

Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

A Glimpse of the King's Return, Part 1

Scripture: Luke 9:26-31

Code: 42-124

You know, I've been here now 34 years at Grace Church and every Christmas season that comes around, I'm trying to figure out what I ought to say that I haven't said about the birth of Jesus Christ. Usually begin that process a few weeks before the time I have to preach it, but as I have been moving through the gospel of Luke and toying with various ideas, I am so compelled by what is next in the text of Luke that I'm just going to stay there, which solves problems for me and I think works wonderfully well for all of us as we arrive next Sunday on the day when we particularly focus on the birth of Jesus Christ. Even though the passage in mind ahead of us here in Luke does not focus on His birth, it focuses monumentally on His glory. In fact, the portion of Scripture that we're going to look at today and next Sunday is the most important event in the life of Jesus between His birth and His death. It is between His birth and His death the most important revelation of His person. In fact, the glory of Jesus Christ is manifest on display in such powerful, unmistakable and wondrous fashion in this text that I couldn't think of anything better than this to bring honor to Him on the day when we remember His birth.

So let's open our Bibles to Luke chapter 9 and we're going to begin reading in verse 26 so that we can transition out of the passage we've been studying into the new one. Luke chapter 9, we'll look at verses 26 and 27 and then we'll transition into the following paragraph.

Before we do that, just some introductory comments. Obviously the world is focused for a little while on the celebration of the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. That happens, of course, every year at this time. Celebration sort of generates thoughts of things that are gentle and mild and meek and lowly and it's a time for memories, it's a time for compassion, it's a time to be sympathetic, it's a time for tenderness, as we often hear, it's a time of lullabies. It's a time to think about home and friends and family and to send Christmas carols and letters that bring joy and hope and express love and affection. It's time for gifts. It's a time for generosity. And that's all sort of associated with the tenderness of the birth of the Christ child.

But it didn't take long for the world's attitude toward Jesus Christ to turn from tender thoughts concerning a baby, to vicious bitter and hostile and deadly plans against the young man Jesus Christ. By the age of 33 the Jewish and Gentile world had come together to murder Him. And for the world, the last view of Jesus that they saw was Him hanging on a cross. Only His followers saw Him after

the resurrection, only His disciples saw Him ascend into heaven. The last public view of Jesus was of a criminal hanging in the most despicable fashion on a cross. The crucifixion was only done to the riff-raff, the low life, the scum of society. From the Gentile standpoint it was the way to demonstrate the most disdain for the most wretched kind of person. From a Jewish standpoint, it was a demonstration that that person had been cursed by God. So from the Gentile standpoint it meant you were cursed by man. From the Jewish standpoint it meant that you were cursed by God. And so there was Jesus hanging, cursed by men and God and numbered with the lowest, with the scum of the earth. A despicable way to treat anybody, contemplating treating someone that way you would have to conclude that they were deserving of it. That's the last image that the world had of Jesus, the crucified Jesus, and that image is continually reinforced by millions and millions of crucifixes spread around by the Roman Catholic Church.

But that is not the last view the world will have. Jesus will be here again. After His death He rose from the dead, was seen by over 500 eyewitnesses, testimony of that is given in the New Testament. After that, He communicated with His own for a period of 40 days and 40 nights, and then ascended into heaven, was taken up in the view of all of them as recorded in the first chapter of Acts. Before going He promised, however, that He would be back, that He would come again. In fact, this is not something that is a secret. Jesus Himself made it very public. When the high priest said to Jesus at His mock trial in Matthew 26, "I adjure you by the living God that you tell us whether you are the Christ the Son of God." Jesus answered him with these words, "You have said it yourself, nevertheless I tell you hereafter you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power and coming on the clouds of heaven." And, of course, the high priest ripped his garments at such blasphemy from his perspective. Jesus said, "You haven't seen the last of Me. The next time you see Me you're going to see Me coming with power and glory."

