

1 The mission of the Messiah (Mark 9)

Last term we looked at Mark 1–8 where the key question was, “Who is this?”¹ Eventually Peter provided the answer: “*You are the Christ!*” (8:29)

Mark 9–16 then deals with the mission of this Messiah. *The Christ* is the anointed ruler sent by heaven to rescue the earth. The Christ restores us as a society under heaven's reign, what Jesus called *the kingdom of God* (Mark 1:15; 4:11, 26, 30; etc).

Jesus explains that the path to power for this Messiah involves a cross. As soon as they recognized his authority, *he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again* (Mark 8:31).

How does the cross save us? That's the main theme of Mark 9–16.

The last 2000 years have offered many explanations of how the cross saves us. They're called *atonement theories*.² Most theologies of atonement are drawn from the epistles, and one case in the Gospels where Jesus used the word *ransom* (Mark 10:45 || Matthew 20:28).³ Surprisingly, most atonement theories are not based on the extensive teaching Jesus gave about the cross.

Listening to Jesus reshapes how we understand the cross. Some Christians think, “Jesus suffered for us, so we don't have to,” but the first thing Jesus says about the cross overturns that view: “*Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me*” (8:34, compare Matthew 10:38; 16:24 and Luke 9:23).

Whatever Jesus was doing with the cross to save the world, he wants us to do it too. The kingdom follows what the king does. We participate in Messiah's mission by absorbing the evil done against us, just as he did. We follow him in bearing away the sin of the world in our bodies too, for the renewal of creation.

The cross is not a theory about how God sets individuals right with himself; it's the foundation for the society that comes to life in Christ. By following him we share in the death and life of the Messiah whom God raised up to lead his kingdom.

That is what the cross achieves as we follow him. Are you ready to explore the Messiah's mission as he describes it in Mark 9–16?

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¹ For notes and podcasts on Mark 1–8, see <https://allenbrowne.blog/2026/04/30/mark-1-8-formed-in-gods-story/>

² For a survey, see <https://allenbrowne.blog/2022/04/06/rich-texture-of-atonement/>

³ For example, John J. R. Lee, and Daniel Brueske. *A Ransom for Many: Mark 10:45 as a Key to the Gospel*. (Lexham Academic, 2023).

1.1 Seeing the Son (9:1-8)

The first verse of Mark 9 continues the discussion in Mark 8:

Mark 9:1 (NIV)

And he said to them, “Truly I tell you, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see that the kingdom of God has come with power.”

As soon as they recognized him as the Messiah (anointed ruler), Jesus began explaining how he would receive the kingship. He would be killed and their lives would be in danger too (8:31-35). Yet some of them would live to see him raised to life and ascending to heaven to share the glory of his Father's throne.

Peter's declaration and Jesus' explanation is now confirmed by a voice from heaven:

Mark 9:2-8 (NIV)

² After six days Jesus took Peter, James and John with him and led them up a high mountain, where they were all alone. There he was transfigured before them. ³ His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them. ⁴ And there appeared before them Elijah and Moses, who were talking with Jesus.

⁵ Peter said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.”

⁶ (He did not know what to say, they were so frightened.)

⁷ Then a cloud appeared and covered them, and a voice came from the cloud: “This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!”

⁸ Suddenly, when they looked around, they no longer saw anyone with them except Jesus.

We call this the transfiguration, as Jesus was momentarily transfigured so they could see who he really was. Jesus never wore regal robes like Herod. He looked ordinary. In this moment they caught a glimpse of the regal glory his Father would give him.

Rarely in Scripture does God speak directly and audibly on earth. When God created the heavens and the earth, his commands established what was good (Genesis 1). When God created the covenant with Israel, his ten commands declared what was good. But Israel found God's voice too terrifying: *They trembled with fear. They stayed at a distance and said to Moses, “Speak to us yourself and we will listen. But do not have God speak to us or we will die”* (Exodus 20:18-19).

God honoured their request. God spoke to his people through a prophet (Moses) who delivered the Torah to them. God wrapped himself in a cloud as he silently lead them through the wilderness (Exodus 13:21-22; 14:19-24; 16:10; 19:9, 16; 24:15-18; 33:9-10; 34:5; 40:34-38).

