**Last 3 weeks; Turning Point in the Journey**

Caesarea Philippi – “You are the Christ (Messiah) the Son of God (Mk. 8:29)

Jesus reveals the “deeper plan” (Mk. 8:31)

“Take up your cross and follow me” (Mk. 8:34)

Now we move to chapter 9, and he is about to revel to three of them something really amazing…

**The Transfiguration**

**Mark 9:2-13**

**2**After six days Jesus took Peter, James and John with him and led them up a high mountain, where they were all alone. There he was transfigured before them. **3**His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them. **4**And there appeared before them Elijah and Moses, who were talking with Jesus.

**5**Peter said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.” **6**(He did not know what to say, they were so frightened.)

**7**Then a cloud appeared and covered them, and a voice came from the cloud: “This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!”

**8**Suddenly, when they looked around, they no longer saw anyone with them except Jesus.

**9**As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus gave them orders not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead. **10**They kept the matter to themselves, discussing what “rising from the dead” meant.

**11**And they asked him, “Why do the teachers of the law say that Elijah must come *first?”*

**12**Jesus replied, “To be sure, Elijah does come first, and restores all things. Why then is it written that the Son of Man must suffer much and be rejected? **13**But I tell you, Elijah has come, and they have done to him everything they wished, just as it is written about him.”

*(Matthew adds: “**Then the disciples understood that he was talking to them about John the Baptist.”)*

Remember: from Caesarea Philippi forward, Jesus had set His sights toward the homestretch of His journey. Everything was progressing to the cross and resurrection.

**THE MOUNT OF TRANSFIGURATION**: - One of the most amazing occurrences in the New Testament. This is such an awesome, spectacular, but completely enigmatic event in the gospels.

* What was this about?
* Why did this take place?
* What can we learn from this?

**WHY PETER JAMES & JOHN**:

Jesus’ “Inner-circle” This is the first time they were selected, other times were Mark 5 (Jarius’s daughter) and The Garden of gethsemane. (not sure why Andrew, Peter’s brother was not included among them)

**WHY MOSES AND ELIJAH:**

These two represent the two most important entities within the Hebrew Faith;

“The Law” and the “Prophets”

**Moses** represents the **Law** (Torah) because it was given to Him by God and he wrote the “Book of the Law”

**Elijah** represents of **The Prophets** (Nevi'im)

He is considered among the greatest and most powerful prophets, and both his death and return are shrouded in mystery:

Elijah did not see death:

**2 Kings 2:11** “Then it happened, as they continued on and talked, that suddenly a chariot of fire appeared with horses of fire, and separated the two of them; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven

 For that reason many Jews believe that Elijah will come back, as it is written in the *very last verses* of the OT, (Mal 4:5). They believe he will come to prepare the way of Messiah, which is the reason for the empty plate at the Passover Seder.

Luke 1:17 prophecies that John the Baptist would go forth in the “*Spirit of Elijah”.*

BUT Moses DID die and the Lord buried him:

**Deut 34:5-6** And Moses the servant of the Lord died there in Moab, as the Lord had said. He buried himin Moab, in the valley opposite Beth Peor, but to this day no one knows where his grave is.” : )

**“THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS”** – In Hebrew culture the LAW and the PROPHETS were considered the “word and will of God”. The Old Testament (Hebrew Scriptures) are sometimes referred to as just “The Law” but is more accurately referred to as The Law and the Prophets. Including all the books of Moses and the writings of the great prophets.

**Tanakh**, an [acronym](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/acronym) derived from the names of the three divisions of the Hebrew Bible:

* Torah (Instruction, or Law, also called the Pentateuch) 5 books of Moses
* Nevi-im (Prophets), The Major and Minor Prophets
* Ketuvim (Writings) Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, etc.