The two comings of Jesus, the first one at His birth as a baby, the second at His coronation as a King. The first one in humility, the second in glory. The first one as a servant, the second as a sovereign. The two comings of Jesus are the focus of prophecy. They are the two great themes of biblical prophecy. There are 330 plus prophecies made of Jesus in the Old Testament fulfilled in His first coming. There are over 1500 prophecies to be fulfilled at His Second Coming. Three hundred and 19 New Testament verses, one out of every 25, looks at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. The world sees only the first coming. They make a sort of a mock celebration out of the first coming, wed it with paganism, as they have done historically and materialism as they have done in contemporary society, and they tolerate the first coming of Jesus. And they need to understand that that is not the last they will see of Him. The next time He comes the whole world will see Him and what they see they will not like. It won't be tender and mild, it won't be meek and lowly, it won't be gentle and loving.

The first mention of the Second Coming of Jesus in the gospel of Luke comes from the lips of Jesus Himself, verse 26, "Whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when He comes in His glory." And here for the first time in Luke's gospel, right out of the mouth of Jesus, we hear that He is coming back and the next time it's not humility, it's glory that's going to be on display. Now this is the first mention of it in Luke's gospel, not the last. Again it will be mentioned in chapter 12, chapter 17, chapter 18, chapter 21. Our Lord Himself here introduces His return and confirms His return in a most powerful way. The question that comes is while Jesus said He was coming back, why should we believe Him? Wasn't He just a man? Even if He was a man who could do miraculous things, some of the Old Testament prophets did miraculous things, the Apostles did miraculous things, why should we believe that Jesus is the sovereign God of the universe, the one who will come back to set up the eternal Kingdom of God in this...in this world and establish His reign forever and ever? Why should we believe Him about that?

It hasn't happened, you know. As Peter records, "All things continue as they were, the skeptics and the mockers say Jesus hasn't come, He has come, two thousand years have gone by, what is there in his words to make us believe that He was telling us the truth?" That's a very important question. God dealt with that in the Old Testament, why should you believe when someone makes a prophecy that is in the far future? When a lot of time passes and generations come and go and live and die and disappear and it doesn't come to pass, why then should we believe that it will? That question could be asked of prophets in the Old Testament who prophesied the Kingdom thousands of years before us, hundreds of years before us. Why...why should they believe them then when they say there's coming a Kingdom? Why should they believe the prophets of the Old Testament when they said there's coming judgment, that God is going to come back, He's going to send back the great Judge, the Messiah who will judge sinners and condemn them, why should we believe those far future prophecies? How do we know those prophets spoke the truth? Why should we trust them?

God had a way to deal with that. As you read the Old Testament you will notice that not only did the true prophets make prophecies about the far future, they made prophecies about the near future. As you read through the prophecies, whether you're going all the way back to Elijah and Elisha, or whether you're reading the prophets of Daniel and Ezekiel and Isaiah, or some of the minor prophets, you will find that there is a pattern that occurs with true prophets, and it is this. They often prophesy about the far future judgment of God, the far future coming of the great Kingdom at the end of man's day, but they also make prophecies that are going to come to pass in the lifetime of the people who are hearing them. And the reason they made those prophecies that are going to come to pass in the time of those people's lives so that when they come to pass they would know that these men spoke the truth and that what they said came to pass in their lifetime, that was the proof that they spoke the revelation of God and they could be trusted for what was to come in the far future. That's how they proved to be true prophets. And if a prophet prophesied something and it didn't come to pass, what was done to him? He was condemned to death because God did not allow for people to be running around fast and loose saying things were going to happen when they weren't going to happen

because they weren't speaking for God. But a true prophet could only be verified as a true prophet for a future prophecy if he could be verified as a true prophet in a near prophecy. So it was very typical for prophets to prophesy something to come to pass very soon. People could see that what they said was absolutely true. And on the basis of that verification they knew they were a true prophet and they could trust him for the future prophecy.

