

and 40 years after the date of our lesson. All this makes it the more inexplicable how tradition could have fixed upon this spot if it had not some grounds to go upon. The reasons for preferring Hermon are, (1) it is in the vicinity of Casarea Philippi, and so appropriately called "the mountain"; (2) Mark 9: 30 would seem to imply that Jesus did not enter Galilee until after the Transfiguration; and (3) it is believed that the very limited area on the top of Tabor was occupied by a fortified town. To pray—It was one of his all-night seasons of devotion. Compare Luke 6: 12; 21: 37; 22: 39; Matt. 14: 23, 24; Heb. 7: 7. It was at night, for we find that the disciples were sleepy (verse 32), and it was "the next day" when they came down (verse 37).

As he was praying (R. V.)—See other answers to his prayers, Luke 3: 21; John 12: 28. The fashion of his countenance was altered—"He was transfigured before them" (Matt.) literally "metamorphosed," a change in his appearance only, and it was for their observation and benefit. Matthew says that "his face did shine as the sun." White and glistening—Matthew says that "his raiment was white as the light"; Mark that, "his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow, so as no fuller on earth can white them." Glistening means literally "flashing as with lightning." It was not the reflected glory of the heavenly visitants, but a radiance bursting forth from his own person. (John 1: 14; Ps. 104: 2; Hab. 3: 4; Rev. 1: 14-16.) "The face of Moses had shone (Ex. 34: 29-35), but as the moon, with a borrowed, reflected light, but Christ's shone as the sun, with an innate, inherent light." (M. Henry.) "His body was steeped in the splendour which was natural to holiness." (Chadwick.) Why was Jesus transfigured? (1) For his own comfort and encouragement. (2) To strengthen the faith of the disciples, and give them something to rest upon in the dark hours that were to follow. (3) To manifest the unity of the two dispensations. (4) To give a glimpse of what the resurrection state will be like. He "shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory."

30. Moses and Elias—Representatives of the Law and the Prophets, the old economy which was passing away. Read Matt. 5: 17. That these were recognized by the apostles is evident from verse 33, but how they knew them is not told us. Both of these were specially honored by God at their departure from this life. Read Deut. 34: 1-12, and 2 Kings 2: 1-15.

31. Who appeared in glory—Shining with a heavenly radiance suitable to their condition of being. His decease—lit. "his exodus" or departure. The same word is used for death in 2 Pet. 1: 15. What the disciples could not bear to think of, was the sublime subject of this wonderful conference. Doubtless his resurrection and ascension were included. Accomplish—"The departure is conceived of as divinely foreordained, there-

fore as being fulfilled when it actually occurred." (Meyer.)

II. EARTHLY DISCIPLES. 32. When they were fully awake (R. V.)—The margin of R. V. gives "having remained awake." They were very drowsy before but managed to keep awake; when, however, this scene burst upon them they were wide awake. It was no dream, or vision. No historical event is better attested than this. It was witnessed by them, recorded fully in three trustworthy narratives, and referred to in other writings (John 1: 14; 2 Pet. 1: 16-18.)

33. As they were parting from him (R. V.)—Peter wished to detain the heavenly visitors and prolong the blessed companionship. It is good for us to be here—A child-like and simple exclamation, expressing a state of felicity too ravishing for utterance. "O, Master, it is good to be entranced, enwrapped alone with Thee; Till we, too, change from grace to grace, Gazing on that transfigured face." (Stanley.) Some understand Peter to mean "It is opportune that we are here, for we can build three tabernacles for you." Perhaps Peter thought that now Jesus would manifest himself in his glory, between Moses and Elijah, as Israel's Messiah. He did not understand that he would be "lifted up," as "King of the Jews," on a cross, between two malefactors. Even while he was speaking, a poor demoniac boy was waiting for them at the foot of the mountain. Let us make—According to Matthew he said "Let me make." Tabernacles—Booths, such as were constructed of leafy branches at the feast of tabernacles." "Peter and his fellows were so taken with the sight of the felicity they saw, that they desired to abide on the mount with Jesus and the saints. What moved them shews what will delight us when this transient world is over, and God will gather his people to himself. Here was but Hermon, and there will be heaven; here were but two saints, there the mighty multitude no man can number; here was but Christ transfigured, there he will sit at the right hand of God, enthroned in the majesty of heaven; here was a representation for a brief interval, there a gift and permanent possession of blessedness." (Lindsay.) Not knowing what he said—"A subjective reflection which manifestly proceeds from Peter himself." (Lange.) He was "dazed with the vision of glory." (Lindsay.) A moment's reflection would have shown him the foolishness of trying to detain the inhabitants of heaven by offering to house them in booths of branches. When these gospels were written, all three understood better what the Transfiguration meant, and that the glory of Calvary was greater than that of Tabor (or Hermon):

III. THE FATHER'S APPROVAL. 34. A cloud—Matthew calls it "a bright cloud." It was the *Shekinah*, or visible sign of the divine presence. (Ex. 3: 2; 14: 19, 20; 24: 15-17; 40: 34, 35; 1 Kings 8: 10, 11; Ezek.