

# From Simon to Peter #14 - on the Holy Mountain

by J. Glyn Owen

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*The sermon explores the significance of the transfiguration of Jesus, highlighting its implications for his messiahship and glory, and its relevance to the lives of believers.*

**Duration:** 47:28

**Scripture:** Exodus 34:29-35, Matthew 17:1-8, Mark 9:2-3, Luke 9:35

**Topics:** "Simon to Peter"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the significance of the conversation between Jesus, Moses, and Elijah on the Holy Mount. The three witnesses, Peter, James, and John, not only saw this spectacle but also heard what they were talking about. The common interest among the three is the theme of the Exodus, with Jesus going to accomplish a greater Exodus in Jerusalem. The preacher emphasizes the importance of understanding the true meaning of Jesus' departure, referred to as the Exodus, and highlights Peter's initial resistance to the idea of Jesus suffering and dying.

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## Transcript

Well now, we are going to turn this morning to the episode described for us by all three of the first Gospels, the first three Gospels, Matthew, Mark and Luke. But the record that I'm going to follow largely this morning is Matthew's, and you will find that in chapter 17, verses 1 to 8 particularly. This is a record of the transfiguration of our Lord.

Now I'm not going to read any particular verse as our text, we are going to refer to the passage almost in its entirety as we proceed. We are continuing of course with our theme, From Simon to Peter. Seeing again another landmark in the pilgrimage of this man who was to become an apostle and a teacher within the Christian church, as well of course as an evangelist.

And here on the Holy Mount, as he later spoke of it, here on the Holy Mount something big happened. Something that he could only refer to in later years with bated breath and with a sense of adoring wonder. Well now let's turn to it prayerfully.

First of all will you notice the setting. Last Sunday morning we were considering our Lord's almost ruthless. I hesitate to use that word and yet I think it must be used.

Our Lord's almost ruthless exposure of Peter's being influenced not now by God the Father or the Holy Spirit, but by Satan. When Simon Peter had tried to dissuade him from going to Jerusalem to suffer and to die, you remember Jesus turned to him and said, Get thee behind me Satan, for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men. Now following upon that exposure of Peter's folly and his being attuned to the wrong wavelength spiritually, Jesus went on to say, Not only is it necessary for me as your Messiah and your Saviour to die, all my followers must likewise take up their own cross and die their own death.

You remember the words? Verse 24 of chapter 16. Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.

It is necessary for me to die, says Jesus to his disciples. But if you are following, if you are coming in my footmarks, if you are to have fellowship with me in this life and the life that is to come, it is equally necessary for every solitary disciple of mine to die his own death. Now about six days have intervened.

Six whole days, together with the day of the incident just recorded. Then the eighth day came when Jesus summoned three of his favoured disciples, Peter, James and John, and invited them to accompany him where perhaps he did not tell them. But to accompany him, and they were no sooner on their journey than they began to climb an unnamed mountain.

And it was there somewhere on the slopes of that unnamed mountain that this most remarkable, this phenomenal event took place. Now I want to look at it this morning not in its entirety, this is a subject that is far too vast for us to consider in one service such as this. My concern this morning is twofold.

One, I would like God helping us to try to understand in some measure what really took place. Secondly, I would like us to try and see how this applied first of all to Simon Peter, and perhaps in some measure how it applied to all the disciples and indirectly to ourselves. Now that means that there is much in this passage that we shall not touch upon today.

But may it please God to take of these few thoughts and use them to his glory and to our profit as we behold our sovereign Lord transfigured. First of all then, the transfiguration and its subjective accompaniments. What really took place? Now we are treading on holy ground, and we can only enter into these mysteries in so far as the word of God is our guide.

There are mysteries here beyond our ken that we cannot plumb, we cannot sell them, we cannot understand. We are going to try this morning, God helping us, only to see those things that scripture appears to give us unequivocal warrant in declaring. Now in this total event, it would appear that there are three main features.

First of all, there is the transfigured Lord himself. The second verse in Matthew 17 puts it very simply. Words can be very simple on the surface, can they not? But when we look beneath the surface, there is such a wealth of significance and of meaning.

These words are the simplest. And he was transfigured before them. Employing a verb from which our English word metamorphosis, one or two kindred terms, derives, the three gospel writers alike evidently mean to refer to a substantial change in Jesus and a very substantial transformation of his whole being.