And Jesus follows in that same pattern right here. He has said in verse 26, "Look, I am telling you something that's going to happen when you're gone. I'm telling you there's going to be a Second Coming in glory." Nobody there would be alive on this earth when that happened. So Jesus then verifying His believability about the future says this in verse 27, "But I say to you truthfully, there are some of those standing here who shall not taste death until they see the Kingdom of God." Just to prove to you that you can trust Me for the far future, I'm going to tell you you're going to see something before you die that will make you know that what I say is true. I'm going to give you a glimpse of Second Coming glory. I'm going to take you behind the scenes. Before you die you're going to see the reality of the Kingdom of God. I'm going to put on a preview of the Second Coming, a private preview so that you'll know that I am trustworthy. It's not for everybody, it's for some of those standing here. I'm saying this to you truthfully. That emphasizes His veracity. It's like when He says, "Verily, verily I say unto you, don't doubt Me on this, I'm speaking the truth. It's important that you understand it. Some of you standing here." Now the crowd that always followed Him, not the disciples who were His learners, not even all twelve Apostles, some of you and we find how many in verse 28, three...Peter, John and James. Some of you are going to see a preview of the Second Coming before you die. That phrase, "Who shall not taste death," was kind of a Hebraism, a kind of a colloquial expression that the Jews used. He could have said, "You will not die," but He used that very Jewish expression, "Who shall not taste death," because the Jews expressed death that way as if it were, and it is, the bitterest cup that anybody would ever drink. And by the way, that expression "tasting death" is found also in the parallel account of this passage in Matthew 16:28 and the other parallel account in Mark chapter 9 and verse 1. So it was a common way that they expressed dying, as if it were, and it is, the bitter cup of sorrow, the worst taste of all. He says you're not going to die. Everybody dies, but some of you are not going to die until you see the Kingdom of God.

Now Mark adds to what Jesus said. Mark and Matthew both describe the same event. Mark adds that it's going to come with power and Matthew adds that the Son of Man is going to come. So you're going to see the Kingdom, its power, its glory and the coming of the Son of Man. You're going to get previews of the coming of the Son of Man in Kingdom power and glory. This is a staggering promise. Jesus had just said there's going to be a Second Coming in glory and to prove to them that they could trust Him for the fall fulfillment, He says, "And I'm going to give you a preview of this and some of you are going to see it." Staggering promise. They had...they had been hoping for the Kingdom, hoping against hope now for the Kingdom because Jesus said in verse 22 He's going to be taken by the

scribes and the Pharisees and the chief priests and be killed. Then He was going to rise from the dead. I'm not sure they heard the rise from the dead part, but they sure heard the killed part. This wasn't the way the plan was supposed to go in their minds and Peter when Jesus said that, remember, said to Him, "Lord, this can't happen, it's not going to happen," and Jesus said, "Get thee behind Me, Satan," it has to happen, Peter, don't think you can alter the plan of God. If you stop Me from the cross, you accommodate Satan's purpose. They didn't want Jesus to die. That wasn't the plan. Jesus was going to set up the Kingdom on earth and they were going to be prominent in that Kingdom. Jesus had just said in verse 22 I'm going to die, not only am I going to die but He said in verse 22 some of you are too, you're going to have to deny yourself and take up your cross and follow Me. You're going to have to lose your life.

Now this was a bad turn in their thinking. They thought they were ascending some glorious path to the Kingdom and they find out that Jesus is going to be killed and they're going to die too. This is not the way they had designed it. And for Jesus then to say, "I'm going to come in glory," somebody might say, "Yeah, You just said You were going to die, and it's all going bad. How are we supposed to believe that that is not going to be the end, that...that the leaders of Israel having killed You and us and we're all going to die, how do we know there's a glorious future, how can we trust in that future, far-future promise?"

And, I mean everybody in Israel had been waiting for the King and it hadn't come yet. They could have joined the scoffers in 2 Peter...where is it...where is it...where is it? Everything continues as it has from the beginning, when is the Abrahamic promise, Davidic promise of the greatness of the Kingdom ever going to come, it never has come? Why should we believe it will come? How do we know that our Lord is really right when He says He's coming in glory?

Jesus says, "I'm going to prove to you that I'm right because I'm going to give you a near prophecy. Some of you, three of you, namely Peter, James and John, are going to see the power and the glory of My coming in a preview of the Kingdom of God before you die." That's a pretty astounding promise, amazing promise.

