideas" (p. 758). See Dan. 12:3; 2 Baruch 51:3, 5, 10, 12; 1 Enoch 38:4; 104:2; 4 Ezra 7:97." NICNT

<sup>7</sup> "A fuller is one who cleans and prepares woollen cloth by the use of nitrium ("fuller's earth")." NICNT

highlight that tradition makes him the most authoritative in the group. 3.) John was likely the closest to Jesus and likely the youngest disciples. He was the younger brother of James (son of Thunder). He was going to be the only apostle to not be martyred. He lived the longest and wrote the Gospel of John along with 1, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> John letters. He was going to be the most influential in many ways. He was the one to care for Jesus' mom Mary when Jesus died. Tradition says that he was exiled to the island of Patmos for his faith, but later was released and died in Ephesus the resting place of Mary as well.

- and led them up a high mountain<sup>8</sup> by themselves. – why a 'high' mountain? It's a favorite spot for God to provide revelation. He did it with Moses and Elijah who happened to show up here in this story as well. There are many reasons why God would choose a high place, or a mountain, but for our purposes here it mostly means remote and quiet where they won't be bothered.
- And he was transfigured before them, - Transfigured means an external manifestation of something. It's an experience that you can SEE. I would suggest that in this case it's an external manifestation of an inward reality. Jesus is going to demonstrate, manifest, His true identity as God. He is going to let some of His deity through. His 'heavenly color' will shine through. He will shed, for a moment the earthly dullness and explode with glory.
- and his clothes became radiant, intensely white, as no one on earth could bleach them<sup>9</sup> – Why bright light? It's a glory and radiance motif that God uses consistently in the Old Testament. Over and over in the Old Testament God is talked about being clothed in light.<sup>10</sup> Paul, in his letter to Timothy, reflects on this reality in Jesus when he describes Jesus as the one who dwells in, 'unapproachable light'. Multiple descriptors are used to say that it wasn't normal light, it was heavenly, out of this world, beyond this dimension type of light.
  - Ps 104:1–2 – “Bless the LORD, O my soul! O LORD my God, you are very great! You are clothed with splendor and majesty, <sup>2</sup> covering yourself with light as with a garment, stretching out the heavens like a tent.”
  - 1 Ti 6:14–16 - “...until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>15</sup> which he will display at the proper time—he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, <sup>16</sup> who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.”

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<sup>8</sup> “The “high mountain” recalls the theophanies on the mountain of God (Sinai, Ex. 24; Horeb, 1 Kings 19) where Moses and Elijah received a vision of the glory of God. In the choice of location Jesus was not merely seeking solitude. In order to bring the feeling and thoughts of the disciples closer to the significance of the hour he used the evocative significance of the mountain in the wilderness tradition of the OT.” NICNT

<sup>9</sup> “For a brief moment the veil of his humanity was lifted and Jesus’ body presented itself in the form of tenuously material light. In the OT the glory of God is always conceived as shining brilliance or bright light. The reference to the glistening character of Jesus’ clothing reflects this concept and the language of apocalyptic where the image of radiance and resplendent light is borrowed to describe the glory of the Messiah. As a revelation of the hidden quality of Jesus’ life the transfiguration was an anticipation and guarantee of an eschatological reality: the glory of the Consummator. The disciples thus saw a disclosure of the mystery of the parousia (Ch. 8:38), when there will be a vindication of the glory of God superseding all previous revelations of that glory, at Sinai or elsewhere.” NICNT

<sup>10</sup> 2 Sam 23:4; Job 12:22; Ps 18:28; 27:1; 43:3; Isa 9:2; 60:19; Hab 3:4; Rev 21:23-24

