

A Night on a Mount — Transfiguration.

Matthew 17: 1-8; Luke 9: 28-36.

Night Scenes of Scripture

Seventeen Bible Night Scenes, illustrating and elucidating various truths of the Gospel.

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Chapter 4

A Night on a Mount — Transfiguration.

Does it not seem strange to you that of this incomparable night scene, which these scriptures depict, it is written, "They kept it close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen"? (Luke 9: 36.) Does it not seem to you strange that they should be silenced about this wonderful scene? Methinks if I had seen it, my tongue would have wanted to tell others about it. Now, why were they silenced? We read that "Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of Man be risen again from the dead." But more than that, I think the truth is, they could not understand it. It was a marvellous moment. It was the dead of night, and they saw the mountain top lit up with brightest glory. The glorified body of the Son of Man lit up that scene at the dead of night, when darkness reigned supreme. Do you know, my friends, there is coming by-and-by a wonderful time, when there will be no need of the sun or moon, and of that scene Scripture says, "The glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the lamp thereof" (Rev. 21: 23). Are you going to be there?

Well, you say, I should like to see what Peter and James and John saw. They saw Christ glorified as a perfect man on earth. We shall never see that, but, thank God, we shall see a scene that eclipses it in a certain sense, and you will find it all described in the end of the twenty-first chapter of the Revelation. It is a scene of holiness, purity, blessing, and rest for eternity, into which every believer through grace shall pass; and what I am gravely anxious about is to get you, beloved friends, to have a title to, and a part in that scene when it takes place. Have you ever yet been brought to know the Lord, because everything turns on knowing Jesus? Everything turns upon your relation to Christ. You cannot be right for eternity if you are not right about Jesus now. Whether you are right about the Lord or not, what you think of Him, what you feel about Him, what your relation to Him is, I do not know, God knows. But what I want to show you from this scripture is, that everything hangs upon your relation to Jesus the Lord; and it is an immense mistake not to be with God in His thoughts of Jesus. It is an immense mistake on every ground not to be in communion with God.

The man of the world is making a huge mistake, — the Christian that is in the world, and is sailing with the world, is making a great mistake, for he has not the thoughts of the Father about the Son. True blessing today lies in knowing God's thoughts about Jesus. Perhaps you are enjoying them. You could not fail to enjoy them if you had them, because the revelation of the delight of the Father in the Son fills to overflowing the heart that gets that revelation.

Let us now look at this interesting scene, and you will observe that, what I may call its setting — what it flows out of — is what you find recorded in the preceding part of our chapters regarding the Lord when here. As He passed along one day He turned to His disciples and asked, "Whom say the people that I am?" (Luke 9: 18.) He had gone apart — as this part of Luke's Gospel shows — to pray. This eighteenth verse of Luke 9 is the fourth time in this Gospel where we find this blessed dependent Man in prayer before God. He was alone, that is, He had retired from the world; nevertheless His disciples were with Him. They had watched Him — clearly — in prayer. Then He turns to them and says, "Whom say the people that I am?" He would like to know, for the moment, what they thought of Him. He had been in this scene — I mean in active service — for many months. I speak not of the thirty years' retirement, before He came out into the active service of the gospel. He had been two years and some months before the eyes of the people in His work of blessing and of goodness. He had given full testimony to His mission. The Father too had given His testimony at the moment of His baptism, when you first find Him praying (Luke 3: 21).

You remember that in the moment when He was baptized in Jordan the Holy Spirit fell upon Him like a dove — that emblem of purity and gentleness — not like "fire," but like a dove. The dove had found, so to speak, a resting-place. You will remember also that when Noah sent out the dove from his ark, he sent it out twice, and it came back. And why? Because there was nothing on the water but carrion, and there was no resting-place for the feet of the dove. At length, on the third occasion, the dove found something above the water as a resting-place; in a resurrection scene she found a place to rest her feet. And long did the Holy Ghost hover over this world before He could find a resting-place. At length He came in the figure of a dove on Jesus. The Holy Ghost had hovered over the world for four thousand long years, and what did He see? Moral carrion everywhere! Mark it, weigh it, challenge it if you like! He had seen nothing but moral carrion. What do you mean, you may ask, by moral carrion? That which is dead, offensive, and only fit for the scavenger. He saw man, every man, in his real state of sin as God sees him.