Their accompanying description makes that impressively clear. May I remind you, in case you can't turn to Matthew, Mark and Luke all at once, may I remind you of the language. Matthew goes on here to add, he was transfigured before them and his face shone like the sun and his garments became white as light.

That's in the second verse. Mark writes, and his garments became glistening, intensely white, as no fuller on earth could bleach them. That's Mark 9, 3. And Luke's version is this, and as he was praying, the appearance of his countenance was altered and his raiment became dazzling white.

Now you add these three descriptions together and you have something which is most profound and most significant. The language and the facts point, it would seem then, to a metamorphosis, an incomparably wonderful transformation of being that began in the very innermost shrine of our Lord's being, of our Lord's person. It began right in the depths of his soul, and what began in the depths gradually manifested itself through his countenance altered, as Dr. Luke puts it, through his garments becoming white and glistening as no fuller on earth could bleach them, as the other writers agree.

And one other touch, looking back upon the whole of this event with a transformation in the soul of the Savior, the corresponding change of his countenance and the glistening of his garments so that he becomes a veritable incandescent light before them against the black sheath of darkness on the mountainside. Peter says later on in his second epistle, he says, We were with him on the holy mount, and we beheld his majesty. Mystery there was.

But, says Peter, the thing that remains with me to this day is not just the concept of a mystery, but the sense of his majesty. He appeared as king, as God. Thus was the familiar figure of the one who had accompanied them so long, dressed in ordinary garb, speaking the ordinary everyday language of the country.

He was so ordinary from the human point of view. We are not told that he was taller than anyone else. We are not told that he was better looking than anyone else.

We are not told that he had any particular physical phenomenon that made him outstanding. He was but one of them. Humanly speaking, flesh of our flesh, bone of our bone, common man from a common home.

Humanly speaking, that ordinary carpenter's son, looked at from the human point of view, now becomes the transfigured Lord. Leaving not only the impression of a mysterious change, a mysterious change, but of a mystic manifestation of the very glory of God. One other thing to mention here, the implication of the transfiguration of Jesus, beginning within, as the term apparently signifies, beginning within and then working outwards, rather than coming from without and working inwards.

The significance of that would appear to be this. Our Lord's transfiguration, taking this particular pattern, is altogether unique. We read of Moses coming down from the mountain and he wished not that the skin of his face shone.

He has bathed in the glory of the God of glory. He has seen something of it, albeit the hinder parts of God. And Moses comes down and something of the glory of the God of glory was reflected upon his very countenance, though he knew it not.

But you notice, that was not a glory that dwelt in the soul of Moses and worked its way out from him. It was a glory that dwelt in Jehovah and shone upon Moses from outside. We read also of Stephen on the occasion of his martyrdom.

With one breath we read, And they beheld him, and his face was as the face of an angel. And he, looking away, beholding the glory of the Lord Jesus, beholding Jesus glorified, likewise came under the ray of the glory of the Lord upon the throne. And they did not know what to make of it.

But it's the same kind of thing as Moses experienced. That glory did not reside in Stephen, great, glorious as Stephen was by the grace of God. It was the glory of the Lord streaming upon the face of the countenance, percolating into the spirit of the saint, manifesting itself in his demeanor as well as in his countenance.

But what we have here is different. He was transfigured before them. The implication of the emphasis upon those two words in the sentence, before them, is this.

He was probably often transfigured as he communed with his father. He veiled his glory as he walked among men and he became the ordinary, everyday man, Jesus of Nazareth. And his glory was veiled.

He hid it. The common garments, the ordinary gait, the ordinary language, the ordinariness which clothed his extraordinary being, hid his true glory. But when he went into communion with God, the glory of the inner shine, but no one had ever seen it.

Not a man. But on this day, he was transfigured before them. He chose Peter.

He chose James. He chose John to see it. As dear old Matthew Henry put it, speaking comparatively, whereas the glory of men like Moses or Stephen was like the glory of the moon reflecting a light that doesn't belong to them but belongs to another, the glory of the Lord Jesus is as the glory of the sun exuding something that belongs to himself, albeit veiled in flesh and in the common things of human life.

And he was transfigured before them. Now the second phenomenon here that we must look at briefly takes us to the companions of the transfigured Jesus. As Jesus stood transfigured before the three overwhelmed human witnesses, we read, verse 3, And behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elijah talking with him.

