

A Glimpse of the King's Return, Part 2

Scripture: Luke 9:32-36

Code: 42-125

As we come to our time in the Word of God this morning, all the echo of that magnificent music ringing in our hearts, we want to turn to a portion of Scripture where we have been now for many weeks, the ninth chapter of Luke's gospel. As I told you last week when contemplating what message I would want to bring to you at this Christmas season concerning the honor and glory of Christ, I couldn't find anything better than the very passage where we find ourselves in this amazing ninth chapter of Luke's gospel. We're looking at a section that actually runs from verse 26 down through verse 36. I apologize to some of you who are only with us on this Sunday that there will be things that we have already learned about this chapter and this section and perhaps things yet to learn in the weeks ahead that you will miss but we'll endeavor to open up this text in such a way to bring honor to Christ on this very special occasion.

One of the great sections of Handel's Messiah has this text and the glory...the glory of the Lord shall be revealed...shall be revealed. That text is taken from the fortieth chapter of Isaiah where Isaiah the prophet predicts the coming of John the Baptist. He predicts the coming of the one who will be a voice crying in the wilderness, the one who will be the forerunner to the Messiah. He promises that that prophet will come and he will announce the Messiah's coming. And then Isaiah speaks of the Messiah but speaks of Him in those words, "And the glory, the glory of the Lord shall be revealed." Thus does Isaiah identify the Messiah, the Lord Jesus as the glory of the Lord. They are one and the same. The Lord Jesus Christ is the glory of God manifest in human form.

We all understand who know the Word of God that God did reveal Himself and His glory on many occasions. Moses told the people of Israel that the glory of the Lord would appear to them. And it did, according to the ninth chapter of Leviticus. It was in the wilderness where God was feeding Israel with manna that His glory was seen by the people. It was at Mount Sinai when Moses went up to commune with God that the glory of the Lord covered the mountain and shined into the face of Moses. It was at the completion of the tabernacle that the glory of the Lord descended and dwelt over and then in the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle. It was at the initiation of the priestly office itself that the glory of the Lord was seen, according to the ninth chapter of Leviticus. It was at that famous place, Kadesh Barnea, where the people of Israel rebelled in the wilderness, that the glory of the Lord again appeared. It was at the time of the terrible sins of Korah, Dathan and Abiram who illegitimately intruded into the priestly office that the glory of the Lord again appeared in judgment. It was when the

people rebelled against Moses and Aaron in Numbers 16 that the glory of God was manifest, threatening to consume them all in a moment. When the people were thirsty in the wilderness of Meribah and Moses and Aaron fell face down before the Lord, Numbers 20 says the glory of the Lord was present. And at the completion of the temple the glory of the Lord was manifest in 1 Kings chapter 8. In fact, on the occasion of the first offering in the temple, the glory was seen and the people worshiped. Wherever and whenever the glory of the Lord appeared, it was a manifestation of God Himself. All these appearances were simply ways in which the invisible Spirit, the eternal God could manifest Himself. And He chose to do it in shining light, a cloud, fire, blazing light. The mystery of this indescribable revelation is attempted to be explained in the first chapter of Ezekiel as Ezekiel looks, as it were, at the blazing glory of God and describes it as light refracted and light spinning in wheels. It is frankly too mysterious to be described, but we do have those Old Testament pictures.

The glory of the Lord revealed in those ways is still shrouded in mystery. But nonetheless, we are grateful for God's self-revelation as mysterious as it may be, grateful that God did not remain hidden, grateful that God did not remain silent, that God did not remain invisible, that God did not remain shrouded in some kind of eternal darkness, but that He shined the light of glory, even though in the mystery of the *Shekinah*, in ways which were visible and which were recorded in Scripture. God was present in His creation. God was present in providence. God was present in history. And it is so recorded in the words of the Old Testament. But still there was mystery.