Read the history of man in the Old Testament. What do you find? God looked down to see if there were any that did good, any that sought God, or anything that was suitable to God. And did He find any such? Nay. "Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually," Scripture says (Gen. 6: 5). And for four thousand years the Holy Ghost sought in vain for a holy, sinless, spotless, perfect man, on whom He could come and dwell in him. I deny not that He did come, in the way of power, on certain men, to do the will and purpose of God. He could and did use evil men, like Balaam and Saul, or godly men, like David and Isaiah; but He only came on them for the time. He never tabernacled with any of them, or abode in them. Sin was everywhere; but at length comes the moment when a sinless, holy Man appears in this scene, and the Holy Ghost falls upon Him like a dove. At last the heavenly Dove has found a resting-place in this world of sin. Ah, it was a marvellous moment. Why did it not rest on others? There was, you see, sin everywhere. Redemption was not accomplished. The Holy Ghost could only

dwell in sinful men where redemption was known, and where the power of the redeeming blood of the Saviour was really applied. But at length there comes One on whom He can rest, in virtue of what He was in His own Person, sinless, the Holy One of God, and upon Him the Holy Ghost falls, like a dove, and *abides* upon Him.

The testimony of God to John the Baptist was — "Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and *remaining* on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost." And the Baptist adds: "And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God" (John 1: 33, 34). He was a real, true, absolutely perfect Man; but He was a man as much as I am — sin excepted. In the third chapter of Luke's Gospel, you find that He is baptized in Jordan, and while He prays, the heavens are opened, the Holy Ghost descends, and the voice of the Father says, in infinite delight, "Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased." Now mark this! At that time the Father did not add these words, "Hear him." In the scene I have read to you tonight, there is again the expression of the Father's delight, with the added words, "Hear him." If you have never heeded Him before, now then "hear him." Why did the Father not say so at the baptism in Jordan? If I may so say, it went without saying that others would delight in Him. Man was being tested by Him. A year or so goes by, and then He says to the disciples, "Whom say the people that I am?" They reply, "Some say you are John the Baptist, some say you are Elias, and others, that you are one of the old prophets raised from the dead." Nobody knew Him. Ah, what a revelation of the heart of man! The Father had declared who He was, and He had come to His own, but His own received Him not. He was in the world, and the world saw His works; but while they saw what He did, they did not know who He was. Do you know who He is? I repeat — Do you know who He is? "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." That was God's word — His testimony to His personal glory; but the miracles He wrought, His mercy and His goodness, and the beauty of His life, had not opened the eyes of the people. They indeed felt that He was, in a certain sense, One whom God sustained; but it was evident they knew Him not as the Son of God; they knew Him not as the One who was to be the Saviour of the world.

He went about doing good — "full of the Holy Ghost," as Scripture says. He opened blind eyes, unstopped deaf ears, made the lame to dance, caused the dumb to speak, bound up the broken heart, set free the captive; and no matter what the misery was that crossed His path at every turn, He met it in the most marvellous grace; and though He blessed, and healed, and helped people right and left by thousands, yet He never urged one such to follow Him — not one. He never told any man who had been healed by His mighty power to follow Him. No, grace does not buy hearts; it wins them. Mark that! Jesus never seeks to compel one to follow Him. If you are not following Jesus, He will not compel you. There is nothing, in that legal sense, compulsory with the Lord. You may follow Him. It will be a great mistake if you do not. You may do so tonight, and it will be blessing for you, for time and for eternity. But mark! He will not compel you. He will bless you — He loves to bless you; but He then says, so to speak, "Go thy way." To blind Bartimeus, He said, "Go thy way." To the healed demoniac he said, "Go home to thy friends." And then there is Jairus's daughter, twelve years of age, whom He raised from the dead. Does He say, "Now that girl must follow me?" Not a bit of it. He says to the mother, "Give her meat," but He leaves her at home. That is Jesus' way. Christ wins hearts, but He wins them by the attractiveness of grace. He wins them by love. There is no *must*. The heart that is acted on only by a *must* is not enjoying Christ's grace. If you are controlled by a *must*, you