What an arresting spectacle. As the eyes of these three human witnesses are now transfixed upon their Lord, there as incandescent light in the darkness, as the lamp as the light of the world in a dark place, these witnesses of the event saw two of the most lustrous of Old Testament leaders, spirits of just men made perfect, coming from the very presence of God, now assuming some sort of materiality that they could be seen by human eyes, talking to Jesus. Now I can't explain that.

Don't ask me to try. I can't do it. But this is what the book says.

Two men coming from another realm are seen by human eyes in this vision, seen talking to Jesus. They become visible. Who are they? They are none other and none less than, first of all, Moses, the lustrous lawgiver of ancient Israel, and then Elijah, the precursor and the forerunner of all the prophets.

The whole prophetic movement of the Old Testament goes back to this great man, Elijah. And here is Moses who brought God's law. Here is Elijah, the first of the prophets, who expounded and applied the law, as well as much else.

Here they are, and they've come on an errand divinely sent, and here they stand with the Son of God, Jesus of Nazareth, Messiah and Savior of men, upon this unnamed mountain, wrapped in discussion.

Here they are in solemn conference with him who, about a week or so ago, said that he was destined to go into Jerusalem and to suffer many things of the scribes and elders and chief priests and be killed. He to whom Simon turned and said, Lord, this must never be to you.

And here he is, enwrapped in conversation with Moses and with Elijah, and apparently they've no quarrel with him. Can I interject here? According to our Lord Jesus Christ's understanding of the Bible, Moses was one of the great heralds of Messiahship. Our understanding of the Bible, or should I say the modern, more liberal understanding of the Bible, at any rate, hardly sees Jesus in the Mosaic books at all.

But according to Luke chapter 24, Jesus says that even Moses was one of the heralds of his messianic sufferings. Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded to the two men on the way to Emeus the things concerning himself, showing that it was necessary for Messiah to die. And after that to rise again.

Here comes Moses, who had announced the coming of Messiah. Here comes the forerunner of the prophets who had majored on the same theme. And they speak with him.

Any confusion caused by that solemn spectacle was enhanced, however, by the content of their conversation. The three witnesses were not simply allowed to see the spectacle. Oh, may God help us to take this in this morning.

Give us imaginations, not to go beyond the Scripture, warrant, but to see with our mind's eye what the Bible tells us. Here are these two men coming to talk with our Lord, the Messiah, Son of the living God. And here they are in conversation.

And the three witnesses, Peter, James, and John, are not simply given eyes to see this, but ears to hear what they're talking about. Isn't God wonderful? What are these three in common? What have they got to talk about? What is of common interest to the three of them? Luke tells us. And he tells us unequivocally, chapter 9 and verse 31.

They spoke, says Luke, of his departure, which he was to accomplish at Jerusalem. You know, I have to quarrel with the translation of that because it misses out something that we dare not miss. The way Luke put it was this.

They spoke of the Exodus. That's the word, Exodus. They spoke of the Exodus, his Exodus, which he was going to accomplish at Jerusalem.

Now the whole thing glistens, doesn't it? Here is Moses, the leader of the Old Testament Exodus. I don't need to say a word about that. And here he is wrapped in conversation with Jesus of Nazareth, Son of God.

And what are they going to talk about? Oh, another Exodus. May I say so, albeit with bated breath, a greater Exodus than Moses had ever known about, apart from the divine pre-intimations of this that were given to him. And apparently he and Elijah know something of what is to come.

And this is the thread that binds them together. This is the interest that is common to the three. This is the theme of their conversation, the Exodus, which he is going to accomplish in Jerusalem.

Now please notice. Go back to Simon Peter's words, Lord, this shall not be to you. Oh, what a tragedy, Lord, if you're going to Jerusalem and you're going to suffer, and you're going to die.

Oh, what an awful tragedy. Here am I, I've made my confession that you are Christ, the Son of the living God. What's going to become of me? What a letdown for me.

But what a letdown for you. If you suffer in Jerusalem, that'll be the end of the story. What about the church that you're going to build on a rock? Where have we all come to? These two lustrous figures from the other world see things so differently.

His Exodus. The Exodus that he's not going to arrange and plan on books, but accomplish in Jerusalem. Referring evidently to the same event as Jesus had earlier announced and with which Peter would quarrel, these two men see that Jesus is going to Jerusalem not to be subject to men's whims and fancies and to be crucified because he's failed, but to accomplish something sovereignly through his death.