- An Impossible Conversation
  - Moses and Elijah Appear with Jesus
    - Mk 9:4-6 – *“And there appeared to them [in glory] Elijah with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus [about his departure which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem].”*<sup>5</sup> [Now Peter and those who were with him were heavy with sleep, but when they became fully awake they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. And as the men were parting from him,] *And Peter said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good that we are here. Let us make three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah.”*<sup>6</sup> *For he did not know what to say, for they were terrified.”*
    - ESV Combo Account – Matthew 17:1-9; Mark 9:1-10; Luke 9:27-36
      - *“And behold, there appeared to them two men were talking with him, Elijah with Moses, who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. Now Peter and those who were with him were heavy with sleep, but when they became fully awake they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. And as the men were parting from him, Peter said to Jesus, “Rabbi, Master, Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, Let us make three tents here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah”—not knowing what he said. For he did not know what to say, for they were terrified.”*
      - And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses<sup>11</sup> - **Why these two?** On the surface we have the **Law (Moses) and the Prophets (Elijah)**. On the other hand we have the **organization of the nation** of Israel (Moses) and the **consummator of the Messianic Reign/Era** (Elijah). **Beginning and end** of sorts.
      - and they were talking with Jesus. – Thank goodness **Luke helped** us out by telling us what they were talking about because it would have bothered me a lot to not know. Luke tells us that they were **talking to Jesus about His pathway through the cross to rising again**. Whether they were giving Him a heads up, or encouragement, or insight from the Father, is not clear. Remember, **Jesus set aside His glory/deity pieces, and is walking blind down here**, so He was relying on the Father and the Holy Spirit getting Him everything He needed. This was part of that.
      - And Peter said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good that we are here. – **Peter can’t stop talking**. At first, Luke tells us that **they were all sleeping**. They didn’t see the other guys arrive. They wake up and realize that Jesus is talking with two of the greatest men in human history. Peter has to blurt something out. **Luke also adds that they were terrified** and didn’t know what to do or say. Peter defaulted into wanting to be helpful (which is nice) but also Luke tells us that he brought up the next line as Moses & Elijah were leaving. Maybe he was trying to get them to stay longer.

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<sup>11</sup> “Moses appears as the representative of the old covenant and the promise, now shortly to be fulfilled in the death of Jesus, and Elijah as the appointed restorer of all things (Chs. 1:2f; 9:11). The stress on Elijah’s presence at the transfiguration indicates that the fulfilment of “all things” has arrived (Ch. 9:12). The transfiguration is the prelude to the passion, and Elijah is there to testify to the ultimate importance of the impending events in an historical sequence which culminates in consummation. The presence of Elijah with Moses thus has eschatological significance in the specific sense that they proclaim the coming of the end.” NICNT

- Let us make three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah.”<sup>12</sup> – We have two options when trying to figure out what the heck Peter was trying to accomplish in this blurt. The first is that he is human and he was stupefied and wanted to help in any way possible, and recognizing that he was among big dogs, he wanted to serve tangibly to help them out some way. The second is a deeper possible reason which some commentators find which is that Peter thought that he was seeing the coming of the messiah in power and that it was the fulfillment and that they were all going to stay and set up the Millennial Kingdom right then and there without any suffering involved (maybe why Jesus later explains the suffering part has to happen first). Both can be possible. I’m not sure where I lean on this one.
      - How did they know who those guys were? – Moses lived 1300 years before Jesus and Elijah lived 850 years before. It’s not like the apostles had their posters on their wall. Maybe it was their name tags they were wearing? Honestly, its all a guess. One good guess is that Elijah at least looked or was dressed like how John the Baptist dressed (JTB was wearing Elijah costume), so that one was probably a little easier. The whole Moses thing may have been deduced from the experiential moment.
    - For he did not know what to say, for they were terrified – This was all overwhelming to Peter, James and John. Interestingly the Sons of Thunder were more quiet than Peter.
- Deja Vu
  - The Father Speaks From a Cloud
    - Mk 9:7-13 – “*And* [As he was still speaking these things] *a* [bright] *cloud overshadowed*<sup>13</sup> *them*, [and they were afraid as they entered the cloud] *and a voice came out of the cloud, “This is my beloved Son* [my Chosen One, with whom I am well pleased]; *listen to him.*” [And when the disciples heard the voice (which) had spoken, they suddenly fell on their faces and were terrified. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, “Rise, and have no fear.”]<sup>8</sup> *And suddenly* [when they lifted up their eyes], *looking around, they no longer saw anyone with them but Jesus only.*”
    - ESV Combo Account – Matthew 17:1-9; Mark 9:1-10; Luke 9:27-36
      - As he was *still speaking* these things, *behold*, a *bright* cloud came and overshadowed them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is my *beloved* Son, my Chosen One, *with whom I am well pleased*; *listen to him!*” And when *the disciples heard* the voice (which) had spoken, *they suddenly fell on their faces and were terrified. But Jesus came and touched them,*