are a poor miserable legalist, or a self-tortured ascetic, for there is no must where grace is concerned. There is *may*, and then by grace the heart says, *I will*; but there is no *must*.

But, you say, it is written, "Ye *must* be born again." I admit there is a must there. That is the *must* of necessity in regard to new birth — not discipleship. The following of Christ is a beautiful spontaneous act; and you know whether you are following the Lord or not. If not, I hope your heart will be won for Jesus this evening. You may get into fellowship with the thoughts of the Father tonight

The varied answers to the Lord's query, "Whom say the people that I am?" were but guesses — and all wrong. Then "He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Oh, He loved that answer — "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." "And Jesus answered, and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed *it* unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Let me tell you this — you will never learn Christ from the schools of men; you will never learn Christ from the synagogue; you will never learn Christ from the mind. No! If you ever learn Christ, it will be from the teaching of the Father. You will have to get near to the Father. "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed *it* unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." No man cometh unto Him except the Father draw him, and of every one that the Father draws He says, "Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." He came to do the Father's will here, and nothing else. And what was the Father doing? He was introducing souls to His Son. That is what He is now doing. Are you going to be introduced? Introduced! What do you mean? Introduced! My friend, I recollect when God introduced me. I shall never forget it. Do not you recollect, my Christian friend, when you were introduced — when the Father led you as a trembling, wrath-fearing sinner to the Son, and the Son gave you blessing, bringing your troubled soul into rest, and your guilty, sin-stained conscience to peace? I see many smiling faces here as I speak, who are all saying, "I recollect the time when the Lord blessed me." Aye, and you will never forget it. That moment in the history of your soul you will never forget, whatever may have come afterwards.

Then the Lord tells Peter the solemn truth that He must die. Peter does not like that. He could scarce believe it. But the Lord says that He "must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day." He unfolds the solemn fact that He must go to death. Although He was in Himself a spotless, holy, sinless Man, upon whom death had no claim, yet He unfolds the purport of His earthly mission — that He was going to die. And why? Because He knew that you and I could never get life if He did not die. Therefore, in heavenly grace, He yields Himself to be rejected, spat upon, smitten, and killed, and raised again the third day, accepting at the same moment on the cross the whole weight of God's condemnation of sin. He knew what was the scene of moral carrion that presented itself to God. He knew every man's sin, and that there was nothing here fit for God. He knew that the first man was utterly rejected of God, and He knew that nothing could redeem or deliver man or bring him to God save His own death, and therefore He brings out distinctly that He must die. This was not pleasant to Peter, and, desirous of saving his Master from shame, he says, "Be it far from thee, Lord." The Lord rebukes him with the solemn words, "Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men."

Then the Saviour says, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever 'will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away? "Now, I pray you, if you are not yet on the Lord's side, tell me, What is a man advantaged? Young man, what advantage have you? You are in the world, and of the world, and known by the world to be a worldling. "What is a man advantaged if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away," or "lose his own soul"? as Scripture elsewhere puts it. What is the worth of your soul? The Blessed Son of God gave Himself for my soul; and, if I want to know the value of the soul, I look at the cross, and at this holy, sinless, spotless One going down to death to redeem it. That is the value of the human soul. You perhaps never thought of this before. Let me beseech you, ponder the Saviour's question, "What is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?"