***Ta-Na-Kh = Old Testament (Hebrew Scriptures)***

**“The Law and the Prophets”** were central to the Hebrew understanding of God and the expectation of the Messiah.

In the beginning of the sermon on the Mount, Jesus addressed this by saying:

**Matt 5:17** “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.”

**MOSES -** Obviously represents THE LAW

**ELIJAH** – considered “the greatest prophet” Represents the Prophets

These represent two of the most important aspects of God;

the “**Word of God**” and “**Will of God”.**

There is *one thing missing*, the most important aspect of God

***“The LOVE of God”***

This part came *not from Moses*, and *not from Elijah*, but from ***God Himself*** as he spoke into the situation;

**MK 9:7** “Then a cloud appeared and covered them, and a voice came from the cloud: “This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!”

***“My Son whom I love”***

This shows us so much about God, as a Father and the great LOVE that he has for His son.

It was no longer a secret that Jesus was being prepared to become the sacrifice. God was affirming the great love has for His Son, even as he was being prepared for the cross.

This is very similar to the first time the word “Love” appeared in the Bible.

* It wasn’t a Man or woman declaring their love for each other.
* It wasn’t even a prophet commanding us to love God
* It wasn’t a Psalmist writing about the love of God
* **It was God,** recognizing the love a father has for his son, who was about to become a sacrifice.

**Gen 22:2 “**Then He said, “Take now your son, your only *son* Isaac, *whom you****love***, and go to the land of Moriah”

**LOVE**

The meaning of the Mount of Transfiguration is certainly the fulfillment of “the **law** and the **prophets**”, but even more so, we see a clear proclamation of “**God’s Love**”.

Remember when Jesus was asked what the greatest commandment was?

DO you remember His response?

AND the comment after His response?

**Matt 22:36-40** “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” **37**Jesus replied: “**‘Love** the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’**38**This is the first and greatest commandment. **39**And the second is like it: ‘**Love** your neighbor as yourself.’**40**All the ***Law and the Prophets*** hang on these two commandments.”

The Law and the Prophets are *fulfilled in* Jesus.

And God’s love is *demonstrated to us through* Jesus

**Rom 5:8** “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

***Now let’s take a look at Peter, and what His response was to the Tranfiguration:***

**“IMPETUOS” PETER:**

**Mk. 9:4**Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.”

Peter liked what he saw and wanted to “CAPTURE, CONTAIN and CONTROL” the glory of God. He wanted to make three “Sukkot” – Tabernacles or Dwellings for Jesus, Elijah and Moses to stay in.

*(Sort of like when we as kids tried to keep a frog, a butterfly or lightning bugs in a jar.)*

Peter quickly learned what Paul spoke to the Athenians about at the Areopagus

**ACTS 17:24** "The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands.

As soon as Peter began making this suggestion, God interrupted Him and then It was all over. They were alone with Jesus on the Mountain.

**Matt 17:5** “*While he was still speaking*, a bright cloud covered them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!”

God was reminding Peter, as He is reminding us, don’t come with your own agenda, *LISTEN TO HIM!HIM*

Remember what Jesus said when he rebuked Peter in Caesarea Philippi in

**Matt 16:23** “…*you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.”*

*Human Concerns – That which makes sense to us, but may not be the “will of God”* We are all prone to make this mistake.

*During this Pandemic, God has forced us to stop trying to contain His glory in a box.*

*Never before in History has the church had to really come together and be identified for who we are, rather than the building we meet in.*

*I like the T-Shirt: “The Church has left the building”*

*This is a good thing. I know it’s not comfortable and has created a degree of difficulty that we are still not getting use to, but the beauty of seeing God move in the lives of people, in homes, in public settings and even online, is something I never want us to forget even when we are back in our safe and comfortable buildings.*

*My hope and prayer is that if/when we return to our sanctuaries and auditoriums, that we will always be have the desire to be the church that is not defined by or contained in a box, and that we will always remain a welcoming, accessible group that is visible and relatable.*

CONCLUSION: Let us not try to fit God into a box of our choosing, Let’s seek Him and let him reveal his glory to us in the way *He* wants to.

We can’t Capture, Contain and Control it, we need to just humble ourselves, submit to Jesus and yield to His will. Not just in the church, but in all areas of our life.

**He is God’s beloved son…Let’s listen to Him!**