It wasn't that they hadn't seen Kingdom power. They had seen Kingdom power. Every time Jesus healed somebody, that was not human. Every time they healed somebody in the delegated power of Jesus, that was the power of the Kingdom of God. Every time they saw Jesus raise a person from the dead, or saw Jesus cast out demons or when they saw Jesus walk on water, still the storm, control the fish, they knew that wasn't human power. They saw it through Him. They saw it through them as, you remember, the Twelve were given the ability to do the very things that Jesus did miraculously. It wasn't that they had never seen the signs of the Kingdom, but they hadn't seen the Kingdom, they only saw the signs. That is to say they saw the Kingdom operating in the physical

world. They saw it with their eyes and their ears. But that was because it was visible to them, it was manifest to them in human terms. In fact, in chapter 10 of Luke and verse 9, Jesus says, "When there's a healing of someone who is sick, you can say the Kingdom of God has come near to you." Because there's only one explanation for that and that's that the power of the Kingdom is present. In Luke chapter 11 and verse 20 Jesus said, "If I cast out demons by the finger of God, then the Kingdom of God has come upon you." They had seen Kingdom power. They had seen it manifest in healing and casting out of demons. In chapter 16 of Luke and verse 16 the law of the prophets were proclaimed until John. Since then the Kingdom of God is preached and everyone is forcing his way into it. You've heard the gospel of the Kingdom, you've seen the power of the Kingdom. Chapter 17, I think it is, verse 21, He says, "The Kingdom of God is in your midst." They knew Kingdom power was there because they saw the miracles. They even actually participated in that miracle power.

But that was viewing the Kingdom from the human perspective. It would be like asking you, "Have you ever seen Kingdom power?" Well I've seen Kingdom power on display as much as my physical faculties allow me to discern it. I have seen the power of God, for example, in the life of people. I've seen the power of God transform lives. I've seen the power of God save sinners and give them...make them a new creation, give them a new heart, new longings, new aspirations, new desires, new hope, total transformation. That's the Kingdom of God. I haven't seen the Kingdom, but I've seen the evidence that the Kingdom is in our midst. I've seen Kingdom power operate. But Jesus said, "I'm going to show you more than the signs that point to the Kingdom. I'm going to show you more than the physical perception that it's there, I'm going to take you into the Kingdom itself. We're going behind the scenes, behind the curtain. We're going backstage where the divine operation actually takes place. You're going to see the eternal Kingdom and glory and the power that I will display in My coming. And it happened within an eight-day period. Look at verse 28.

"Some eight days after these sayings," very important time connection to show that this is the fulfillment of what He said, "Some eight days after these things, it came about that He took along Peter, and John, and James and went up into the mountain to pray. And while He was praying the appearance of His face became different and His clothing became white and gleaming. And behold, two men were talking with Him and they were Moses and Elijah who appearing in glory were speaking of His departure which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. Now Peter and his companions had been overcome with sleep, but when they were fully awake they saw His glory and the two men standing with Him. And it came about while these were parting from Him, Peter said to Jesus, 'Master, it's good for us to be here and let us make three tabernacles, one for You and one for Moses, and one for Elijah.' Not realizing what he was saying, and while he was saying this, a cloud formed and began to overshadow them and they were afraid. As they entered the cloud and a voice came out of the cloud saying, "This is My Son, My chosen One, listen to Him." And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and reported to no one in those days any

of the things which they had seen."

Now we're going to enrich this whole narrative from Matthew and from Mark to get the full picture. This is a staggering event. This is a supernatural event. This is going behind the curtain, as I said, into the other world. We live in a time/space world. We live in the dimensional world that is suited to humanity. Here we are taken into the eternal Kingdom.

Note verse 8, "Some eight days after these sayings." Some means that it's not a precise indication eight days, Matthew and Mark say six days. But that kind of points up the various ways people calculated, so you see that a lot in Scripture. It is six days in between, it is eight days if you count the day that Jesus made the prophecy and the day it actually came to pass. That's why Luke says, "About," or "Some," eight days. There's no discrepancy here whatsoever. Matthew and Mark simply refer to the intervening days and Luke chooses to include the day in which Jesus made the prophecy and the day in which it came to pass. That's common in biblical chronology to see time counted in both of those ways.

