



Lent 2 B  
Gospel

ARTICLE NO. 2006.274  
Mk 8:31-38

### The Passion announced (Mark 8:31-38)

#### Collect

O God, whose glory it is always to have mercy: Be gracious to all who have gone astray from your ways, and bring them again with penitent hearts and steadfast faith to embrace and hold fast the unchangeable truth of your Word, Jesus Christ your Son; who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.



And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be **rejected** of the **elders**, and of the **chief priests**, and **scribes**, and be killed, and after three days rise again. And he spake that saying **openly**. And Peter took him, and began to **rebuke** him.

But when he had turned about and looked on his disciples, he **rebuked** Peter, saying, Get thee behind me, Satan:

for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men. And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them,

Whosoever will **come after me**,  
let him **deny** himself,  
and take up his **cross**, and follow me.

For whosoever will save his life shall lose it;  
but whosoever shall lose his life  
for my sake and the gospel's,  
the same shall save it.

For what shall it profit a man,  
if he shall gain the whole world,  
and lose his own **life**\*\*?

Or what shall a man give  
in exchange for his **life**\*\*?

Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed  
of me and [**mine**]  
in this adulterous and sinful generation;  
of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed,  
when he cometh in the glory of his Father  
with the holy angels.

\*\* The Greek is "Psyche" which in Mark always refers to a mortal breath/spirit not man's immortal soul. So I have used life, as have other Anglican commentators to avoid an error in interpretation. "Life" is the translation in the RSV, NAB, J.B. Philips.



Glen Miller



#### Rejected

Matthew omits "**rejected**"

(Matthew 16:21)

21 From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that **he must go unto Jerusalem**, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.

So does Mark, later

(Mark 10:33)

33 Saying, Behold, **we go up to Jerusalem**; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles:

It is more likely that the passage **was a prophecy that Jesus would depart this life** in Jerusalem.

The OT passage referred to

(Isaiah 53:3) Hebrew OT

3 He is despised and **rejected** of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

But the Greek LXX has "fading away beyond the sons of men" in place of the Hebrew OT "rejected".

Ibn Ezra has "ceased to be reckoned among men."

[mine] - (of my words) is omitted from two oldest mss. And the sense is better.

Pharisees never blamed

Much of this tract is commentary - don't take it as Gospel. It is here to encourage meditation and study. Use your gift of discernment, to find the truth.

### The Passion announced and a warning to Peter

Jesus was walking with an entourage of Apostles, disciples, and bewildered people who, after the death of John the Baptist were looking for a leader. There must have been a big crowd, and Jesus gave them an explanation for his death, and a warning that if they were to continue following him they may be walking into similar danger.

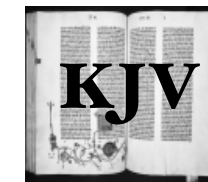
Although most of His teachings had been in parables, He is very candid, and tells them that He expects to be killed, and that He (and the audience assumed his disciples also) would become an enemy to the elders and chief priests. But He said, that He would *rise again* - this last sentence must have been totally mysterious to them. But Peter believed Jesus (see 8:29). He knew that whatever his Lord prophesied would come true. He took Jesus aside, away from the hearing of the others, and pleaded with Jesus not to say anything about his death **openly**. For if it did not come to pass, He would be called a false prophet by the people, and His kingdom would come to nought. If He died, what would they do without their King, and what would happen to their dream of a new life for everyone?

Jesus told Peter not to speak like that in front of the other disciples, and He reminded him that no-one was not to know who He was (Mk 8:29). But He had *turned about* - changed his position/changed his mind, because of Peter's persuasion. But He warned Peter that he had better get with the program, and He called Peter, "Satan", because he was, like Satan, a good persuader, and Jesus was persuaded not to talk about the passion **openly**.

So, rather than expound on his statement **openly**, He continued in a mysterious language that only the Apostles might understand. Though he was speaking to a big audience His words were very appropriate for Peter:

"Whosoever will come after me" - (to Peter, "*get thee behind me*" i.e. next in line) and the command, to "*deny himself*" was a warning to Peter to deny himself not Jesus (Peter does deny Jesus three times).