Job put it this way, "Lo, these are but the outskirts of His ways and how small a whisper do we hear of Him," Job 26:14. Those revelations were but a whisper. They were but the outskirts. Or as in the personal experience of Moses on the mount when God showed him His glory, He only showed him His afterglow, just the fringe of His glory, for the full glory of God would incinerate any person who came before it. Even the prophets like Daniel who received such immense revelations from God, who were given visions of the glory of God, said, "I heard but I didn't understand." The glory of God was present but too mysterious to fully grasp. God whispered in His *Shekinah*, but He shouted in His Son. It is in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God that the glory of God is most marvelously and clearly manifest for there we see the complex of His divine attributes manifest through a human being understandable, comprehensible to us. And so does the writer of Hebrews begin his marvelous book with these words, "God after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions in many ways in these last days has spoken to us in His Son who He appointed heir of all things through whom He also made the world," and then this statement, "And He, God's Son, is the brightness of His glory and the exact representation of His nature." Never has the glory of God been so brightly manifest, never has the nature of God been so exactly revealed as in the person of Jesus Christ. When you see Him, you see God's glory, you see God's nature. Hebrews 1 says He is the brightness of His glory. He is the *apogazma*(???), that is to say He is the sending forth, He is the shining out of God. He expresses God's attributes, God's essence, God's nature to us. Just as the radiance of the

sun reaches the earth and lights the earth and warms the earth and gives life and growth to the earth, so in Christ the glorious light of the nature of God shines into the hearts of men and women.

That is exactly what Paul said in 2 Corinthians. He said it is the glory of God shining to us in the face of Jesus Christ. He is the Lord of glory. He reveals the nature of God, the essence of God in a way that the whispers of creation and the whispers of the *Shekinah* and the whispers of the Old Testament record could not do. He is, as Malachi 4:2, the Sun of righteousness who arises with healing in His beams.

All of that to say, Jesus is the glory of God...the glory of God. That is to say, Jesus is the manifestation of God Himself. Now go back to our text and we have from verse 26 to 36 an event in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ that is the most powerful and dramatic proof that He is the glory of God, that He is the *Shekinah*. In fact, we have to begin in verse 26 with the words of Jesus, "Whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when He comes in His glory and the glory of the Father, and of the holy angels."

Here Jesus speaks of His return, of His Second Coming in an even fuller glory than manifest in His first coming. The first time He came, and it was clear that He was the glory of God, we read that in John 1:14, and we, writes John, beheld His glory. And what glory was that? The glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. We saw His glory and it was the same glory that belongs to God. But even though the glory of Christ reveals God in ways that the whispers of the Old Testament didn't, it is still not yet the full revelation. If you read Matthew 24, Matthew 25, if you read Daniel chapter 7, if you read Revelation chapter 19, you will see at the Second Coming that Jesus will come in full blazing glory, not veiled by human flesh and the glory will be so powerful that men and women across the world will cry for the rocks and the mountains to fall on them, to hide them in darkness from the face, the blazing face of the glorious returning Christ. You find that as the prophet said when He hits the earth His glory will fill the earth. Jesus will come in full glory, as full a glory as any of His creation could withstand and survive.

So Jesus in verse 26 says, "I'm coming in glory...I'm coming in glory. I am the glory of God. I have come in glory." John says He did. "But I'm coming even in greater glory." How do we know that that's true? How do we know that He is the glory of God? How do we know that He came the first time in the greatest glory that had yet been manifest but will come again in even greater glory? How do we know that?

Verse 27, He gives a promise. "I say to you truthfully," I want to prove this to you, I don't want you to have any doubts. So, "There are some of those standing here, some of those people standing there, who shall not taste death until they see the Kingdom of God." In this statement Jesus says in case

you might have cause to doubt that I am the glory of God, to doubt that though I am going to be turned over to the Jewish leaders and be murdered, I'm going to die, it's going to be a traumatic and difficult thing for you to endure, you need to understand this, that is not the end. He already had promised back in verse 22 that He would be rejected, that He would suffer and that He would be killed. But also, that He would be raised up on the third day. He made that promise. Once the apostles got into the throes of His death, as you well know, they had a hard time hanging on to confidence in His resurrection. Jesus wanting to affirm and confirm their faith even beyond His promise gives them this preview of the Kingdom of God and of His true glory. He says in verse 27, "Some of you are going to see it. Not all of you, but some of you."