<sup>12</sup> “He is anxious to find the fulfillment of the promised glory now, prior to the sufferings Jesus had announced as necessary. His comment reflects a failure to appreciate that the transfiguration was only a momentary anticipation of the glory of the consummated kingdom. The blessings of the new age, which will be shared by all the people of God (Ch. 13:26f.), cannot be secured until Jesus has accomplished the sufferings which are integral to his appointed task, culminating in his death.” NICNT

<sup>13</sup> “Gr. ἐπισκιάζειν, which here has the nuance of enveloping or concealing, rather than “overshadowing.” See A. Oepke, TWNT IV (Eng. Tr. 1967), pp. 908 f.” NICNT

*saying, "Rise, and have no fear." And when they lifted up their eyes, looking around, they no longer saw anyone with them but Jesus only.*

- **As Peter was talking** – Luke and Matthew add that the cloud covered the apostles WHILE Peter was talking, which I find funny. It's like **the Father shut Peter up and cut him off.**
- And a cloud overshadowed them<sup>14</sup> - **Why a cloud?** A cloud was the **Old Testament manifestation of the PRESENCE of God Almighty.** It was the tangible reference point of His arrival (e.g. cloud filling the temple with His glory meant that He had showed up).
- and a voice came out of the cloud, - This is the voice of the Father. We are having **another experience like Jesus' baptism:** Father speaking from above; Holy Spirit manifesting coming down; Son in the experience tangibly. The Father is talking. I wonder what He sounded like.
- "This is my beloved Son; listen to him."<sup>15</sup> – **what was the Father saying?** He was saying that **Jesus was not a normal man but the Son of God (deity), therefore they needed to listen to His new revelation.** Jesus was saying **radically new things** that shifted how things were done. It was tough for a Jewish person to stomach. They needed to hear this and record it so that others may know that **the Father affirmed** the specialness of **Jesus Christ** and that **He had the authority to realign things on earth.**
- And suddenly, looking around, they no longer saw anyone with them but Jesus only – It seemed just as fast as it came it was gone. They were left along with Jesus and it was quiet.
  - **What was this experience all about?** – it wasn't simply a fulfillment of the promise and prophecy that Jesus gave just prior, it was a **demonstration of WHO Jesus was and EVIDENCE that He would come again in a similar manifestation upon His return. It was proof that the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming was real.**
  - **Affirmation for Jesus** – Jesus received affirmation from the Father at the beginning of His ministry and here at the practical wrapping up part (the Father would have to be silent when Jesus went to the cross – the actual ending).