So it was on that very eighth day that Jesus took along Peter, John and James, and He took them with Him to fulfill what He had just promised. Now they are already designated as the inner circle back in chapter 8 verse 51 when Jesus went in, you remember, to raise that daughter from the dead. It says He took only Peter, John and James and they were the inner circle all the way through His ministry. When it comes to the Garden of Gethsemane when Jesus goes into the Garden of Gethsemane to pray, it is recorded that He took with Him Peter, James and John, again the three intimate apostles. Why did He choose three? The answer is, Deuteronomy 19:15, "Anything that is stated to be true must be confirmed in the mouth of two or three witnesses in order that he might have credible testimony to these intimate events that occurred, these supernatural events." Peter, James and John were there in this, His most personal revelation of Himself, they were there in that garden time in again the most intimate personal revelation of His pain and suffering and anticipation of the cross so that there would be believable accurate testimony to the reality of this event. Jesus pulled three to Him because He couldn't give Himself to Twelve. Obviously He pulled three to develop intimate relationships with them so that they could be the leaders of the others. But He pulled three in order to fulfill the requirement that God Himself established about validating testimony. And by the way, that two or three witnesses repeated at least four times in the New Testament as a standard of testimony that is to be believed.

And so these three are taken with Him. And it says they went up into the mountain to pray, a common activity, by the way. Jesus did this a lot and Luke loves to record the prayer life of Jesus and His apostles and does so more than the other writers. Matthew says it was a high mountain. Mountains get up over four thousand feet around Capernaum and some places. It doesn't tell us which one, a lot of speculation through the years, people saying it's this mountain, that mountain.

The Bible doesn't say and if the Bible doesn't say, why speculate? We don't know, it's not important. If it had been important we would have that information. Somewhere near Capernaum, however, in upper Galilee region north of the Sea of Galilee where Jesus was conducting His ministry. One of the several possible high mountains, as I said, going up as high as four thousand feet. We know it was near Galilee because after this event they came down and went through Capernaum. So Jesus takes these three up into a mountain. And what is going to happen there is the greatest revelation of Jesus, the greatest revelation of Jesus yet. And in His lifetime, the greatest revelation of who He really is and the greatest event between His birth and His death. It is a glimpse of the eternal Kingdom and Kingdom glory that will be manifest at the Second Coming of Jesus.

Now there are four ways in which the glory of Christ is manifest. I'm going to give you two of them this morning, and two next week. Four ways, number one, the Son's transformation, the Son's transformation, verse 29. I love the understated way in which the Bible expresses things in very simple terms, and yet the event is so profoundly inexplicable. The words are so easy to understand. "And while He was praying," verse 29, "while He was praying..." By the way, only He was praying because verse 32 says the others were sleeping. They slept in a lot of important prayer meetings. They do it again and they're not alone, but they do it again in Gethsemane...Gethsemane in Luke 22:45, they fall asleep there too. No matter how monumental the event was, they seemed to be overcome by sleep. It may indicate something of their weariness but actually in Luke 22:45 it says that in Gethsemane they fell asleep because of sorrow. I think one of the ways they dealt with their pain and their grief and their anxiety and all of that was to go to sleep. And they would be bearing a high level of anxiety here because Jesus had just declared to them that He's going to be killed by the leaders of Israel and that just didn't fit the system in their mind. And so it may have been that sadness also contributed to this sleep as it did in the twenty-second chapter when they fell asleep in Gethsemane. But whatever the reasons, they were sleeping, so Jesus was left to pray alone.

And at the time of His praying, the appearance of His face became different, became *heteron*, a word that means different. It was different than what? Oh it was different than what it always had been, it was different, it was other than. In fact, Matthew explains it this way, He was transfigured, transfigured, and Matthew uses a Greek verb, *metamorphoother(?)*, a metamorphosis took place. You know what that means, don't you? You think about metamorphosis, you think about what creature? A butterfly because there's absolutely no way that you could assume, if you looked at what it was before it went into a cocoon, and what it was when it came out, you would not connect the two because the metamorphosis is so total, so dramatic. Jesus' form, *morphe*, changed, His body changed. They had known Him only as a human being, His body had been a body like the body of any human being. When the shepherds came to the manger, they saw a baby that looked like any other baby. When Mary picked up her baby, that baby looked like any other baby she had seen. When Joseph looked into the face of that little boy running around the carpenter shop in Nazareth, He

looked like any other little boy that Joseph had ever seen. He had the same human characteristics and features that any boy has. And as He grew into a youth at the age of twelve, He's in the temple having questions and answers with the doctors, what they saw even though He said He had to be about His Father's business and was coming into the full awareness of His Sonship, they could see only a boy, only a twelve-year-old boy. And that was the way it was when the disciples saw Him. When they heard Him teach, He spoke as a man. When they saw Him eat, they saw Him eat as a man. When they saw Him sleep, He slept as a man sleeps. He walked and talked and behaved as a man. His *morphe*, His form, His body was human, it was 100 percent human, it was what they were used to seeing.