The third element which makes part of the, makes the whole scene complete is twofold. The cloud and the voice. The gracious God who planned that Peter, James and John should see Messiah's innate glory breaking forth from the temple of his body and of his soul so as to be transfigured in the entirety of his countenance and his garments illumined from within.

Then behold the spectacle of his conversation with Moses and Elijah and overheard the content. God also ordained that they should see and hear something still beyond and over and above this. A still more solemnly compelling and more confirmatory of the Messiahship of Jesus Christ and of his glory.

In verse five we read this again apparently very simple statement. Lo, a bright cloud overshadowed them. Now the significance of that can only be duly appreciated against the background of the Old Testament.

If you come to a statement like this and you don't know the Old Testament, may I say so reverently, then you certainly are not in a position to understand what this is talking about. The Bible is one and you don't step in in the last half of the book and expect to understand everything if you don't read the first part. And you cannot find any significance to the fact that an ordinary cloud is gathering here on the mountainside and that's what you must conclude if you don't know the Old Testament background.

In ignorance of the Old Testament background you must conclude that this is but an ordinary cloud of condensed watery vapor. It's going to rain, there's a shower coming and the cloud is gathering and the brightness must be the brightness of a star beyond it or something like that. But that's not the cloud we have here.

The cloud that we have here is of an entirely different significance as the rest of the passage goes on to explain, or to imply I should say. This cloud is none other than the Shekinah that marked the visible presence of God with his people in the Old Testament days. Have you not seen it? I read this morning as we came into the presence of God of the glory of the Lord coming down upon Mount Sinai in a cloud.

And God summoned Moses to come into the cloud and God spoke out of the cloud. Another time Moses was outside and God spoke to him again out of the cloud. We read later on in Exodus chapter 40 verses 34 and 38 that when the tabernacle as we speak of it, the tent of meeting had been erected the cloud came upon it and filled it.

And so do we read likewise when Solomon's temple was completed, 1 Kings 8 verses 10 and 11 when the temple was completed it was erected in all its magnificence the glory of the Lord came upon it in a cloud and filled the place. Now watch this. This is not the watery vapor that moves in the firmament.

This is something wholly supernatural. This is God coming in a mood that signifies his presence. In other words, my friend, we do not simply have Moses and Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration.

We have the God of Israel coming down, the God of the Exodus, the God of the burning bush, the God of the wilderness and the God of Canaan. God omnipotent comes down in the only way that they would recognize him in a cloud. Lest there should be any misunderstanding here, God does not simply appear in a cloud.

He speaks out of the cloud. As he did on Sinai's slopes in the hearing of Moses and ancient Israel, so here on the slopes of this unnamed mountain. And it's just as well it is unnamed, isn't it? You imagine the pilgrimages.

You imagine the multitude of people who would make a great, a fat lot of money on this. If only we knew where this mountain was. It's unnamed.

But here it is, God came down on the mountainside and God spoke out of the cloud. Verse 17, and this is what he said. Verse 5 in chapter 17, And a voice from the cloud said, This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.

Listen to him. Not hear him, listen to him. That makes a better translation.

As on Sinai's slopes then, God spoke out of the cloud, so here also. And his words were no less clear than when he spoke with Moses. This time, however, he did not declare the law.

The law has been given. But he comes down on this solemn occasion to attest his son's genuine sonship. And the fact that he has not veered out of the way in deciding to go to Jerusalem to suffer and to die.

Against the background of what he has proclaimed concerning his future plan and program. The Father comes down in the cloud and out of the cloud he declares, This is my beloved Son and I am pleased with him and I find no fault with him. Peter, you do, I don't.

That means that Jesus' plans then, centering in Jerusalem, Are as pleasing to the Father as they were of interest to Moses and Elijah. He is no blind leader of the blind. He does not say fanciful things that have emerged only in his own human soul.

His plans have the divine sanction and beat with the divine favor and the divine signature. And God says, listen to him. Now permit me for a few moments to move to the second concern of mine this morning.

Which is the transfiguration and the disciples, but especially Peter. You see, all this has peculiar relevance to Peter. Because Peter was the spokesman of Caesarea Philippi.

And Peter was the one who arrogantly tried to put his Lord right a little while after. Now, one thing that is so wonderful to me is this. It would seem from this that there is nothing that God will not do to put his people right.