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<sup>14</sup> "the cloud is frequently the symbol of God's presence and protection (e.g. Ex. 16:10; 19:9; 24:15f.; 33:1). It is particularly significant that the correlation of the cloud and the voice is limited to the exodus accounts of the Pentateuch, as in the instance of the theophany on Sinai (Ex. 24:16). The cloud is God's tabernacle, the pavilion which both reveals and conceals his glory. The one whom God hides within his pavilion bears a special relationship to him (Ps. 29:5). In the case of both Moses and Elijah the epiphany of the glory of God served to vindicate their mission during their respective ministries in the wilderness. This is also the function of the cloud and the heavenly voice on this occasion. When Jesus began his mission in the wilderness of Judea the voice of God declared him to be the beloved Son, the object of his elective pleasure (Ch. 1:11). Now on the wilderness mountain the voice is heard again, reaffirming the Father's approval and confirming Jesus' dignity as the transcendent Son, although he has assumed the role of the rejected, suffering Servant of Isa. 53. Jesus' obedience to his messianic vocation is vindicated by God, precisely at the point where Jesus has announced what obedience entails (Ch. 8:31). The presence of the cloud and the solemn declaration of the voice affirm the same truth: Jesus is the unique Son of God who enjoys the unbroken presence and approval of the Father." NICNT

<sup>15</sup> "The spoken content of the revelation deserves careful attention. The first clause affirming Jesus' unique filial relationship to God provides the immutable ground for the solemn admonition in the second clause. Because Jesus is God's only Son the disciples are exhorted to hear and obey him. The stress upon Jesus' present status as the Son of God indicates that the transfiguration is more than an enacted promise of future glory. The unchanging fact of his transcendent sonship is the constant presupposition of his words, which reveal the will of God. The command "listen to him," which reinforces this insight, contains an allusion to Deut. 18:15 and serves to identify Jesus as the eschatological Prophet like Moses to whom Israel must listen because he is the final bearer of the word of God. The exhortation has bearing upon all of Jesus' words, but has particular relevance to the new instruction Jesus had been giving to his followers concerning the necessity of his sufferings and of their participation in his humiliation. There can be no doubt that Mark intended his congregation in Rome to take this word to heart." NICNT



Testament about the Messiah needing to suffer for the sins of the people, but they don't know how this is going to work out practically. **Maybe they knew intellectually but couldn't receive it emotionally.**

- It's Just Not Clicking
  - The Apostles Struggle to Understand the Elijah Prophecy
    - Mk 9:11-13 – *"And they asked him, "Why do the scribes say that first Elijah must come?"<sup>12</sup> And he said to them [according to Malachi 4:5-6), "Elijah does come first to restore all things. And how is it written<sup>18</sup> of the Son of Man that he should suffer many things and be treated with contempt?<sup>13</sup> But I tell you that Elijah has come, and they did to him whatever they pleased, as it is written of him."*
    - And they asked him, "Why do the scribes say that first Elijah must come?" – **The apostles (especially the Inner 3) are receiving big batches of revelation at a time, included with intense experiences. They are struggling to put the pieces together. One that stood out was understanding the prophecy of Malachi, which is likely the last prophet to speak in the Old Testament and the one they would be most familiar with that talked about the Messiah's arrival, which they were a part of right now.** The question was, 'what's the thing with Elijah needing to come before you can be announced as Messiah?' How is that going to work, practically? Interestingly, they just saw Elijah in body a moment ago, maybe that's what brought it to mind. But they wanted to know how that could be possible. **Is he going to come back from the dead and show himself to others?**
    - The last words of the Old Testament – some gatherings of the Old Testament (clearly our version) ends with **Malachi** the prophet. His **closing words are a promise of a coming Messiah and that era would be heralded in with the return of Elijah the prophet.** The scribes (experts in the Mosaic law) would talk extensively about this prophecy in Mal 4:5-6, **especially with Jesus walking around claiming to be the Messiah.** The prophecy says that BEFORE the Messiah arrives a version of Elijah will show up and usher Him in. Jesus tells His disciples here that John the Baptist is that Elijah.
      - Mal 4:5-6 – *"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."*
    - And he said to them, "Elijah does come first to restore all things – **The prophecy in Malachi is rather severe. Although it's good news that a forerunner would usher in the awaited Messiah, there also seems to be a seriousness about his usefulness and purpose in getting the nation ready to repent so that God doesn't just wipe them off the planet. We can argue all day if that was a legit threat or merely God telling them WHY**

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<sup>18</sup> Ps. 22:6, 7; Isa. 53:2, 3; Dan. 9:26; Zech. 13:7; [Phil. 2:7]; See Matt. 26:24

JTB was necessary. But it does give importance to JTB's ministry. It mattered. I see it like this: The Son of God was coming into Israel and the leaders were terrible, but if the heart of the people would welcome the Messiah than it was a good thing. JTB's job was to address the people, not the leaders. The leaders were already wicked and would be judged. The people, however, who the Messiah was coming for, wanted Him.