They knew there was Kingdom power in Him and they knew that He had supernatural energy that came through Him and was even delegated to them. But it was not visible in His physical form. He didn't go around with a halo over His head. I hate to foul up some medieval art but He didn't. There was nothing about His humanness that would distinguish Him from any other man, other than I personally believe He was probably better looking and more compelling, more dramatic as He had to have been the finest craftsmanship that the Father ever did because it would have been untainted by sin and the Fall.

But all of a sudden a metamorphosis takes place and Matthew says, "His face shone like the sun." All of a sudden His face was as blazing as a noonday sun. Now that's a change. And then it says, if you look down in verse 29, "His clothing became white and gleaming." Became *leukos*, that's dazzling and brilliant, and *exastrapton*, to flash like lightning. This is coming from the inside. From the inside of what they were used to seeing as the *morphe* of Jesus, the human form, blazing light starts coming out. And His face, of course, is only His skin and its like the sun shining. And His skin, the rest of the body, shines through the garments as dazzling as lightning flashes.

What is this telling us? This is God. This is the *Shekinah* of God. When God manifested Himself in the Old Testament, He manifested Himself as light, didn't He? As light. God is light and in Him is no darkness at all, John writes. And light is synonymous with eternal life. God has manifested His Spirit life in light. Jesus had said, "I am the light of the world," but it never had been seen before. And here was an incredible glimpse of eternal life. This is what eternal life looked like when it's translated into light. And it permeated through His transfigured body so that literally He's ablaze like a flame with the sun at its peak. The Old Testament, the glory of God, you'll remember, appeared a number of times, the glory of God rested in Sinai, the blazing fiery light of God. The glory of God showed up in the mountain when Moses, you remember, said, "Let me see Your glory," and God veiled him a little bit and let His glory pass by and the glory was so dazzling and brilliant that it got on the face of Moses. And in chapter 34 of Exodus when he went down the mountain, his face was blazing with that reflected light. When the tabernacle was finished in the fortieth chapter of Exodus, the glory of God

descended out of heaven, came down, went over the tabernacle and then went right into the Holy of Holies and there was the symbol of the dwelling of God there as that light, that blazing light, when into the Holy of Holies. And when the time came to move the tabernacle, the light went up and led the people as a cloud of light in the day and as a pillar of fire of light at night. When the temple was finished in 1 Kings chapter 8 verses 10 and 11, it says the glory of God again came down into the Holy of Holies of the temple. God manifesting Himself in blazing glory. God chose light as the way to reveal the essence of His spiritual eternity to man. Matthew 25:31, He's coming again in blazing glory and light, this same glory. Revelation chapter 1 shows Him moving in His church in blazing glory. Revelation 19, He comes in this blazing glory. Revelation 21:23, there's so much glory coming out of Jesus Christ that heaven doesn't have any lights or lamps because the Lamb Himself is the light of heaven. The glorious light of the very essence of God's nature and the very essence of Christ and the very essence of the Spirit of God comes out of the jewel that is the...the New Jerusalem and refracts through all the jewels that make up the perimeter that makes up that city and spatters it light throughout the endless universe for all eternity. This is what they saw.

Now, you say, "Wait a minute, they were asleep." Yeah, but they're going to wake up. Unfortunately for you they're not going to wake up until next Sunday. But when they do, you're going to like it. And I'll venture to say there are things that you have never ever thought about regarding what happened here. This is so phenomenal. If you ever wonder who Jesus is, this ought to stop your wondering, right? He is the eternal God. He is the very essence of light. The light didn't shine on Him, it shined from Him. He is the light. When He said it in John 8:12, "I am the light of the world," He meant that. There's no question about who He is. He appeared as a man, but He was eternity. He appeared as a servant, but He was essential eternal life, God a very God.