And "*to take up his cross*" - Peter was later crucified as commanded by his Lord, in Rome, this was the price Peter must pay for the power that Jesus would vest in him.



(Mark 6:27) Death of John the Baptist

27 And immediately the king sent an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought: and he went and beheaded him in the prison,

(Mark 8:29)  
29 ... Peter answereth and saith unto him, **Thou art the Christ.**

This is the first time that Jesus has mentioned the passion.

(Luke 22:31)  
31 And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, **Satan hath desired to have you**, that he may sift you as wheat:

Elders - possibly the 70 member Sanhedrin "elders and chief priests" is thought to be a bad translation of the Hebrew. "...elders, that is to say the chief Priests" makes more sense. Nowhere in the OT are the elders combined with chief priests - so they may have been the same people.

(Ezekiel 7:26) RSV  
26 Disaster comes upon disaster, rumor follows rumor; they seek a vision from the prophet, but the law perishes from the priest, and counsel from the **elders**.

### More Insight

To all his listeners Jesus said:

*For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it.*

The mention of *life* is Greek “psyche” or breath of life and this vanishes when man dies, but the last line refers to salvation of the soul. This sounds as if each person must go through a kind of passion and resurrection also. I suppose it might mean:

If you are thinking always about saving your own neck (from crucifixion by the enemy) , rather than the souls of others, you are not going to doing the right thing, and you will not be guaranteed eternal life.

Then Jesus asks them if they understood what He just told them.

*For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own life?*

This is not a statement. He is not saying it is not worth your (physical) life to gain even a whole world of material “stuff”. He is talking to people who own nothing - his Apostles, disciples, the poor in the audience, the harlots, and the publicans. What would be the worth of such advice to them? No, Jesus is asking them a question, and He is expecting His Apostles, especially, to meditate on it.

They are probably wondering: what shall the reward be, for the man who wins the whole world (including it’s inhabitants) for Jesus?

And who could such a man be? Peter? <sup>A</sup> Would he exchange his own (physical) life for this?

Yes he would, because [Previous verse] he is guaranteed eternal life (*the same shall save it*) and according to Jewish teaching, a life in Paradise one <sup>B</sup>. Whereas, everyone else can only hope for eternal life and the best that a non Martyr could hope for is Paradise level three <sup>B</sup>. (For Anglicans today, see “hope” B.C.P. - thanksgiving prayer after communion, and “may” in Article 17 in the Articles of Religion).

<sup>A</sup> Peter, his Apostles, and all his Bishop’s (R.C., Anglican, Orthodox) through the ages have won more than 1.5 Billion people for Jesus.

<sup>B</sup> In the Mishnah a Martyr was destined for Paradise level one, whereas the best anyone else could hope for was levels four (great men) three (for scholars), or five (penitents and righteous). Level two is for those who die at sea, level six for the unmarried and the chaste, level 7 for the poor who were possessed of scripture and the Mishnah and were engaged in a worldly occupation.

The Views expressed here are strictly those of the author and probably disagree with what you have previously thought. Read other commentaries - meditate on the original KJV.

### More Insight

And again, Jesus rephrases the same tantalizing question:

*Or what shall a man give in exchange for his life?*

What is it that a man would be willing to give up for Jesus, who offers a guarantee of eternal life in exchange?

Answer: he must give up his own life for Jesus’s sake and the gospel’s - by martyrdom, as did Peter, and many of the Apostles.

This is quickly followed by another promise to the Apostles:

*(Mark 9:1)*

*1 And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.*

“Shall not taste of death” is Aramaic idiom for “shall not die spiritually”

For he that accept Jesus’s challenge to give up his own life *for Jesus sake and the gospel’s*, is guaranteed by Jesus to be judged (by Jesus) as righteous and will “live” to see the kingdom of God <sup>A</sup> (which comes after the Parousia and after judgment). Others can only hope to be judged righteous.

See: Proper 19A Article 2005.806 Avoiding vengeance for similar personal advice to Peter by Jesus.

But why “scribes”? Bad press? The scribes are equivalent to our news reporters. There probably were also scribes supportive of Jesus.

*(Mark 9:1)*

*1 And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.*

*(Luke 9:25)*

*25 For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?*

*(Matthew 16:26)*

*26 For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*

"World" Strong's 2889.