Ah, you say, I have life before me. Have you? Are you sure of that? I see a young man here who is just starting out in life. He has it all before him, and he means to have the world for a time. Stop, dear youth, God may cut you off before you have time to enjoy much of the world's things. Perhaps you reply, I do not think it is likely I shall be cut off. Ah! my friend, did you see those two hearses going along Princes Street yesterday afternoon? Yes! but death is a common thing. Yes! I know it is; but it was the heavy shower that so refreshed the earth, in the middle of last week, that swept these two men whose funeral you saw, into eternity. Poor fellows! they were working in the city drains, and the torrent of rain overwhelmed them ere they could get out. They were caught in a trap, as it were, and drowned. The devil would much like to catch you, my unsaved friend, in a similar trap. And I will tell you more. There is an unyielding and immovable grating at the end of all his traps. Ah! you say, that is where those poor fellows were found, just inside the outlet grating — drowned. Yes, and, sinner, mark you, that is just where you will be found if you go on in your sins, ruined and lost for eternity. And what then? You will find you were the dupe of Satan. One could not but feel deeply sorry for the poor entombed men, and for those who were left behind to mourn their loss; but what effect has this lesson upon you? Come now, friend, let us be honest. Had it been you who were buried yesterday, where would you be now? In eternity. Face it, and say where. In heavenly glory, cleansed by the blood of Christ? Oh, no! Nobody ever mistook you for a Christian. God knows well, and you know well, you are unsaved. God save you now. You may never get another chance.

"What is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away? For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed." Do you hear that? You have been ashamed of Jesus. You know you have been. You ran away if ever you saw a Christian coming up to you to speak personally about Jesus. You were ashamed. Listen. "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and my words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and *in his* Father's, and of the holy angels." Oh, then, He contemplates coming back, does He? Yes, He is coming back in His own glory. He is coming back in His Father's glory, and in the glory of the holy angels. But, tell me, will you be with Him then? Who is on the Lord's side? Oh, you say, I hope I shall be on the Lord's side then. But, say, are you on His side now? That is the point. I used to be ashamed of Jesus, and now I am ashamed that I ever was. My dear friend, I hope you may be henceforth ashamed that you have ever been ashamed of Jesus. Ashamed of Jesus! Ashamed of love!

Ashamed of infinite grace! Ashamed of the One who gave up everything for us, who did everything for us, and who fills our hearts full of joy for eternity in the Father's house. Ashamed of Jesus! God forbid that you and I should be ashamed of Jesus.

And now the Lord adds, "But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God." You may say, What did Jesus mean by that? I think the answer is in the next verse: "And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to *pray*." Observe that. This is the fifth time in Luke's Gospel that Jesus is seen praying. "And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistering." Matthew puts it thus: "He was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light." By His side you see were Moses and Elias. "There be some standing here," He says, "which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God," or, as Matthew has it, "till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom." It is the same thing. The Lord has not yet come in manifest majesty and glory, as King of kings, and Lord of lords, but He will thus come as the Son of Man, and no doubt here He gives His beloved disciples a miniature picture of the coming kingdom. If you have any doubt as to that interpretation, you will have all doubt dispelled if you listen to what one of the eyewitnesses says, for you must observe that the Lord had three men with Him that wondrous night, and they were eye-witnesses of His glory. Moses and Elias were His companions in that glory. That is what you and I are going to be, my Christian friend. Peter, James, and John were eye-witnesses, and that is what Peter refers to in his Second Epistle, when he says: "Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance. For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount" (2 Peter 1: 15-18).

Peter makes perfectly plain what he saw, since he calls it "the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Look at this scene. I conclude from the narrative given that it was night, for the disciples had gone to sleep, and they slept long. Clearly they awakened from their sleep confused. The whole circumstances point to this scene being at night. You find the Lord frequently spending the night in prayer. Here He was in prayer, and what took place? While His three disciples were "heavy with sleep" He was transfigured, and "when they were awake they saw his glory." Roused from their slumber, Peter, James, and John saw it. As that Man bent before God on the mountain-top in prayer, the Father expressed His delight in Him, and "he received from God the Father honour and glory." He had travelled three-and-thirty years in blessed dependence on, and devotedness to God, and now from the mountain-top He might have passed up into heaven unchallenged, and been rapturously welcomed. But if He had gone up into glory then, He would have left you and me behind, for redemption was unaccomplished.