Later, when they strayed from the covenant relationship, God sent prophets to call them back to himself. Elijah was the foundational prophet at the time the kingdom split, when most of Israel turned from worshipping the LORD and recognizing his anointed Davidic king (*the sins of Jeroboam* in 1 Kings 16:31; 2 Kings 3:3; 10:29-31; 13:2, 11; 14:24; 15:9, 18, 24, 28; 17:22). Other prophets then continued what Elijah began: the prophetic ministry of calling God's people back to himself.

That's the story of the Old Testament, or as the Jewish people called it, *the Law and the Prophets* (Matthew 7:12; 22:40; Luke 16:16; Acts 13:15; Romans 3:21). Moses represented the Torah (Mark 1:44; 7:10; 10:3-5; 12:19, 26), and Elijah represented the Prophets (as in Malachi 4:5-6).

In this vision, Jesus' conversation partners are Moses and Elijah. The glorious kingship of the Messiah is the fulfilment of what God has been saying all along through the Law and the Prophets.

But in this moment, God speaks not only through the Law and the Prophets. The one who wrapped himself in a cloud at Sinai now speaks directly! God confirms what Peter said, that Jesus is God's anointed. God affirms what Jesus said, that the Father would give authority to the Son he has chosen.

This is the second time we've heard a voice from heaven in Mark's Gospel. At his baptism, the Spirit descended on the anointed ruler, *and a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased"* (1:11).

It seems God has one message for the world. The one who reigns in the heavens has entrusted the throne to the Son appointed to reign on earth. God's command to the people of the earth is, "*Listen to him!*" (verse 7). This is the message from heaven that brings atonement (literally *at-one-ment*) between heaven and earth.

Everything else fades as the vision ends. They no longer see Moses, Elijah, the cloud of God's presence, or the glorious robes of the heaven-anointed king. They see *only Jesus with themselves* (a word-by-word rendition of the end of verse 8).

Your thoughts on the transfiguration?



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1.2 The Elijah to come (9:9-13)

Mark 9:9-13 (NIV)

⁹ As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus gave them orders not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead. ¹⁰ They kept the matter to themselves, discussing what “rising from the dead” meant.

¹¹ And they asked him, “Why do the teachers of the law say that Elijah must come first?”

¹² Jesus replied, “To be sure, Elijah does come first, and restores all things. Why then is it written that the Son of Man must suffer much and be rejected? ¹³ But I tell you, Elijah has come, and they have done to him everything they wished, just as it is written about him.”

The Torah teachers were hoping for the kingdom of God to be restored. They called it *the day of the LORD*. Back then, the times were defined by the reigning monarch (e.g. 1 Kings 6:1; 14:25; 15:1, 9, 25, 28, 33). *The day of the LORD* was therefore the day when they would have YHWH reigning over them again (e.g. Isaiah 13:6, 9; Ezekiel 30:3; Joel 1:15; 2:1-31; Amos 5:18-20; Obadiah 15; Zephaniah 1:7, 14).

Malachi said God would send a prophet to prepare his people for his reign:

Malachi 4:5-6 (NIV)

⁵ “See, I will send the prophet **Elijah** to you before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes. ⁶ He will turn the hearts of the parents to their children, and the hearts of the children to their parents; or else I will come and strike the land with total destruction.”

Jesus understood John the Baptist to be the promised prophet sent in the tradition of Elijah to call God's people back to himself. The opening verse of Mark's Gospel identifies John the Baptist as God's *messenger who will prepare the way before me* (quoting Malachi 3:1).

But there's a problem! *Although the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him, confessing their sins* (1:5), John was arrested and killed by the current overlord of Galilee (6:14-28). Elijah led Israel to declare that the LORD was Israel's true leader (1 Kings 18:39), yet the existing rulers tried to kill him. Elijah ran for his life, never managing to bring Israel back to the LORD's reign (1 Kings 19).