Verse 28 then is the fulfillment of that promise in verse 27. "Some eight days after these sayings," the other writers say six days, they counting only the days in between, Luke counting the day He promised it, and the day He fulfilled it, "Some eight days after these sayings, it came about that He took along Peter, and John, and James and went up to the mountain to pray." He took these three, they were the inner circle, as we know among the apostles. They were the three to whom He referred in verse 27 as the sum of those standing here. It was important that there be three of them because the law of Deuteronomy said that all things to be witnessed to as true must be verified in the mouth of two or three witnesses, and what they are about to see is going to be so unbelievable, so miraculous that it is crucial that the maximum number of witnesses be able to report this miracle at the appropriate time. And so He takes along Peter, James and John up into the mountain to pray. They will have an experience which will leave its mark on them forever.

Starting then in verse 29 we come to this event called the transfiguration. Jesus demonstrates His glory, His glory is here revealed in four ways. Number one, in the Son's transfiguration, verse 29, and we looked at this last time, I'm reviewing it, "While He was praying the appearance of His face became different," *heteron, heteros*, as opposed to the same. It became different. He took on another form. Matthew says He was transfigured and he uses a Greek word from which we get the English word metamorphosis which means to go through a complete change of form. They had known Jesus as a man and indeed He was a man in every sense a man, and when you looked at Jesus what you saw was a man, you saw a physical body that looked like every other human being looked. He didn't look like some kind of space alien, He didn't float above the ground. He walked, He talked, He did everything that men do.

But all of a sudden there was a metamorphosis. Luke says His face was different. Matthew says it blazed like the sun. It was like looking into the sun at high noon. And then Luke writes, "His clothing became white and gleaming. It became dazzling, as what the word *leukos* means, brilliant, not so much the flat white that we think of, like a white piece of cloth or paint that's white, but rather something that's dazzling, that's shining like diamond white and gleaming which is used to describe lightning. So His face is like the sun and His body is like blazing lightning coming through His clothing.

What are they seeing? They're not seeing light shining on Jesus, they're seeing the glory of God shining out from Jesus. This is the revelation that you have here, the *Shekinah*, the same presence that walked in the Garden in the cool of the day and talked with Adam and Eve, the same presence that appeared to Moses on Mount Sinai in the glory that shined on His face, the same presence that appeared in the wilderness leading the children of Israel by a pillar of cloud in the day and a pillar of fire at night, the same glorious, blazing light that came into the tabernacle and into the temple. This is God, this is the glory of God manifest, not on Jesus as on the face of Moses, but from within Him as evidence that this is God Himself and the glory comes from the inside. The truth of who He is is revealed in the Son's transfiguration.

And then secondly, we saw last time, the saints' association. And then a most amazing thing happens in verse 30, "Behold, two men were talking with Him and they were Moses and Elijah." And they were appearing also in glory. They were in this glorious kind of transcendent form and they were speaking of His departure. The Greek word is *exodus* which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. The scene becomes even more dramatic. Here is Jesus and from within Him is shining out the essence of the nature of God in light and then standing with Him, Moses and Elijah, the two greatest men of the Old Testament. Moses, as you remember, the giver of the law and Elijah, the greatest upholder of the law, Moses the law, Elijah the prophets, they represent really the Old Testament which was known to the Jews as the law and the prophets. Why are they there? Because they are two witnesses from the Old Testament, attesting to the deity of Jesus Christ.