For a moment it was revealed...it was revealed. People who deny the deity of Christ have a major problem with this passage because here is glory not coming on Him from somewhere else, but here is glory coming out from inside Him. It is the truest expression of His essential being as God. So the Son's transformation proves that He is the King, proves that He is the eternal Son, proves that He is the coming One.

Secondly, not only the Son's transformation, but the saints association...the saints association. This is amazing. Just briefly, verse 30 and 31, "Behold, two men were talking with Him and they were Moses and Elijah who appearing in glory were speaking of His departure which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem."

This is just so powerful, so purposeful. And Luke can't help but write, "And behold," because that expresses shock and surprise. It would be one thing to just see Jesus there, that would be enough, but all of a sudden two men...two men. And again, I think it's reflective of two or three witnesses.

Two men to affirm Jesus as the promised Messiah. And these two men are standing there talking to Him about His departure, about His death, affirming...listen to me...that His death is not a breach of some plan, but here is Moses and Elijah chatting with Jesus about the planned death. This isn't break into the plan...this is...Moses knew that was the plan, after all, Moses had been the instrument by which God had put the whole sacrificial system into place, right? It all came through Moses that he received all that instruction about the sacrificial system which simply was symbolic of the One who would come and give His life for sinners. It didn't surprise Elijah because it was the message of the prophets that the Messiah would come and the Messiah would have to provide for sinners. Both the law and the prophets confirmed that.

Everything is on schedule. This is such marvelous news. Unfortunately, as I said, they're asleep and haven't yet awakened to what's going on. But we'll wake up to it all with them next time. But look again at this. Moses and Elijah. By the way, they were men...that's interesting because in the other Kingdom when we get there we're going to be who we are. If you're a man, you're going to be a man. We're not going to be some kind of androgynous, floating spirits. But we won't be like we are here in the sense that there's no marrying or giving in marriage, but we will be what we are in absolute divine perfection. And they were having a conversation. That's encouraging. There's information being passed around, there's intelligence. They were talking about the plan which means there's usefulness and purposefulness and things are going somewhere. And they're socializing, Moses and Elijah, hanging out with Jesus.

Why Moses and Elijah? Well I thought about this and I thought...well, if I could go back to the Old Testament and think of which two characters most prominent in the Old Testament had unusual demises, or unusual exists out of this world, the first two that come to my mind are Moses and Elijah. Most people, they died and he was buried with his fathers, right? You go through Genesis, he died and he was buried, he died and he was buried. You know, it's kind of a routine thing. It's still going on, obviously. But not Moses and Elijah. Moses had a very unusual death and his body was never found. His body was never found because there was a battle over his body between Satan and Michael and they were fighting over the body of Moses. Satan wanted to do something really bad with the body of Moses. We don't know what because he didn't succeed. They were contending for the body of Moses and it tells us in Deuteronomy 34:6 that God just took his body and buried it Himself. Nobody knows where...nobody knows where. So somebody could raise the question...well what happened to Moses? We're not sure what happened to Moses? Well good news, he's over there on the other side. You may not be able to find his body, you may wonder about where it is and why he disappeared in such a strange way, but the good news is he's over there because here he is appearing on the other side.

And Elijah, Elijah, do you remember what happened to him? He didn't even die. He had a private Rapture. He went to heaven in a chariot of fire. That's what it says in 2 Kings 2:11, he just...God just picked him up in His private chariot and shwissh, he was in heaven. Never died. So that's the second person who had the sort of strange exodus. And so here is Moses who had a strange exodus and here is Elijah who had a strange exodus and they're talking with Jesus about His exodus. You can just kind of hear the story. Well, Moses said, "Let me tell you about mine." And Elijah says, "Huh, you think it's something to be buried by God, I wasn't even buried. I just went up in this chariot, let me tell you about the chariot, it had this, you know..." And Jesus smiling and saying, "You haven't seen anything yet, wait till you see Me go." I don't want to trivialize the scene but that's what it says. They were speaking of His departure which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.