Now it's happened again. As promised, God sent John, but the rulers *have done to him everything they wished* (verse 13). The leaders of God's people in Jerusalem are not ready to recognize the Son God has sent them. He remains in mortal danger. They will kill him.

For their own safety, Jesus embargoed the transfiguration experience: *giving orders not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead* (verse 9).

1.3 When evil won't let go (9:14-29)

If you're listening to Mark's account from the perspective of the disciples, you may be struggling with two truths that feel hard to reconcile:

- a) Jesus is God's anointed ruler, so God will raise him up as king and restore the earth as a kingdom of God in his leadership.
- b) The present leaders on earth will kill God's Messiah to preserve their own power, so the life of anyone who follows Jesus is in grave danger too.

The disciples cannot make sense of *what* "raising from the dead" meant (verse 10). They do not understand how the cross defeats evil (8:32).

And they do not see evil willingly submitting to Jesus' authority:

Mark 9:14-29 (NIV)

¹⁴ When they came to the other disciples, they saw a large crowd around them and the teachers of the law arguing with them. ¹⁵ As soon as all the people saw Jesus, they were overwhelmed with wonder and ran to greet him.

¹⁶ "What are you arguing with them about?" he asked.

¹⁷ A man in the crowd answered, "Teacher, I brought you my son, who is possessed by a spirit that has robbed him of speech. ¹⁸ Whenever it seizes him, it throws him to the ground. He foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth and becomes rigid. I asked your disciples to drive out the spirit, but they could not."

¹⁹ "You unbelieving generation," Jesus replied, "how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy to me."

²⁰ So they brought him. When the spirit saw Jesus, it immediately threw the boy into a convulsion. He fell to the ground and rolled around, foaming at the mouth.

²¹ Jesus asked the boy's father, "How long has he been like this?"

"From childhood," he answered. ²² "It has often thrown him into fire or water to kill him. But if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us."

²³ "'If you can?'" said Jesus. "Everything is possible for one who believes."

²⁴ Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!"

²⁵ When Jesus saw that a crowd was running to the scene, he rebuked the impure spirit. "You deaf and mute spirit," he said, "I command you, come out of him and never enter him again."

²⁶ The spirit shrieked, convulsed him violently and came out. The boy looked so much like a corpse that many said, "He's dead." ²⁷ But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him to his feet, and he stood up.

²⁸ After Jesus had gone indoors, his disciples asked him privately,
“Why couldn’t we drive it out?”

²⁹ He replied, “This kind can come out only by prayer.”

What are we to believe about Jesus? Does he have the authority to defeat evil?
Or will they see evil kill him? The disciples haven’t got this figured out yet.

They’re as confused as the generation God led out of Egypt, the generation that saw the signs God did but would not trust God to lead them to become his kingdom (Numbers 14:3). That’s the *unbelieving generation* Jesus compared them to (verse 7). That’s why Jesus presses the boy’s father regarding what he believes (verse 23).

Verse 26 is a picture of an evil spirit unwilling to yield to Jesus’ authority. It would kill its victim rather than release him. It’s as if the boy had died (verse 26), and Jesus must raise him to life. (The word *anistamai* in verse 27 is used of lifting someone up and also of raising the dead).

The whole event therefore becomes a picture for the disciples of something that is beyond them. When Jesus refers to *this kind* (verse 29), he implies they were up against an intense form of evil, the kind of evil that would rather kill its victim than let go. And they will see the ultimate evil—death itself—take Jesus. But death will release him. While they are feeling powerless to help, God will raise him up.

That’s the context of this story. Before (verse 9) and after (verse 31) it’s all about Jesus receiving the kingship because the Father raises him up out of death.

So, we pray, “*Your kingdom come! ... Deliver us from evil*” (Matthew 6:9-13).
We trust the Father who raises up his Anointed to lead us to life.⁴

Thoughts?

1.4 How God uses his power (9:30-41)

To make sure we get the point, Mark again places the disciple’s inability to overthrow that kind of evil within the framework of Jesus’ death:

Mark 9:30-32 (NIV)

³⁰ They left that place and passed through Galilee. Jesus did not want anyone to know where they were,³¹ because he was teaching his disciples. He said to them, “The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men. They will kill him, and after three days he will rise.”³² But they did not understand what he meant and were afraid to ask him about it.