There they stand. And what are they doing? They're having a conversation with the Son of God. They're talking with Him and they're talking about His departure which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. They know Him. They have known Him since they arrived in heaven, centuries before this event. If there's any question about where Moses and Elijah have been since their deaths were a little strange, Moses just disappeared because God Himself buried His body, and Elijah never died, he went to heaven in a chariot of fire. So if there was any question about what might have happened to them, the question is answered here...they've been in the eternal Kingdom, they've been in the other world, they've been in the presence of God. And there they would have known the Son of God, known Him personally, known Him well before He ever came into the world, before He was ever born in Bethlehem. And they therefore would have known the plan of God, the plan of redemption which they would have looked forward to, Moses in the imagery of the sacrificial system, and Elijah in his prophecies of God's grace to come upon His people. There they were and they're talking, they're talking with Christ. What an amazing confirmation and affirmation of who this is. This is the son of God with whom they were very familiar. This isn't Moses and Elijah meeting somebody for the first time. This is the Son of God whom they have worshiped ever since they arrived there who only recently has come into this world as a baby and now grown into a man in a thirty-year period of time.

And what are they talking about? They're talking about His departure. What's that? His death, His resurrection and His ascension from Jerusalem into heaven again, and the idea of the conversation is that everything is on schedule as originally planned. This is so affirming, the giants of redemptive history recognized Jesus as the Son of God and they stand there engulfed in His glory.

Now that takes us to the third point and we come now to the apostles. We have seen the Son's transfiguration. We have seen the saints' association. I guess we could call this the sleepers' suggestion because we find in verse 32 this interesting comment. "Now Peter and his companions had been overcome with sleep." You know, there are some times to stay awake, just there are just some times in life when it really would be to your advantage to keep your eyes opened, during a sermon is one of those times. I don't want to push the point but it seems to be an opportunity that doesn't come by very often. But that would be a minor detail, compared to this occasion. And I don't think there was a level of disinterest or apathy that led them to this because the language in the Greek here is quite interesting, verse 32, it says, "His companions had been overcome with sleep," that is to say it was not voluntary...it was not voluntary. They had entered into...it's a perfect passive in the Greek, they had entered into a condition, or a state in which *bareo*, the verb means to be heavy. They just couldn't stay awake and so they went into sleep, *hypno* from which we get hypnosis. All of that language means that there wasn't some indifference here, there wasn't some personal disinterest in the situation, it wasn't that having been called up into the mountain to pray with Jesus they really...they really just didn't want to participate, they did. But they just couldn't help it. They were literally overwhelmed with sleep. One could suggest that that was a divine act of God and God sort of anaesthetized them. But that's not the case because Jesus woke them up to take in what was going on which was critical. It was simply the idea that they were weary, they were tired, they were deeply burdened because they had just been told that Jesus was going to suffer many things, be rejected and killed by the leaders of Israel which had immense implications. Here is the Messiah being killed by the people He's come to redeem, in their minds. Not only have they just heard that Jesus is going to be killed but they had just been told that if they're going to follow Him they have to take up their own cross which means they themselves are going to likely end up being killed as well. And so the burden is very heavy on their hearts.

But they had a habit of falling asleep, didn't they? Later in the Garden of Gethsemane, Luke records in chapter 22 verse 45, that when Jesus took them into the garden to pray with Him, the night of His betrayal when He was going to the cross, they fell asleep there, too. And it does lead me to believe as well that Jesus had a physical strength that was beyond normal. It wasn't beyond being human, it was just beyond normal because His body was not impacted by sin. It was not a body that was affected by the Fall, He had a level of strength that others did not have. There were times, however, when even He went to sleep out of weariness, such as on the boat in the Sea of Galilee in the midst

of a storm. But for now, He was awake and praying and being transfigured and they were asleep.

