

“Then they asked him, “Why do the teachers of religious law insist that Elijah must return before the Messiah comes?” Jesus responded, “Elijah is indeed coming first to get everything ready. Yet why do the Scriptures say that the Son of Man must suffer greatly and be treated with utter contempt?” Mark 9:11-12 NLT

lectio // Mark 9:2-13

First of all, don't you want to know what Jesus, Elijah and Moses were talking about in verse 4? “Then Elijah and Moses appeared and began talking with Jesus.” It was actually them and they were having a conversation! Anyways, back to the highlighted text. The guys begin asking the right questions. Why do the religious leaders insist? Jesus affirms that the religious leaders timeline is correct. So, the teachers of the law weren't completely ignorant of the cues, they just could not recognize them when they showed up. Through time and ad nauseam discussion over hundreds of years, their idea of “Elijah” and the “Messiah” had taken on a completely different profile of the prophets descriptions. By this time in history, true leaders were imagined as powerful political figures, like kings of old who crushed enemies and liberated Israel from the captors. Who wouldn't want that under the harsh, secular rule of the Roman empire. The religious leaders equated freedom with escaping tyranny and taking control as a world leader. It sounds good, except that wasn't God's plan at all. The depth and breadth of the freedom God was securing went far beyond a political reign, it would go deep into the human soul and cause a revolution to repair the breach between himself and all life, not just Jews, or Greeks or Romans, but the earth itself. So when John the Baptist showed up as a crazy anti-establishment kind of preacher, crying for people to repent, the religious leaders had no idea that he was in fact the spirit of Elijah and a forerunner of the messiah, Jesus Christ. Everyone missed it, but Jesus let these followers in on the mystery. Jesus interpreted the times and the purposes of God for them. They could not see it on their own. But it all started with their question - WHY?

oratio

Dad,

I need to recognize when you are at work to accomplish your will in the Kingdom of God. I want to be WITH you, not fight against you. I don't want to be a “religious” leader or “teacher” who gets all the facts but misses the point because my view, my perspective didn't line up with how I think things should have gone. I want to be able to know, see and feel the move of your spirit through individuals who are called as well as circumstances that seem wildly out of scope of my opinions.

contemplatio

rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root