⁴ The word “fasting” is probably a later addition to this text. See Ben Witherington III, *The Gospel of Mark: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Eerdmans, 2001), 268.

The *Son of Man* is the human descendant who inherits the authority God gave humans in the beginning. But humans no longer use the power God gave us to represent God's authority; instead they fight God's authority and kill his representative. They have power to destroy God's Messiah, but on the third day they lose that power. That's how the cross overturns evil, releasing earth to be a kingdom of heaven again.

So, will Jesus' followers take the way of the cross? Or will we be like the rest of the world in rebellion against God—seeking power for ourselves?

Mark 9:33-37 (NIV)

³³ They came to Capernaum. When he was in the house, he asked them, “What were you arguing about on the road?” ³⁴ But they kept quiet because on the way they had argued about who was the greatest.

³⁵ Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, “Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all.”

³⁶ He took a little child whom he placed among them. Taking the child in his arms, he said to them, ³⁷ “Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me.”

If Peter's ambition was to be Jesus' prime minister (8:33), the others are also concerned about their place in the hierarchy of Jesus' government (verse 35).

The little child gives orders to no one. People pay for access to important leaders, but Jesus is found in those we think of as unimportant, without influence.

Verse 37 upends our view of God. God as the most important and influential person in the universe, but how does God use his power? Here he is—not in Rome or even Jerusalem, but in *Galilee of the Gentiles*, the first region Israel lost to foreign powers (Matthew 4:12-16). These children, growing up in oppression, will know his name. It's to them he is delivering the kingdom of God.

So where do you look to see God? We see God's face—God's image—in humans. That's by design. It's hard to see God's face in Pilate, or in the high priest who will hand Jesus over to be crucified. It's easier to see God's face in the powerless people.

Don't seek power, Jesus tells them. Be human, like the Son of Man who is not seeking power for himself, but inherits it because that's how God designed the world to be.

We don't even need to protect God's power:



Mark 9:38-41 (NIV)

³⁸ “Teacher,” said John, “we saw someone driving out demons in your name and we told him to stop, because he was not one of us.”

³⁹ “Do not stop him,” Jesus said. “For no one who does a miracle in my name can in the next moment say anything bad about me, ⁴⁰ for whoever is not against us is for us. ⁴¹ Truly I tell you, anyone who gives you a cup of water in my name because you belong to the Messiah will certainly not lose their reward.”

1.5 What Jesus says about Gehenna (hell) (9:42-50)

The final verses of Mark 9 are the most detailed teaching about hell anywhere in the Bible. Let's take time to understand what Jesus taught.

Mark 9:42-48 (NIV)

⁴² “If anyone causes one of these little ones—those who believe in me—to stumble, it would be better for them if a large millstone were hung around their neck and they were thrown into the sea. ⁴³ If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into **hell**, where the fire never goes out.

[⁴⁴] ⁴⁵ And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than to have two feet and be thrown into **hell**.

[⁴⁶] ⁴⁷ And if your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into **hell**, ⁴⁸ where

‘the worms that eat them do not die,
and the fire is not quenched.’ [Isaiah 66:24]

The word hell (*Gehenna* in Greek) occurs only here in Mark, in three other contexts in Matthew (5:22-30; 18:9; 23:15, 33), and once in Luke (12:5). James 3:6 is the only occurrence outside the Gospels.

Another word (*hadēs*) has sometimes been translated “hell,” though it simply means “the dead,” the equivalent of *šheōl* in the Old Testament (e.g. Psalm 6:5). When Jesus said the gates of Hades would not block the assembly gathering around his kingship (Matthew 16:18), he was declaring that death would not hold him.

2 Peter 2:4 borrows the word *Tartarus* from Greek mythology, the place where the Titans were said to be imprisoned in the afterlife. There's also some visual imagery in John's visions (e.g. Revelation 20:14 -15), but our aim is to understand what Jesus taught about *Gehenna*.