Well, verse 32, "When they were fully awake," which indicates it took a little time to awaken them. And you can imagine that when they initially were awakened by Jesus and they saw what they saw, they were busy rubbing their eyes and wondering whether they were in a dream or not because there they see Jesus in this blazing glory and there they see Moses and Elijah and the question always comes up...how did they know that was Moses and Elijah? Did they have name tags or badges, or what? Did Moses have the law and did Elijah have some prophetic robe they recognize...? No, it was simply that God revealed to them clearly who they were or else they introduced themselves, either case. It says that when they were fully awake they saw His glory, that was the reason for having them there, they saw the blazing face of Jesus like the sun, they saw His body with what was like lightning coming through the clothing, and they saw also the two men standing with Him. This to them was immensely critical confirmation that Jesus was in fact the glory of God and that was attested to by Moses and Elijah the greatest Old Testament figures. If you ever question who Jesus is, this is a glorious scene in which to have the question answered. They saw what the Lord wanted them to see.

We don't know how long this went on. But verse 33 says, "And it came about," which indicates some kind of time interval. Maybe they engaged in the discussion. Maybe they listened. I hope they did as Jesus and Elijah and Moses discussed the future, His departure, and even perhaps His coming again. "But it came about as these," that would be Moses and Elijah, "were parting from Him." The scene was drawing to an end. Moses and Elijah began to leave. "Peter," the impetuous one, the verbal one, the spokesman, "said to Jesus," and here comes the sleepers' suggestion. This, by the way, shows astounding self-confidence. Can you imagine yourself in the same scene? If I were to imagine myself in that scene, I would be hard pressed to assume that I would open my mouth and say anything...the trauma, the shock would be more than one could...could even endure. The gasping for breath would leave you speechless. But Peter has this...this brashness to him, this aggressiveness to his character. It's an astounding act of self-confidence. He is now out of the time/space/dimension, in a sense, he is out of his own world and realm, he is in the eternal Kingdom. He has just fulfilled the promise that Jesus said, "You're going to see the Kingdom of God," he's departed the realm in which we live, he is in the Kingdom of God and the first thing he wants to do is make suggestions about what should be done. Give me a break.

"Peter said to Jesus, 'Master,'" now that sounds a little...a little quick, so I would just help Peter a little bit here. Matthew records that he said, "*Kurios*," Mark records that he said, "Rabbi," teacher, Luke records that he said, "*Epistata*," master and I'm glad for that because what that means as I've taught you through the years, that when you have the synoptic accounts on the same event, you take the sum of the parts, that he at least said, "Master, Lord, teacher," so that he was overwhelmed by the glory of what he was seeing and grabbed every word, at least those three, to demonstrate the wonder in his heart. He was full of respect for the glorified Lord. And his first comment does make sense. "It

is good for us to be here." Which is another way of saying, "I like this. This is what I've been waiting for. You know, when we first started following You as the Messiah," has to be his thought process, "we were waiting for the Kingdom. We finally have seen it. You know, it got a little bit distant, a little bit bleak and then we heard You were going to be rejected and You were going to be killed and we were going to have to be taking up a cross, and all this sadness and all of this disappointment and it wasn't what the original plan was supposed to be and things weren't going the way we thought, and now here we are and this is what we've been waiting for. Lord, it's really good for us to be here, it's *kalos*, it's excellent, it's the best. In other words, we need to be here and we don't need to go back there. This is what we've been looking for."

I don't...I think there was some holy dread there, I think there was some holy fear in that moment. But Peter also recognizes that this is the best experience of his life and he's right. This is far better than pain and a cross and rejection and murder. And here you have then the testimony of the apostles that this was the Kingdom of God, this is where we want to stay, he says, this is it. So the testimony of Jesus' transfiguration proves He is the glory of God. The testimony of the saints' association proves He is the Son of God. And the suggestion of the apostles proves He is the glory of God because there in the midst of that glory, having been ushered by this vision into the Kingdom of God, they affirm that this is the place they have been waiting for.

