

# Listen to My Beloved Son

**SUNDAY 5 MARCH 2023 GOSPEL READING: Matthew 17:1-9**

1 And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain apart. 2 And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his garments became white as light. 3 And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. 4 And Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is well that we are here; if you wish, I will make three booths here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah." 5 He was still speaking, when lo, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him." 6 When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces, and were filled with awe. 7 But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Rise, and have no fear." 8 And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only. 9 And as they were coming down the mountain, Jesus commanded them, "Tell no one the vision, until the Son of man is raised from the dead."

**SCRIPTURE READING: Genesis 12:1-4a**

1 Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. 2 And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and him who curses you I will curse; and by you all the families of the earth shall bless themselves." 4 So Abram went, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.

**Meditation:** Are you prepared to see the glory of the Lord and to share in his glory as well? God made a promise to Abraham that he would make him a channel of great blessing not only to his own family and future descendants but to all the families of the earth as well (Genesis 12:3)! The condition for the fulfillment of this promise was simple and straightforward - "Go from your family and country to the land that I will show you" (Genesis 12:1). Abraham not only believed in God's promise, he promptly obeyed and did as the Lord commanded him. God chose Abraham as his instrument of blessing - that through him and his descendants would come the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ who would reveal the glory and blessing of God's kingdom and bring salvation for all who would call upon his name.

## ***The Lord Jesus came to fulfill all that Moses and the prophets spoke***

The Lord Jesus is the fulfillment of all the promises made to Abraham and to his spiritual descendants. In all that Jesus did and said he sought to please his Father in heaven and to bring him glory. Like Abraham, he was ready to part with anything that might stand in the way of doing the will of God. He knew that the success of his mission would depend on his willingness to embrace his Father's will no matter what it might cost him personally. Jesus on three occasions told his disciples that he **would undergo suffering and death on a cross** to fulfill the mission the Father gave him. As the time draws near for Jesus' ultimate sacrifice on the cross, he takes three of his beloved disciples to the top of a high mountain. Just as Moses and Elijah were led to the mountain of God to discern their ultimate call and mission, so Jesus now appears with Moses and Elijah on the highest mountain overlooking the summit of the promised land. Matthew's Gospel tells us **that Jesus was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his garments became white as light** (Matthew 17:2).

## ***Jesus reveals his glory to the apostles and to us***

Why did Jesus appear in dazzling light with Moses and Elijah? The book of Exodus tells us that when Moses had met with God on Mount Sinai *the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God* (Exodus 34:29). Paul the Apostle wrote that *the Israelites could not look at Moses' face because of its brightness* (2 Corinthians 3:7). After Elijah, the greatest of the prophets, had destroyed all the priests and idols of Baal in

the land, he took refuge on the mountain of God at Sinai. There God showed Elijah his glory in great thunder, whirlwind, and fire, and then spoke with him in a still quiet voice. God questioned Elijah, "What are you doing here?" And then directed him to go and fulfill the mission given him by God. Jesus, likewise, appears in glory with Moses and Elijah, as if to confirm with them that he, too, is ready to fulfill the mission which the Father has sent him to accomplish.

Jesus went to the mountain knowing full well what awaited him in Jerusalem - betrayal, rejection, and crucifixion. Jesus very likely discussed this momentous decision to go to the cross with Moses and Elijah. God the Father also spoke with Jesus and gave his approval: *This is my beloved Son; listen to him*. The Father glorified his son because he was faithful and willing to obey him in everything. The cloud which overshadowed Jesus and his apostles fulfilled the dream of the Jews that when the Messiah came the cloud of God's presence would fill the temple again (see Exodus 16:10, 19:9, 33:9; 1 Kings 8:10; 2 Maccabees 2:8).

### ***Christ's way to glory***

The Lord Jesus not only wants us to see his glory - he wants to share this glory with us. And Jesus shows us the way to the Father's glory - follow me - obey my words. Take the path I have chosen for you and you will receive the blessing of my Father's kingdom - your name, too, will be written in heaven. Jesus fulfilled his mission on Calvary where he died for our sins so that Paradise and everlasting life would be restored to us. He embraced the cross to win a crown of glory - a crown that awaits each one of us, if we, too, will follow in his footsteps.

### ***We are partakers of his glory***

Are you spiritually awake? Peter, James, and John were privileged witnesses of the glory of Christ. We, too, as disciples of Jesus Christ are called to be witnesses of his glory. *We all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit* (2 Corinthians 3:18). The Lord wants to reveal his glory to us, his beloved disciples. Do you seek his presence with faith and reverence?

**Daily Quote from the Early Church Fathers:** *Listen to Him*, by Leo the Great, 400?-461 A.D.

"A voice from the cloud said, *This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him*. I am manifested through his preaching. I am glorified through his humility. So listen to him without hesitation. He is the truth and the life. He is my strength and wisdom. "Listen to him" whom the mysteries of the law foreshadowed, of whom the mouths of the prophets sang. "Listen to him" who by his blood redeemed the world, who binds the devil and seizes his vessels, who breaks the debt of sin and the bondage of iniquity. "Listen to him" who opens the way to heaven and by the pain of the cross prepares for you the steps of ascent into his kingdom." (excerpt from *Sermon 38,7*)

**OPENING PRAYER: - Lord Jesus**, keep me always alert to you, to your word, your action, and your constant presence in my life. Let me see your glory. **Amen**

**CLOSING PRAYER:- "World Peace"** Lord, we pray for the victims of recent natural disasters Earthquakes and Cyclones that they have the resolve to rebuild their lives and homes after the forces of nature have turned against them, also the war in Ukraine that those effected have the strength to forgive the Military forces that are attacking them and the leaders of both countries find a peaceful resolution to this war. **Amen.**