So what is *Gehenna*? The picture of hell that many of us have today comes from the Middle Ages when the church gave hell a prominence it does not have in Scripture. Despite the fact that Paul never mentioned hell in any of his letters and none of the

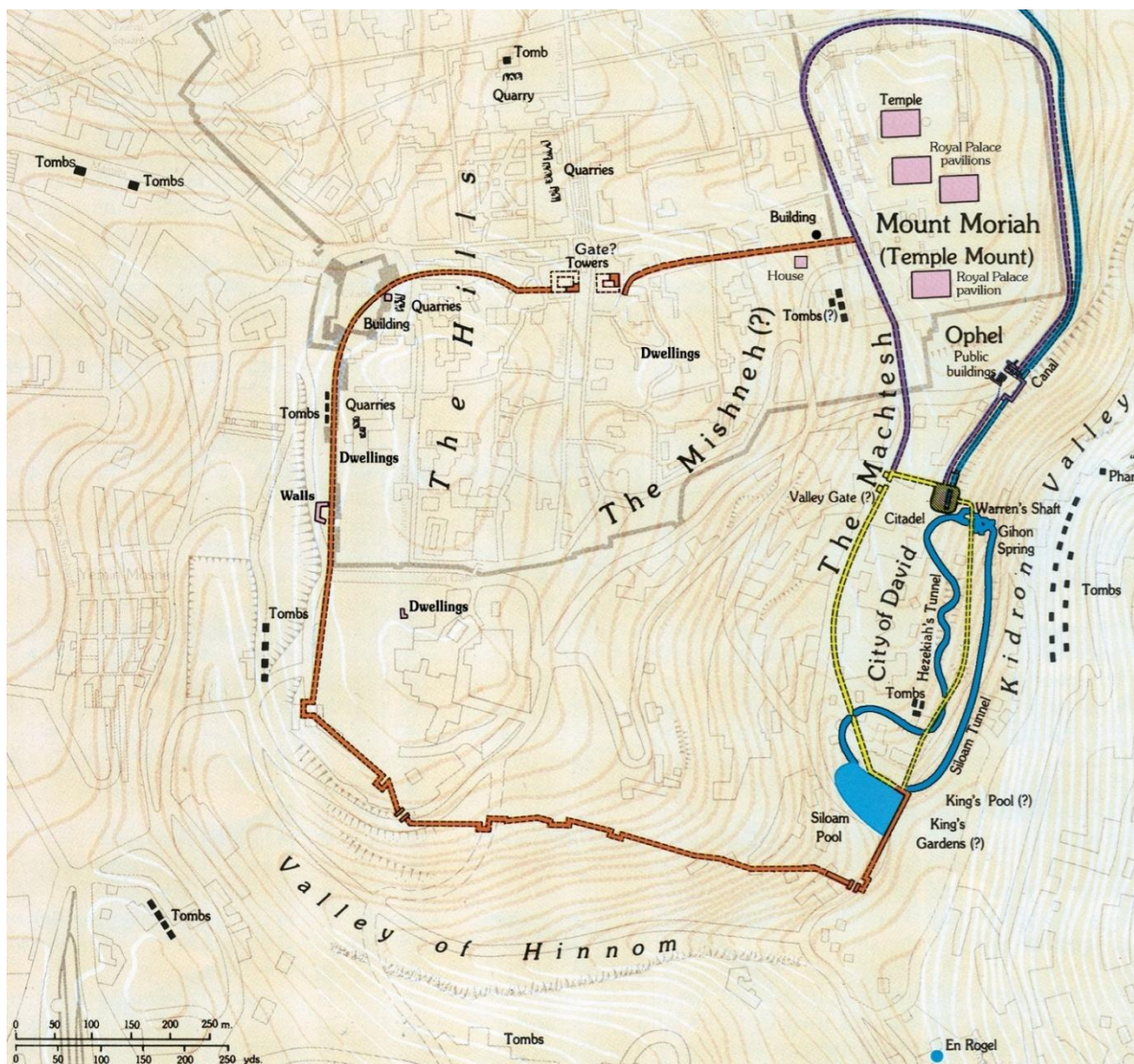
apostles mentioned hell as they preached the gospel in Acts, hell became a convenient tool for the church to threaten people with guilt and fear.

