

LESSON V.

THE TRANSFIGURATION

July 29, 1900

Luke 9: 28-36. Commit to memory vs. 33-35. Compare Matt. 17: 1-13. Read Mark 8: 31 to 9: 29.

28 And it came to pass about ¹an eight days after these sayings, he took ²Pe'ter and John and James, and went up into ³a mountain to pray.

29 And as he ⁴prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment ⁵was white and ⁶glistening.

30 And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were ⁷Moses and ⁸Eli'as:

31 Who appeared in glory, and spake of his ⁹decease which he ¹⁰should accomplish at Jeru'salem.

32 ¹¹But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: ¹²and when they were ¹³awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him.

Revised Version—¹Omit an; ²With him; ³The; ⁴Was praying; ⁵Became; ⁶Dazzling; ⁷Elijah; ⁸Marg'n, departure; ⁹Was about to; ¹⁰Now; ¹¹But; ¹²Fully; ¹³Marg'n, having remained awake; ¹⁴Were parting; ¹⁵Marg'n, booths; ¹⁶And while he said these things; ¹⁷A voice came; ¹⁸My Son, my chosen; ¹⁹Ye; ²⁰Came; ²¹Held their peace; ²²The.

EXPLANATION

Connection—The disciples were sad after Jesus had told them that He must die. (Lesson IV.) They did not yet grasp the fact of His resurrection. To cheer them and to reveal still more clearly His true nature and mission, there is the Transfiguration.

28. An eight days. Matthew (17: 1) and Mark (9: 2) say "six days"; a different way of counting. Luke reckons the days from and the day to, the others only the day between. The week had been spent in instruction. **Peter and James and John**; the inner circle of His disciples, and best able to understand what they were to see. (See 8: 51; Matt. 26: 37.) **A mountain.** Matthew and Mark say "an high mountain"; most likely one of the spurs of Mount Hermon, the highest mountain in Palestine; not Mt. Tabor, an inhabited and fortified place in Galilee. **To pray**; probably at night. (See vs. 32, 33; 6: 12; 2 Pet. 1: 18, 19.) Compare also the night scene in Gethsemane. (Matt. 26: 36-46.)

29. The fashion of his countenance. Matthew (17: 2) says, "His face did shine as the sun"; likely from the glory within, as did the face of Moses from the reflected glory of God. (Ex. 36: 29.) **White and glistening** (literally, "lightning forth"). Matthew compares the whiteness to the light (17: 2); Mark, to the snow (9: 3); Luke, to the lightning. He Himself was transfigured, so that His very garments shone. He appears now in His true glory. (Rev. 1: 13-15.)

30, 31. Two men; who had lived centuries before, but were still living men. **Moses**; the great law-giver. **Elijah**; perhaps the greatest of the prophets. In the past, God had revealed His will to Israel by the law and the prophets. **Appeared in glory**; the glory they brought with them from the heavenly world. **Spake of his decease**; literally, His exodus ("departure"), a very weighty word, as Bengel says, involving His passion, cross, death, resurrec-

33 And it came to pass, as they ¹⁴departed from him, Pe'ter said unto Je'sus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three ¹⁵tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Mo'ses, and one for ¹⁶Eli'as: not knowing what he said.

34 ¹⁷While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud.

35 And ¹⁸there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is ¹⁹my beloved Son: hear ²⁰him.

36 And when the voice was ²¹past, Je'sus was found alone. And they ²²kept ²³close, and told no man in those days any of ²⁴those things which they had seen.

37 And ²⁵there came a voice, saying, ²⁶Ye are the sons of men, and shall sit on twelve ²⁷thrones, judging the twelve ²⁸tribes of Israel.

38 And ²⁹he said unto them, ³⁰Go ye, and tell the brethren of these things. ³¹And he said unto them, ³²Behold, I am with you, and shall be with you, until the end of the world.

tion and ascension. Note the theme; not His teaching or miracles, but His death.

32. Heavy with sleep. It was night. They had become drowsy as Jesus was praying. (Compare Matt. 26: 40, 43, 45.) **Fully awake** (Rev. Ver.). "Suddenly starting into full wakefulness in the middle of the vision." **They saw his glory.** The spectacle burst upon their bewildered gaze.

33. Peter said unto Jesus. A foolish scheme was this of Peter's. **Good for us to be here.** If they stayed there, Jesus might escape the cruel death of which He had spoken. Peter and the rest would have heaven's rest and glory without further toil. **Three tabernacles**; tents or booths made of boughs. **Not knowing what he said.** They were "sore afraid", frightened out of their senses. (Mark 9: 6.) To how much greater glory Calvary would lead!

34, 35. There came a cloud. Matthew (17: 5) says, "a bright cloud"; possibly the Shekinah, or cloud of glory, the symbol of God's presence. (Ex. 33: 9; 1 Kings 8: 10.) **Overshadowed them.** "Whom? the disciples? Jesus, Moses and Elias? All the six? Or the two celestial visitors alone? The second, the more probable, but impossible to be certain." (Bruce.) **A voice.** Peter speaks of it long after. (2 Pet. 1: 17, 18.) **This is my beloved Son**; as at the baptism, Luke 3: 28. (See also John 12: 28.) Peter had confessed that Jesus was the Son of God. (Matt. 16: 16.) The Father in heaven now responds, "My Son, my chosen." (Rev. Ver.) There should have been no doubt now.

36. Jesus . . . alone. Another most impressive lesson. Moses, representing the law, Elijah, representing prophecy, disappear. Jesus who came "to fulfil the law and the prophets" (Matt. 5: 17) remains; "Hear Him." (v. 35.) **Kept it close**; as commanded (Matt. 16: 9), until after the resurrection. The others were even less prepared than they to understand it.