And so, Peter says, "I have a proposal, here's my proposal. Let's make three tabernacles, one for You and one for Moses and one for Elijah." Not realizing what he was saying which was pretty common for him. Matthew says he did say, "If You wish." He did defer to the Lord, "If You wish, let's make three tabernacles." What's he saying? He's saying, "Let's make this permanent here. We've got to stay here." Now there's humility in this. He didn't say, "Let's make six tabernacles." He didn't include himself and James and John. He knows that he is not to be so honored as those who belong to the eternal Kingdom. It's the glorious persons that need to be properly honored, but the idea here is not just to honor them but to make the place permanent so that he can permanently remain in that marvelous reality. "Can't we stay here?" What were his motivations? Well, this is what he had been anticipating from the start and better. He had heard the prophecy that some of you are going to see the Kingdom and he knew he was seeing it. His excitement was heightened to its highest point ever in his entire life when he saw the glory of Christ and Moses and Elijah all associated within the eternal Kingdom and he heard them speaking about the exodus of Christ and perhaps he thought that that might mean the Kingdom was imminent. And here were two great prophets, Moses and Elijah, ready to lead people out of the bondage of sin into the Kingdom of God. Maybe he thought that this was just the first element in the actual coming of the eternal Kingdom.

It was also at a very special time on the calendar in the Jewish year. At that moment in the month of Tishri, six months before Passover, a very special event was happening down in Jerusalem. New

Testament chronology puts this at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles, commemorating the exodus from Egypt. Peter would have known that. Down in Jerusalem they're celebrating the Feast of Tabernacles which commemorated the exodus out of Egypt. Wow, what great timing, let's...let's put some temporary tabernacles up here for You to dwell in for a while as the first phase of the exodus bringing Your people out of the bondage of sin and this world into this glorious Kingdom. That was really in his heart. He thinks this could maybe be the first phase of the Kingdom for which he had waited for so long. If he remembered Zechariah 14 he would also remember that in the Kingdom, the millennial Kingdom, the glorious Kingdom of Christ, the Feast of Tabernacles will be held every year as a remembrance of the exodus. And not just the exodus out of Egypt, but the exodus out of bondage to sin into the glorious life of God.

So there were some elements that prompted Peter's suggestion. But the comment of Luke is, "Not realizing what he was saying." What does that mean? Well, Peter didn't realize that this was not the beginning of the Kingdom. He didn't realize that this was not the launch point. Sure Elijah was to come at the time of the Kingdom, he knew that. That fit. Sure during the Kingdom there was going to be a Feast of Tabernacles and they could have one right there in the Kingdom to parallel the one at the same time down in Jerusalem. All of the elements of the Kingdom that Peter had longed for were there, the glory of Christ was displayed, why go back? But he doesn't realize what he's saying. The plan is fixed. Before there will ever be a crown, there has to be a cross, doesn't there? The glory will come and it will come in the future, but it's not going to come then and it's not going to come there because there has to be a cross. And the Son of Man must go and die as the prophet said He would, He must be the suffering servant of Isaiah 53. He must be wounded for our transgressions. He must be bruised for our iniquities. The judgment of God for us must fall on Him, He must die as the sacrifice for sin. He must be the ultimate and final Lamb, the one whose sacrifice perfects forever those that are sanctified. There can be no crown without a cross. There can be no Kingdom without a Calvary. This isn't it, Peter. This is just a preview to firm your faith so that you will always know, no matter what happens, when I die and when I leave this world and when you die, crucified upside down, or in the case of James, martyred, or in the case of John, exiled an old man to Patmos under persecution, as you go through those things and as the rest of the apostles go through their martyrdoms, and most all of them were martyred, of course, they will remember that that is not the end of the story. There is a glorious Kingdom beyond this life and the King in that Kingdom is going to come again and bring that Kingdom to earth. His glory will fill the earth, that will come, but not now, Peter, he says, you don't know what you're saying.

Finally, and monumentally in this scene, the testimony to Christ as God, as the glory of God comes through His transfiguration, the saints' association, the sleeping apostles' suggestion, and finally the sovereign God's revelation. Verse 34, "While Peter was talking, while he was saying this, a cloud formed...hum...and began to overshadow them." Here comes the *Shekinah*. "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.'