Catholicism claimed Jesus had given Peter the keys of the kingdom (Matthew 16:19). The church could therefore use the keys to let people into heaven or to send them to hell. All those yarns about Saint Peter at the Pearly Gates deciding who goes to heaven and who goes to hell are based on that claim.

The church painted lurid images of damned souls suffering eternal conscious torment. Dante's poem *Inferno* graphically imagined what it would be like to descend into hell. The walls of the Sistine Chapel illustrate how central the message of hell had become.

None of these images are the background for Jesus's comments. What did *Gehenna* mean to Jesus and his audience?

Gehenna was a real place. It's just south of the temple mount in Jerusalem. *Gehenna* (Greek) derives from *Ge Hinnom* (Hebrew). *Ge* is the Hebrew word for "valley," and Hinnom was the original owner of this valley (Joshua 15:8; 18:16). It was often called *the Valley of Ben Hinnom*, since Hinnom's sons inherited the valley (*ben* = son).



"The first temple period" in Dan Bahat, *The Carta Jerusalem Atlas*, (Jerusalem: Carta, Jerusalem, 2011), 23.

This valley had a terrible history. People from Jerusalem burned their children there:

- King Ahaz *burned sacrifices in the Valley of Ben Hinnom and sacrificed his children in the fire* (2 Chronicles 28:3).
- King Manasseh *sacrificed his children in the fire in the Valley of Ben Hinnom* (2 Chronicles 33:6).
- King Josiah tried to stop these evil practices: *he desecrated Topheth, which was in the Valley of Ben Hinnom, so no one could use it to sacrifice their son or daughter in the fire to Molek* (2 Kings 23:10).

The LORD was horrified they thought he wanted such a thing. God said:

Jeremiah 7:31 (NIV)

“They have built the high places of Topheth in the Valley of Ben Hinnom to burn their sons and daughters in the fire—something I did not command, nor did it enter my mind.”

Did you get that? Burning people in this valley (*Gehenna*) was evil. Such a thing had never entered God's mind. This statement comes as God explains why he abandoned the temple they'd built for him in Jerusalem (7:1-14). And because God withdrew, the city fell to Babylon.

Jeremiah goes on to say that if they want their children slaughtered in Gehenna, the Babylonians will give them more than they want:

Jeremiah 7:32-33 (NIV) (compare Jeremiah 19:6 and 32:35)

³² So beware, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when people will no longer call it Topheth or the Valley of Ben Hinnom, but the Valley of Slaughter, for they will bury the dead in Topheth until there is no more room. ³³ Then the carcasses of this people will become food for the birds and the wild animals, and there will be no one to frighten them away.

Jeremiah's words were fulfilled in 586 BC. Those who tried to defend Jerusalem were slaughtered. There were too many to bury, so their bodies were burned in Gehenna.

Gehenna became a symbol of the unfaithful people of God who lost their lives in the conflict with Babylon. It became a warning to the following generations.

But the bodies burned in Gehenna were not suffering eternal conscious torment as Catholicism taught. That idea comes from Greek thinking, for the Greeks taught that humans are eternal souls that live on after our bodies die. In Jewish thinking, humans are mortal, and those who receive the gift of eternal life receive new bodies in the resurrection.⁵

Which version of hell is Jesus talking about? Disembodied souls suffering forever? Or people losing their life, like those whose bodies were burnt in Gehenna?

⁵ See N. T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God* (London: SPCK, 2003), 32–207.

The disembodied option doesn't fit Jesus' comments. He's talking about your body: hands, feet, and eyes. Matthew makes it even more obvious: *It is better for you to lose one part of your **body** than for your whole **body** to go into hell* (Matthew 5:29-30).

He's talking about people losing their lives, people who are not raised to life to share eternity with God. Their bodies don't burn forever without being consumed (like Moses' burning bush in Exodus 3:2). They *perish*—a word that's used many times in Scripture (Matthew 18:14; Luke 13:3, 5; John 3:16-17; 10:28; 11:50 etc.). Perishing is not the same as being tortured forever.