**John got them ready.**

- And how is it written of the Son of Man that he should suffer many things and be treated with contempt?<sup>19</sup> – Jesus seems to address a question that they didn't ask aloud, but clearly He knew they were struggling with it. He could always tell what they were processing. **They were wondering about the rising from the dead thing, so He addressed it.** He brought to mind that they knew the prophecies of suffering and torment the Messiah would deal with. That would include death.
- But I tell you that Elijah has come,<sup>20</sup> - It's not that Elijah just came on the mountain with Moses, but that **the forerunner of the Messiah came, which is John the Baptist** who was preparing the nation for the arrival.
  - **Mt 11:11-14** – "Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. <sup>12</sup> From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force. <sup>13</sup> For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John, <sup>14</sup> and if you are willing to accept it, **he is Elijah who is to come.**"
- and they did to him whatever they pleased, as it is written of him<sup>21</sup> - The evil men (this time **Herod and Herodias**) had **John the Baptist killed** and put his head on a platter. This is **similar to the attacks** that Elijah suffered at the hands of **another evil woman Jezebel and her weak husband, Ahab**. The big difference is that God pulled Elijah from the earth before he died (chariot of fire).

## Conclusion

- Promises are only as True as the Person who Gives Them – **this story was to show the apostles that Jesus was who He said He was and could do what He said He could do. Part of that promise is that He would come back and make things right.**

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<sup>19</sup> "The disciples' real question is, What have death and resurrection to do with the Son of Man? They possessed no categories by which they could distinguish between Jesus' statements concerning his resurrection and those concerning his parousia, and the relationship between these two distinct events remained obscure. Jesus' reference to his death and resurrection after three days may have led them to expect a duplicate of Elijah's experience of translation (cf. Ch. 8:31 with 2 Kings 2:17), or some similar experience of exaltation following humiliation. The place of Jesus' passion and death, together with his resurrection, was the unexpected and incomprehensible middle term between the present and the magnificent future assured by the transfiguration. What bothered the disciples specifically, then, was the phrase "from among the dead," together with the implication that time would yet remain before the consummation for the proclamation of what they had seen." NICNT

<sup>20</sup> "Jesus' veiled affirmation implicitly identifies John the Baptist as the eschatological messenger promised in Mal. 4:5f. John is the Elijah sent by God because he fulfilled the function expected of Elijah, leading the people to renewal through repentance and forgiveness." NICNT

<sup>21</sup> "His sufferings at the hands of Herod and Herodias (Ch. 6:14-29), which are indicated by an idiomatic expression denoting absolute and arbitrary power (cf. 2 Macc. 7:16), strengthen the identity of John with Elijah, who in his own ministry was harassed by a wicked woman and a weak king (1 Kings 19:2, 10). The startling character of this identification needs to be appreciated. The secret of Jesus' messianic vocation, conditioned by suffering as well as exaltation, leads to the disclosure of John's vocation as Elijah.<sup>36</sup> That the identification is not made explicit is consistent with the restraint Mark has exercised elsewhere when dealing with Jesus' identity." NICNT

All the suffering would be worth it. But how can they trust Him? Because of WHO He was.

- What has God told us that we can take as a promise? – it's not earthly wealth and perfect health; it's that we will be with Him forever. It's that He's good at Saving. It's that He loves us and has a purpose for us. It's that we have meaning in His kingdom. It's that we live in perpetual grace and not in fear. Those things are true and they are solid because of who said them.