

² Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John, and led them up on a high mountain apart by themselves; and He was transfigured before them. ³ His clothes became shining, exceedingly white, like snow, such as no launderer on earth can whiten them. ⁴ And Elijah appeared to them with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus. ⁵ Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah” – ⁶ because he did not know what to say, for they were greatly afraid. ⁷ And a cloud came and overshadowed them; and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!” ⁸ Suddenly, when they had looked around, they saw no one anymore, but only Jesus with themselves. ⁹ Now as they came down from the mountain, He commanded them that they should tell no one the things they had seen, till the Son of Man had risen from the dead. ¹⁰ So they kept this word to themselves, questioning what the rising from the dead meant.

Text: Mark 9:2-10 A Transfig. 2-11-18 Ex. 33:18-23; 34:6-8 Rev. 22:1-7 Ps. 115 Resp. Ps.: 97
Hymns: 657, 135, 359, 656

WE SEE JESUS' GLORY!

Dear fellow believers in Christ,

Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could have seen Jesus in His glory as God on the Mount of transfiguration!

Our text begins, “Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John, and led them up on a high mountain apart by themselves; and He was transfigured before them.” No sinful human being can see God in all of His glory and live. When Jesus let Peter, James, and John see His glory as God, it was only some of His glory. But seeing even some of Jesus' glory was an awe-inspiring site: “His clothes became shining, exceedingly white, like snow, such as no launderer on earth can whiten them.” Matthew says, “His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light” (Mt. 17:2). Since seeing some of Jesus' glory on earth was that wonderful, how much more wonderful will it be to see Jesus in all of His glory in heaven!

“And Elijah appeared to them with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus.” Although Moses and Elijah hadn't lived on earth for centuries, they appeared with Jesus and talked to Him. How could that be? Jesus says, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die” (Jn. 11:25-26). Jesus once said, “Concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying, ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living” (Mt. 22:31-32). Although Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob died, God didn't say, “I was the God of Abraham, ... Isaac, ... and Jacob,” as though they're

dead and gone forever. God says, “*I am the God of Abraham, ... Isaac, ... and Jacob.*” Everyone who has died believing in the Son of God is now experiencing eternal life with Him, as evidenced by Moses and Elijah appearing with Jesus during His transfiguration. Peter, James, and John got to witness this. Our text informs us that at that time they didn’t really understand the resurrection (v. 10). But in time they did come to understand it.

“Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, ‘Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah’ – because he did not know what to say, for they were greatly afraid.” The experience of seeing Jesus as God and seeing Moses and Elijah was both frightening and wonderful. Peter wanted to make it last as long as possible.

“And a cloud came and overshadowed them; and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, ‘This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!’” Along with what the three disciples had already been allowed to see and hear, now they heard the voice of God the Father say that Jesus is His “*beloved Son.*”

God told them, “*Listen to Him*” (to Jesus). They needed to keep doing what they had been doing: learning from Jesus and growing in their understanding of Him and eternal salvation in Him, and everything else Jesus teaches in His Word. For their own faith’s sake, and for the sake of all they would teach in the future (including us!), they needed to continue to “*listen to [Jesus]*” all their lives.

“Now as they came down from the mountain, He commanded them that they should tell no one the things they had seen, till the Son of Man had risen from the dead.” Why didn’t Jesus want them to tell anyone about His transfiguration? We can figure out why from the next verse: “*So they kept this word to themselves, questioning what the rising from the dead meant.*” At that time the disciples didn’t understand that Jesus would rise from the dead, and what His resurrection means to us. After Jesus rose from the dead and they understood it, they could better understand what His transfiguration means to us, and tell people about it.

A few days before Jesus’ transfiguration Peter told Him what he and the other disciples believed about Him: “*You are the Christ*” (Mk. 8:29). Jesus told His disciples, “*The Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him. And after He is killed, He will rise the third day*” (Mk. 9:31). As “*the Christ*” – “the anointed One” sent by His Father as the Savior of the world – Jesus knew all the suffering He would have to go through to save us. And when the time came, Jesus willingly suffered and died on the cross. AND JESUS ROSE AGAIN! Jesus’ death and resurrection means that our sins have all been forgiven, and that He will raise us from the dead and take us to heaven. As Jesus says, “*Because I live, you will live also*” (Jn. 14:19b).

Peter, James, and John were allowed to see Jesus' glory as God that one time. Before and afterwards, Jesus looked like a normal human being. The Bible doesn't mention any time when the other disciples were allowed to see Jesus' glory. But except for Judas, they see Jesus in all of His glory now in heaven!

Jesus promises us, *"I am with you always"* (Mt. 28:20). Although we can't see Jesus, He is with us. During our life on earth, as the Bible says, *"We walk by faith, not by sight"* (2 Cor. 5:7). In heaven with all the other believers you and I will see Jesus in all His glory!

Peter says, *"We did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty"* during His transfiguration. *"For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. And so we have the prophetic Word confirmed, which you do well to heed"* (2 Pet. 1:16-19). We weren't there Peter, James, and John to see Jesus in His glory. But as Peter says, *"we have the ... Word"* of God. By the faith God has given us, we know Jesus appeared in His glory as God during His transfiguration, as the Bible says. We know, as the Bible says, that Jesus is God.

The Bible says that on the Judgment Day Jesus will come *"in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory"* (Mt. 25:31). The first time Jesus appeared on earth He hid His glory and looked like a human being. At Jesus' Second Coming on Judgment Day He will appear *"in His glory."* *"Behold, He is coming with the clouds,"* Scripture says, *"and every eye will see Him"* as He truly is (Rev. 1:7a).

On the Judgment Day we will see our glorious Savior with our own eyes. We will hear Him say to us, *"Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world"* (Mt. 25:34). Then Jesus will take us to heaven where the Bible says there will be *"no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God [will illuminate] it. The Lamb is its light. And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in [His] light"* (Rev. 21:23-24a).

With the eyes of faith we see Jesus' glory on the Mount of Transfiguration. We see Jesus' glory through His Word. And we will see Jesus with our own eyes in all of His glory in heaven! Amen.