

Mark 9:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean.

Analysis

The disciples 'kept that saying' (τὸν λόγον ἐκράτησαν), obeying Jesus' command but 'questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean' (πρὸς ἑαυτοὺς συζητοῦντες τί ἐστὶν τὸ ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναστῆναι). Their confusion reveals that resurrection was incomprehensible before its occurrence. Jews believed in general resurrection at history's end (Daniel 12:2; Martha's confession, John 11:24), but individual resurrection of the Messiah before the eschaton was foreign. Jesus repeatedly predicted His resurrection (Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:34), yet disciples couldn't grasp it. This demonstrates human inability to comprehend divine revelation apart from Spirit illumination. Even witnessing the transfiguration's glory didn't enable them to understand resurrection. Only after Easter did Scripture and Jesus' words make sense (Luke 24:25-27, 44-45; John 2:22). Reformed theology emphasizes that natural human reason cannot grasp spiritual truth (1 Corinthians 2:14)—revelation requires both objective word and subjective Spirit illumination.

Historical Context

First-century Jewish resurrection belief varied: Pharisees affirmed bodily resurrection at the end of the age (Acts 23:8), Sadducees denied it (Mark 12:18), apocalyptic literature described it (2 Maccabees 7). However, none anticipated the Messiah rising from the dead in the middle of history. The concept of dying-and-rising deities existed in pagan mystery religions (Osiris, Tammuz, Adonis), but Jewish monotheism rejected such myths. Jesus' resurrection was categorically

different—historical event verified by witnesses (1 Corinthians 15:3-8), not cyclical nature myth. The disciples' confusion demonstrates they weren't predisposed to resurrection belief; their later testimony came from overwhelming empirical evidence, not wishful thinking or theological invention.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. What does the disciples' inability to understand resurrection despite Jesus' teaching reveal about human spiritual blindness apart from divine revelation?
2. How does the resurrection's utter unexpectedness to first-century Jews strengthen the evidence for its historical reality?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	τὸν	λόγον	ἐκράτησαν	πρὸς	ἑαυτοὺς
And	G3588	that saying	they kept	with	themselves
G2532		G3056	G2902	G4314	G1438
συζητοῦντες		τί	ἔστιν	τὸ	ἐκ νεκρῶν
questioning one with another		what	should mean	G3588	from the dead
G4802		G5101	G2076	G1537	G3498
ἀναστῆναι					
the rising					
G450					

Additional Cross-References

Acts 17:18 (Parallel theme): Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoicks, encountered him. And some said, What will this babbler say? other

some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection.

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