How would you like God to show up and say, "Could you be quiet and listen?" That's pretty intimidating. Peter just stopped talking, this is for listening. Here you are in the eternal Kingdom listening to Jesus, Moses and Elijah, having a conversation and you have the audacity to say, "Hey, guys, can I make a suggestion?" Peter, listen! Of all times to listen, that's one of the times to listen.

While Peter was interrupting Moses and Elijah and Jesus, God interrupted him. God made an appearance on that mountain in Galilee that night. A cloud formed, began to overshadow them. Matthew 17:5 says it was a bright cloud. Of course it was not a dark cloud, it was God is light, it was the *Shekinah* of God, the same God who appeared in a pillar of cloud in Exodus 13, who appeared again as the glory of the Lord appearing in the cloud in Exodus 16, Exodus 40 the cloud of the Lord's glory that filled the tabernacle. And they were afraid, the three apostles were now afraid because now the scene is enough to cause panic. They were...they were more than afraid, they were really terrified, actually terrified. In Matthew chapter 17, you will understand this, verse 6 to 8, "When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces and were much afraid. Jesus came to them, touched them and said, 'Arise, do not be afraid.' And lifting up their eyes they saw no one except Jesus Himself alone."

They were afraid, they were as afraid as Ezekiel was when he fell on his face in a coma when God appeared to him. They were as afraid as Isaiah was when he pronounced a curse upon himself when God appeared to him. They were afraid as John the Apostle later was in Revelation chapter 1, when the glory of Christ appeared to him again and he fell over like a dead man. Terror grips them as they experience the holy glorious presence of God. And it says a cloud form began to overshadow them and the them there is Moses and Elijah and Jesus. And the disciples are afraid as they saw they, them being Moses, Elijah and Jesus enter the cloud. The language here is not just clear in the English but in the Greek the picture is the cloud, the Kingdom cloud, the representation of God engulfs Jesus, Moses and Elijah. We know that because the apostles hear the voice, verse 35, coming out of the cloud, therefore they're outside. The voice comes out of the cloud to them. They were afraid of the cloud and now God speaks out of the cloud and He speaks directly to Peter and James and John and He says, "This is My Son."

His transfiguration proved it. His association with the prophets proved it. The confirmation of the Apostles who realized this was the Kingdom and He was the King proved it. And now the greatest attestation ever, the word of the Father. It's the same thing, or similar what the Father said earlier, right? Way back in the third chapter of Luke at the baptism of Jesus, you remember that the Father spoke out of heaven, Luke chapter 3, and the Father affirmed who was being baptized. "Thou art My

beloved Son in Thee I am well pleased." The ultimate affirmation of the Father. This is My Son, same nature, same essence, same deity. Matthew says He said, "This is My beloved Son," *agapetos*, loved. This is My chosen One, My elect Son, this is the One in whom I am well pleased. Matthew says that was also included. Pulling it all together, "This is My Son, My beloved Son, My chosen One in whom I am well pleased. Shut up, Peter, and listen. Listen to Him."

By the way, that's what was prophesied by Moses. In Deuteronomy 18:15, "The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet, you shall listen to Him." Listen to Him. This astounding and amazing event attests to the Christ of God being the glory of God. He is the glorious God in human form. He declares it in His transfiguration. The Old Testament saints declare it. The New Testament saints declare it. The Father Himself declares it.

Now the amazing scene has an epilogue in verse 36 and we'll close with this. It's a strange one. "And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone." Remember the disciples had fallen over, Jesus had touched them, lifted them up and when they looked again, Jesus was there alone. It's over. It came and it went. It wasn't the time for the Kingdom, wasn't the time to build some semi-permanent dwelling and start phase one of the Kingdom. It was over. It was a preview. It was a taste. And verse 36 says, "They kept silent and reported to no one in those days any of the things which they had seen."