Now if there were two Old Testament witnesses that the people of Israel would trust more than any others, it would probably be Moses and Elijah. Moses was the most revered, still is the most revered among the Jews. The greatest leader in Israel's history led them out of captivity, that's why he's their final hero. He was a king in authority, he was a prophet in message, he was a priest in service to God for His people. He gave the Pentateuch, the five books that set down the law. I mean, he was trustworthy. As a witness to the other side, couldn't get better than Moses and running a close second to Moses would have to be Elijah. Elijah was such a godly person that like Enoch, the only other person who was so beloved by God that he didn't die, and Moses stands for the law and Elijah stands for the prophets and the Old Testament was always called the law and the prophets. And what was Elijah's distinction? He had fought against idolatry. Moses gave the law, and Elijah guarded it. He was probably the primary guardian of the law of God among the people. First Kings 17 through 19, 2 Kings chapters 1 and 2, he fought for the law, he fought for the honor of God against idolatry. God validated his prophecies with miracles, you remember. Moses the prominent lawgiver, Elijah the prominent prophet, they represent the Old Testament. They represent the saints. And there they are standing in the presence of Jesus having a discussion about Jesus' upcoming exodus. There couldn't be anybody give more assurance to Peter, James and John than Moses and Elijah.

You say, "Well how would they know who they are? Did they have name tags?" Well I don't think they had name tags. They probably introduced themselves. You say, "But isn't it true that the saints don't get their glorified bodies until after the Tribulation. That's right, the Old Testament saints are the spirits of just men made perfect, their spirits are in heaven, their bodies are not yet raised from the dead. They will be at the time of the end of the Tribulation when Jesus returns to set up His Kingdom. "Well where did they get visible bodies?" Well look, the Lord can...the Lord took them out under unusual conditions, He can treat them any way He wants in the meantime. Either they received the body for a day, that they might be manifestly visible, or they got theirs early...whichever. And how did they know them? Because it was revealed to them. They may have well told them who they were. But here are the men who very well form the law and the prophets of the Old Testament.

Here the men representing the Old Testament and what they're saying is as those who represent the Old Testament, isn't it wonderful, Lord, that You're on schedule. This is not an interruption. Your departure is coming and down the way, so is Your glory. The very men from inside the Kingdom representing the law and the prophets standing with Jesus in His glory is a confirmation of His messiahship, confirmation of His deity, confirmation that the plan of God is on schedule, confirmation that it will ultimately end in glory. They appear, verse 31 says, in glory. That is to say they're a part of that whole majesty, that whole glory, that whole essential life that's characteristic of that eternal kingdom. And they're talking about the departure which he was about to accomplish. That's wonderful. The word accomplish means to fulfill. It wasn't an accident, it wasn't a breach in the plan, it was a fulfillment of the plan.

So there they are in some...some form as men, and yet glorified men. They had the kind of body that you're going to have and I'm going to have. Philippians 3 says we're going to have a body like unto the glorious body of Jesus Christ, like unto His resurrection body. And there they are standing to talk about the death, the resurrection and the ascension of Jesus Christ which is to be accomplished before He comes in glory. And verse 32 says, "Now Peter and his companions had been overcome with sleep." There are times to sleep and there are times to wake up. This is a time to wake up. And next week we're all going to wake up together to find out what happens.

Father, we thank You for the manifestation of the glory of Christ in this incredible account. When we think about where in the Scripture we go to go behind the curtains, to go into the other world, as it were to go into the eternal Kingdom, to get beyond our mortality, to get beyond our humanity, to get beyond space and time, the glimpses are rare...rare, we see them in the visions of the prophets, we see them in the visions of John in the apocalypse, we see it here in a very unique way as if we were standing there with Peter, James and John to see the revelation of who Christ really is and to be reminded again that the departure, including His death, is part of the plan to be accomplished at Jerusalem. We are reminded how the eternal Kingdom operates in time in space in a country in a city through human beings, to accomplish divine and supernatural outcome. We thank You that we had this glimpse behind the scenes. We really can't wait to wake up and embrace it in its fullness as we come together again next week to see the glory of Christ in Second Coming preview. In the meantime, Lord, we honor You. This erases those sometimes lingering doubts. Is there really another world? Is there really an eternal Kingdom? There is and You took Your beloved apostles there to be eyewitnesses and thus did John say, "We beheld His glory, the glory as the only begotten of the Father full of grace and truth." And thus did Peter write, "We saw His glory when we were with Him on the holy mount." And the record stands of the unveiled Christ, our Lord and our Savior. We bow to Him, our Lord and God, Redeemer and King. Amen.

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