**κοσμος** kosmos *kos'-mos*; probably from the base of 2865; orderly arrangement, i.e. decoration; by implication, the world (in a wide or narrow sense, including its inhabitants, literally or figuratively [morally]):--adorning, world.

<sup>A</sup> The kingdom of God is different from the kingdom of heaven which can be created any time before the Parousia.

*(Mark 9:1)*

*1 And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.*

*(John 8:51, 52)*

*51 Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.*

*52 Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death.*

*(Luke 9:27)*

*27 But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God.*

“Shall not taste of death” is Aramaic Idiom for “shall not die spiritually” G. Lamsa Idioms in the Bible explained.

### ISBN

Everyman’s Talmud	Cohen, Abraham	Schocken Books	0-8052-1032-6
Idioms in the Bible Explained	Lamsa, George M.	Harper Collins	0-06-064927-5

Now as to this last verse in chapter 8:

*Whosoever therefore shall be **ashamed**  
of me and [**mine**]  
in this adulterous and sinful generation;  
of him also shall the Son of man be **ashamed**,  
when he cometh in the glory of his Father  
with the holy angels.*

Most of the commentaries in my library make no direct statement on the meaning of this passage. Gore et al. (Anglican scholars) think that the word adulterous might refer to the way Israel has forsaken their true and only husband. But to forsake someone is not adultery, so they suggest “sinful” in its place, but this is then a repetition of sinful in the same line.

The *New American Bible* has “faithless” instead of adulterous. *J.B. Philips NT* has “unfaithful”. Though these Bibles are both good translations of the Greek, they stand alone with “unfaithful”. But since believers receive faith from God, perhaps Jesus meant nonbelievers?

Now, *Ashamed* in the first instance above means: that a man is embarrassed to present himself to the Lord or his Apostles. Edwin A. Abbott in his monumental work “The Son of Man” has a suggestion that Ashamed here meant to hide oneself from the duty to God, which seems not to be in disagreement with what I have said. Or it might be a reference to Isaiah 53:3, where people hid their faces because He was a despised man, and He and his Apostles were not esteemed by most (the elders?). But, says Jesus: the entire generation is sinful and adulterous, so why should they be embarrassed of his (righteous) Apostles. Whatever is the right interpretation, Jesus says that unless they present themselves to Him and the Apostles (“mine”) now, (and presumably repent and confess their sins), they will have to do it later at the final judgment, and He will be dishonored in front of His Father, and the holy angels. And, as Abbott says: in retribution God will hide Himself from them.

And **then will I profess unto them, I never knew you:** depart from me, ye that work iniquity. (Matthew 7:23)

[mine] - (of my words) is omitted from two oldest mss. And the sense is better.

(Isaiah 53:3)  
3 He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and **we hid as it were our faces from him;** he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Well that does it, I think. There was more meaning here than I expected, and it was a difficult passage.

How does this apply today?

**If anyone is too ashamed to listen to the gospel, and runs away from God’s servants in embarrassment, they should consider the serious consequence that Christ will hide his face from them (will not recognize them) in the final judgment, and they will be lost.**

There is no suggestion of a second chance, after death. (see also the Flood and Baptism Article 2006.255)

P.S.

### **PETER**

The idea that Peter was publicly rebuked by Jesus is not supported by the scripture. For Jesus only **looked** at his disciples as he rebuked Peter. It was after the rebuke that Jesus *called the people unto him with his disciples also...*

The Protestant commentaries seem to enjoy the idea that Peter was often “criticized” by Jesus. But as I see it, Peter and Jesus were very close, and Peter was given a lot of advice by Jesus, and also was corrected immediately. And this was due to the great charge that was to be laid on him just before the resurrection. Peter is after all the first Bishop from whom all Anglican Bishops are spiritually descended. The Protestants who are adamantly opposed to Apostolic succession do not see Peter in the same light. Read your Anglican and Catholic commentaries.

In the NT you will find no other Apostle who is so important to Jesus. Peter is mentioned almost 200 times. John, who “was leaning on Jesus’ bosom ..., whom Jesus loved. (John 13:23) was mentioned 50 times, even less than John the Baptist (about 70 mentions).

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