

## TRANSFIGURED CHRIST

Luke 9 records some momentous events in the ministry of Jesus Christ. We see Peter confess Him as "*the Christ of God.*" Jesus foretells His crucifixion and resurrection. He challenges the people that anyone who would be His disciple must "*deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me. For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses himself?*"

Then Jesus says, "*For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when He comes in His glory,*" adding, "*I tell you truly, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God.*" A cryptic statement!

**ENIGMATIC WORDS** - The minds of Jesus' disciples must have been reeling. They tried to reconcile His words with what they knew about Old Testament promises, and what they expected the Messiah to accomplish. They were ready for His glory, but not His suffering. They longed for the Christ, the Deliverer that God had long promised, and that Jesus seemed to be.

Verse 28 says, "*now about eight days after these sayings He took with Him Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray.*" Luke notes Jesus praying in 3:21, three times in Luke 9, once each in chapters 10 and 11, three times in Luke 22. The inner circle, Peter, James, John, also witnessed the raising of Jairus' daughter, and Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane.

**ALTERED APPEARANCE** - Verse 29 continues, "*And as He was praying, the appearance of His face was altered, and His clothing became dazzling white.*" Human language struggles to describe divine scenes, and surely understates what the witnesses actually saw.

Jesus' face shone brightly, like the brightness of the sun (like Saul on the Damascus road). His clothing was white as light, and His appearance was "glistening," literally, as bright as flashes of lightning. "This was not reflected light," observes RC Sproul, "the source was internal, from Jesus Himself, because He is God come in the flesh." The Christ of God indeed!

**GLIMPSE OF GOD'S GLORY** - The question of "*who is this Jesus*" asked in Luke 8 and 9 was decisively answered here by God Himself, notes WA Grudem. Luke continues, "*And behold, two men were talking with Him, Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of His departure which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.*" This is what Jesus talked about in verse 22.

Moses had been dead some 1,400 years, was the great lawgiver of the Old Testament. Elijah, dead some 900 years was one of the greatest prophets of the Old Testament. Together they represent the Old Testament, "*the law and the prophets*" and all the promises of God's Word. These promises were fulfilled in the very One they are now talking with, Christ Jesus Himself.

**ETERNAL REALITIES** - Moses and Elijah appear in glory, as the Bible promises heavenly life after death for God's people. Moses now stood in the Promised Land which had been prevented by his sin from entering, and was buried by God Himself. Elijah was taken up alive into heaven by God, and represents all believers who will be alive when Christ returns, when all believers will be resurrected to glorified bodies to live in the new heavens and new earth (see 1Corinthians 15).

God had called both Moses and Elijah to a mountain to reveal Himself there, and now the Son of God summons these representatives of the Law and the Prophets, who had performed signs and wonders to authenticate their foretelling of the Christ. The Israelites expected both Moses and Elijah to return at the end of the age. Elijah would be the forerunner of Christ (Malachi 4:5).

**SHEKINAH GLORY** - Deuteronomy 18:15,18, says God would raise up a prophet like Moses, "*and it is to Him you shall listen.*" It is to Him that Moses and Elijah now speak. John 1:14-18 notes of Christ, "*we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth*" and "*for the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God, but the only God who is at the Father's side, has made Him known.*" In Matthew 5:17 Jesus said, "*I have not come to abolish the Law or Prophets, but to fulfill them.*"

In Luke 9 He speaks of His "*exodus*" departure that He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem, because of His "*eisodus*" entrance into the world as God come in the flesh. He was to give His life in crucifixion and then be resurrected and ascended as Lord and Christ. And He will come again in glory to lead His redeemed people into the new heavens and earth. Moses and Elijah "*listen to Him*" just as God commands -- and we must likewise hear and heed the Lord Christ! ☐