He will go to any expense, he will plan anything. He will do anything. In order to assure that his own plans are perfected and the promises of his son are fulfilled.

Just imagine heaven planning a thing like this. And calling these three aside. Just imagine the plans, just imagine the divine condescension.

But you see, it is like this. When Jesus makes a promise on earth, the whole Godhead in heaven are pledged to see it through. And if it needs a transfiguration moment such as this, then heaven will provide it.

The Lord Jesus Christ is not a mere man. From among men he carries with him the dignity and the sovereignty and the lordship of the Godhead. And the sanction of heaven.

Now, just three things and we shall be brief here. Referring only to Peter, the significance of this to Peter. As to the glory of his master's person.

Peter's expressed conviction at Caesarea Philippi is here evidently corroborated. Sooner or later God will always corroborate a confession of faith. Sooner or later God will always come to his child who speaks out the truth in terms of a confession of faith.

Concerning the Lord Jesus Christ and confirm it. Some of you here this morning perhaps remember the first time when you acknowledged Jesus Christ publicly to be your lord, your own saviour. Perhaps it was with great timidity that you stood before perhaps a congregation such as this and you acknowledged him as your own.

But as you did, he sealed your soul with a sense of certainty that can only come in the wake of obedience. God does that. And when Simon Peter has been so courageous in Caesarea Philippi and so obviously at that point in tune with heaven and confessed Jesus to be son of God and Messiah.

God now comes down and he says alright Peter you were right there and I'll prove that you were right. And I'll come to your side and I'll underwrite the whole thing and put my signature on it. I'll have you know that you were right.

I'll give you peace in your heart and enlarge your understanding of that. But now, things have changed since then. Don't let me go back again.

Simply refer to them. Simon has doubted whether Jesus was really the true prophet, wise, planning wisely to go to Jerusalem. Is he really one that can be depended upon and relied upon? And then Jesus told him to get behind him, calling him Satan.

Peter must have smarted painfully under that stern rebuke. Now I've been trying to imagine what must have happened over the intervening six days since Jesus heard those words. Now here we are imagining.

Here we are not following what is told because nothing is told us. But if we rightly understand what must have taken place, Peter must have been very sore. How would you have felt if the Master himself had stood and looked you in the eye and said, Get behind me, Satan, because you're not in touch now with heaven but with the things of earth? You wouldn't shrug that off with a smile and just carry on? I don't think so.

Neither did he. And I suggest to you that the intervening week must have been one of the most painful of all experiences in Simon Peter's experience. I can imagine him asking a question like this.

Could I have been so right in Caesarea Philippi and then so wrong so soon afterwards? Right in my acknowledgement that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of the Living God? Wrong in my understanding of the rightness of his going into Jerusalem to die, to be killed? Could I be so right in the one and so wrong in the other? What happened to me? Was that first experience of mine wholly wrong and born out of my own ego? I'm a very impetuous man. Perhaps I shouldn't have said anything. It would have been better if I kept my mouth closed at Caesarea Philippi.

I can see Peter moving and oscillating from faith to doubt and doubt to faith, from hope to despair and despair to hope again, and from one scene to another and one extreme to another. He doesn't know where he is. And if I understand him all right, I can sense him asking something like this.

Well, what? What? Then came the summons. Peter, James, John. And they climbed the mountain.

And they come to the place. And it is night. And they settle down.

And as Luke tells us, the Master was in prayer. And as Jesus prayed, He was transfigured before them. And His countenance was altered.

And His garments shone with such brilliance and such light as no fuller on earth could bleach them. And there they see the picture of this incandescent human lamp, the very light of the world, the very embodiment of the glory of the God of the burning bush. He was transfigured before them.

All assuring Simon, of course. Oh, let us see this. All assuring Simon that whatever may have been wrong later on, that was right.

Jesus is more glorious than he ever recognized in Caesarea Philippi. Not less. Simon had not beheld the glory that welled in his soul, for no human eye could see it.

It was veil. In that sense, He put it on one side, not to show it and exhibit it. But now it comes out.

I can imagine Peter saying in the words of a hymn we shall sing at the close. Tis good, Lord, to be here. Thy glory fills the night.

Thy face and garments like the sun shine with unburrowed light. Now I know I was right. Secondly, if this confirmed the glory of His person, then there is also something else here.