In verse 48, Jesus refers to the closing verse of Isaiah:

Isaiah 66:24 (NIV)

²⁴ “And they will go out and look on the dead bodies of those who rebelled against me; the worms that eat them will not die, the fire that burns them will not be quenched, and they will be loathsome to all mankind.”

As you'd expect, Isaiah speaks of *dead bodies*, not consciously suffering souls. Worms eat the dead bodies, but the worms never die out. Fire consumes the dead bodies, but the fire never goes out. In generation after generation there is no shortage of dead bodies to fuel the fire and feed the worms.

That's the background for Jesus' comments. His comments are actually targeted at those who abuse their place in the community by tripping up those who have less power and understanding, *the little ones*. It would be better for them to meet an untimely end, perishing in the sea, Jesus says (verse 42). In the end, their bodies will be burned or eaten by worms, not raised to life to participate in God's eternal reign (verses 47-48).

Hear God's heart. God is not torturing disembodied souls forever. Isaiah 66:24 is God's lament over losing *those who rebelled against me*. God sees their dead bodies being burnt, in generation after generation. The worms survive, while many of his people do not. This is the grief God spoke of when he called Isaiah to prophetic ministry (Isaiah 6:9-13), the grief Jesus knows too (Mark 4:12 || Matthew 13:12-17).

Would you like to discuss what Jesus was saying when he spoke of *Gehenna*?

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What matters most is how we represent God. If the Scriptures do not teach that God keeps his enemies alive to torture them indefinitely, we misrepresent God by saying so. In the words of Edward Fudge, the traditional view of hell as everlasting conscious torment is “a horrible doctrine, unworthy of God, foreign to the Bible, spawned by pagan philosophy and preserved by human tradition.” ⁶

⁶ Edward William Fudge, “Response: A Conditionalist Response to Traditionalism,” in *Two Views of Hell: A Biblical & Theological Dialogue*, (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2000), 208.

You may have noticed verses 44 and 46 are missing from recent translations. No early manuscripts of Mark's Gospel have these verses, which simply repeat verse 48 (the Isaiah quotation). It's an example of the church adding to Scripture to underscore its threats against any who might resist its power.

The chapter concludes:

Mark 9:49-50 (NIV)

⁴⁹ Everyone will be salted with fire.

⁵⁰ "Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can you make it salty again? Have salt among yourselves, and be at peace with each other."

Verse 48 spoke of the fire that never seems to go out as the rebels keep dying and their dead bodies are burnt. But even the godly suffer (verse 49).

Salted with fire is an odd phrase, probably drawn from the sacrificial language of the Old Testament. Grain offerings were *seasoned with salt* (Leviticus 2:13), and burnt offerings were *sprinkled with salt* (Ezekiel 43:24). Jesus may therefore be calling everyone to *present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, your true and proper worship* (Romans 12:1). This is right response to God, unlike the rebels whose dead bodies end up burned anyway (verse 48). If that's right, the contrast between verse 48 and 49 is similar to what Jesus said in 8:34-38.

So the challenge for the people of God is not to lose our saltiness. When Israel/Judah lost their unique flavour, they found themselves exiled from the land, thrown out and trodden underfoot by the gentiles (Matthew 5:13). The community that lives under King Jesus needs to give each other the same grace God has given to us, so we experience the God-flavour in each other. Then we'll be at peace with each other as a response to being at peace with God (compare Matthew 6:14-15).

1.6 Conclusion

Meditate on Mark 9. What does this chapter mean to you?

- 1) What's the significance of the transfiguration? What does it reveal about Jesus?
- 2) What's your response when your prayers are not answered?
- 3) In what ways are you giving your life in support of people who don't have power?
- 4) What conclusions do you reach about Jesus' teaching on Gehenna?

In preparation for next week, **read Mark 10**. As Jesus makes his final journey to Jerusalem, he responds to people's questions and describes how the kingdom of God is so different to a world characterized by unfaithfulness and greed. For even his disciples struggle with seeking power over each other.