You say, "Wait a minute. That is bizarre. Didn't you say He wanted them because they were the witnesses? Wasn't it important that they proclaim what they had seen? Why would they not say anything? Were they unfaithful to their responsibility?" They had just seen a picture of the Second Coming, as well as an affirmation of Christ. How was it a picture of the Second Coming? Well in the Second Coming Christ will appear in that blazing glory. Also, in the Second Coming Christ will appear with His saints. Revelation 19 says when He comes He will come with His saints, those who died are represented by Moses, those who were raptured are represented by Elijah. And when He comes with His saints He will come to His people, ready to receive the Kingdom, represented by Peter, James and John. And He will come to a mountain, just as He was on a mountain there. In a remarkable way it was a preview of the Second Coming. Even with a preview of the Second Coming which they have seen, even with amazing astonishing visit to the Kingdom of God, the eternal Kingdom, and the confirmation of the deity of Jesus Christ, the manifestation of His glory, they kept silent. Why?

Answer: Matthew tells us. "As they were coming down from the mountain Jesus commanded them saying, 'Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man has risen from the dead.'" There's going to come a time when you can tell people, it's not now...not now.

Why such a prohibition? Why would He say don't tell anybody now? Was He saying don't cast your pearls before swine, nobody's going to believe this, it's just too far fetched, too impossible? Don't waste it on people.

It might be an element of that. After everyone knew He was risen from the dead, that is at least everyone who believed in Him, this vision would certainly become more believable. Some have suggested that they were told not to say anything because if they started parading around and saying everywhere what certainly would be something they would want to say that they had seen the eternal Kingdom and that Jesus was the King, they would have then become a greater threat to the Jews and to the Romans which could have precipitated an attack against them and a premature execution of Jesus and the apostles, and so Jesus doesn't want that to happen. I think there's some truth in that.

There also was this possibility, the Jews wanted a Messiah who could conquer the Romans. If the apostles began to report around that they had just had a little conversation with Moses and Elijah in the Kingdom of God and they had seen the Messiah there, this may have fed the fever pitch of the people which did manifest itself on Palm Sunday when they wanted Jesus to be their Messiah and to do what they wanted done to Rome. This might have precipitated a sort of groundswell in which they tried to thrust Jesus in to lead an army, as it were, against Rome. Jesus says, "Let's just not get involved in any of this." After the death on the cross in its appropriate time, after the resurrection, then you can tell everybody what you saw. Then it becomes believable. Then it can't excite the crowds or the leaders or the Romans to bring about a premature death of Christ. Once He has conquered death, they'll know He didn't come to conquer the Romans.

After the resurrection, then you can tell what you saw. And then you can tell people what you saw because they need to know that I'm coming again. That's why He gave them that preview. They will have seen My death, seen My resurrection, the believers will have known of My ascension into glory. After that, you'll have proof positive that I am in the Kingdom and I am coming in Kingdom glory as promised.

They did give testimony. We don't know the testimony James gave, he died very early as a martyr and didn't write any Scripture. The book of James is written by the brother of our Lord, not the Apostle James. But I read you John's testimony. Listen to John 1:14, "We beheld His glory," that's his testimony of the transfiguration, "And it was glory as the only begotten from the Father full of grace and truth." We saw the glory...we saw the glory.

Peter wrote his testimony. Second Peter chapter 1, Peter says this, "We didn't follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. We've been preaching His power, we've been preaching His coming, this isn't some cleverly devised tale, we were eyewitnesses of His majesty, for when He received honor and glory from God the Father such

an utterance as this was made to Him by the majestic glory, 'This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.' And we ourselves heard this utterance, made from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain." That's Peter's testimony, 2 Peter 1.

John says I saw it, I saw the glory. Peter says I saw it, I saw the glory. And the result is that the glorious one who died and rose and ascended is coming again to bring the Kingdom. Not now but later but He will come...He will come. And Peter and John are given privilege of giving biblical testimony to that reality. Christ is God. His death is prophesied and so is His Second Coming. That's what we look for and say with the Apostle John, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Father, we thank You for this glorious and powerful portion of Scripture. Thank You for giving it to us and reiterating it through John and Peter. It gives us the hope that our Savior is coming again. We pray to His glory. Amen.

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