As to the necessity of His messianic sufferings and death, Jesus' own understanding of His passion is as clearly corroborated as was Peter's confession of His person. Let Peter be in no doubt whatever about it. Neither the two lustrous visitors from the heavenly land, nor God the Father have any quarrel with Jesus Christ and His plan to go into Jerusalem and be killed.

Because what on the human side can be described as being killed, from another side is to be described as the accomplishment of an exodus. He is going to spoil the spoiler. He is going to break proud Babel's gates in thunder.

He is going to tear to pieces the might of Satan, so that henceforth the little church that is born now will come out of great tribulation and out from the tyranny and anguish of a greater than Egyptian bondage,

simply because Jesus is going to die the liberating death in Jerusalem. However deeply penitent Simon must have been concerning his view of our Lord's sufferings earlier on, I am so glad to be able to announce from this pulpit this morning that he radically changed his mind later. However deeply penitent he was at this point, he certainly was later.

You read Simon Peter's epistles and you read something of what he has to say. He were not redeemed, he says, with corruptible things as silver and gold from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. Was it an accident? No, says Peter.

He was foreordained from before the foundations of the world and was manifested in this last day for this very thing, for you. He has changed his mind all right. Simon learned the lesson, God knows better, Moses knew better, Elijah knew better, heaven knows better than earth.

Blessed is the man who can change his mind like that in accordance with the heavenly will and the heavenly understanding. Thus the glory of the Saviour's person, as well as the necessity of his passion, emerge in a new light against the background of what took place there on this unnamed mountaintop. One other thing.

Finally, as with the glory of his person and the necessity of his passion, so also with the authority of our Lord in his teaching ministry. Oh, I've been grateful many times for this word. That the God who came down in the cloud spoke clearly without any ambiguity whatsoever and turned, as it were, to the three disciples and all who hear of their words in due course and said this, Listen to him, listen to him.

You know, all our problems really emerge because we don't listen to him. Because we want to impose our own will upon him or our own understanding upon him and we want him to go here and not to go there and so forth. This is what heaven says.

Look, listen to him, not to yourselves. Listen to him, not once but twice, always, even. Listen to him in all circumstances.

He is worthy to be obeyed. He is the prophet that should come. Listen to him.

And as we go on listening to him and obeying him, we shall find that the glory of the mount is, in some sense, repeated. Not in its externalities and its objectivity, but something of the glory that he revealed there once forever on the mount of transfiguration comes like a sheath of heavenly peace and grace and joy into our own souls. For the way of obedience is the way whereby we also are transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another, so that the mind that was in him becomes the mind in us.

Oh, my dear people, do you see the transfigured Lord this morning? Now, I'm not applying this all that much to ourselves today, not because it doesn't apply, but what I would like us to do first of all is this. I would like us to see the message coming to us indirectly, for we do not see this only through the eyes of Peter and his friends. We did not hear these words as they heard them, but as we read the Gospels, and as we see the emerging faith and confidence of these disciples, and as we come on to the fulfillment of the purposes of God later on in the New Testament, behind it all there is this confirmatory, this sustaining vision of the glory of his person, even at this stage, of the authority of his teaching, and of the necessity of his passion.

May the Lord write these things upon our hearts. May we see them through the eyes of Peter and through the eyes of the other disciples. May the impact upon us be nonetheless enabling us to acknowledge him to be the person he is, to see in his passion the purpose he attributed to it, and to follow him as the one and only prophet, priest, and king.

Let us pray. Lord, our Heavenly Father, as we bow before thee, having been meditating upon these words, we feel that we have been in a territory that is strange to us, so strange to us because we do not live as nearly to thyself as we ought. Neither are we as conversant with thy word as we might be, so that we look at these episodes of Scripture through carnal minds and carnal eyes, and even when we read of them, they are glorious, dimmed for us.

Oh, teach us how to understand thy word, and when we understand it, and begin to see something of the glory of these incidents that we are meditating upon in these days, grant that we may so come under the direct impact of the truth proclaimed, that we may be the more proud of him who is our Lord and our Saviour, and have the greater confidence in him, and be willing to render him more implicit obedience. Bless our meditation today to the glory of thy name, and the good of our lives, and the overflow to the benefit of others. In the name of our transfigured and now ascended Lord, even Jesus Christ.

Amen. Amen.

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