The Father, in this wondrous scene, expresses His delight in Him, He receives honour and glory, and for the time being He has a glorified body. That glorified body illumines — lights up — all that mountain-top, and by His side are seen two men, Moses and Elias, and I need not say with what joy they occupy that place with their Lord and Saviour. Moses and Elias had been

pillars in Jewish history. Moses, the lawgiver, had died, and been buried by God's own hand. Wonderful indeed was his history. You know what his great desire was? To go into the land of promise. But God said, "Get thee up into this mountain Abarim, unto Mount Nebo. . . . and behold the land of Canaan; . . . thou shalt see the land before thee; but thou shalt not go thither unto the land which I give the children of Israel" (Deut. 32: 49, 52). Poor Moses! I think he was very heart-broken because he was not allowed to go into the land. If he had gone into the land then, he would have gone into it in very poor company. Where do we see him in this night scene? He is in good, yea, the best of company. He is in the company of the Son of God. Raised by God's own hand he stands with the incarnate Son of God on that mountain top. He got far more than he missed, as the poet has touchingly written: —

"And had he not high honour?

The hillside for a pall;

To lie in state, while angels wait,

With stars for tapers tall;

And the dark rock pines, like tossing plumes,

Over his bier to wave,

And God's own hand, in that lonely land,

To lay him in the grave.

In that strange grave without a name,

Whence his uncoffined clay

Shall break again (oh, wondrous thought!)

Before the judgment day;

And stand with glory wrapt around,

On the hills he never trod,

And speak of the strife, that won our life,

With the Incarnate Son of God."

The site of the Transfiguration has been supposed to be Mount Tabor, but much evidence militates against this view. We do not know the place except that it was in the Land of Promise, and Moses was there with Jesus, in the company of the blessed Son of God. And Elijah, the

prophet-reformer, who had gone up without dying, was there too. Moses and Elias are there as the companions of the Lord, and you have thus a picture of the coming kingdom, the heavenly side as well as the earthly. What is the heavenly side? The Son of Man in glory, and at His side, sharing that glory, one who had died and been raised, and another who had been taken up without dying. That is just what will be manifested shortly. The kingdom of the Father gives us the heavenly side, while the kingdom of the Son of Man presents the earthly side.

But you may inquire, Who form the heavenly side? Those who partake of the first resurrection, those who already have passed into the grave, and whom the Lord when He comes will take out of the grave, "raised in glory" to be with Him in glory. There will be also many alive on the earth when the Lord comes, and these — changed into His likeness — will be caught up to meet Him in the air. "So shall we ever be with the Lord." Moses is the figure of those saints who have fallen asleep, been buried, and will be raised — mark — "in glory." Moses and Elias in this scene were in a glorified state. That is the point. They appear in glory, and are in association with the Son of God, they are the companions of Jesus. Did you ever think what heaven will be? You get a very beautiful picture of it here. It will be heaven to be with the Saviour.

Fellow-Christian, should the Lord come back tonight, you and I through mercy would not see death, we should be caught up like Elias into glory. That is the Christian's hope. In Peter and James and John you have the earthly side of the kingdom prefigured, while, withal, they are eye-witnesses of their Lord's majesty and glory, — glory which God conferred upon His Son. This was not His intrinsic, personal glory, as the Son of God. It was acquired glory, conferred on Him because of what He was as man in this scene. He had done all for God's glory, and God's glory only, and the answer to this wonderful pathway of humiliation and self-emptiness is that He is glorified as Man, while He stands upon earth. No one surely wonders that He is glorified now. He came from glory, and is gone back to it, and in His cross has opened up the way, and laid the basis, in redemption, of our title, to go there also through His rich grace.

And now we read: "And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias: who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." Could anything be more wonderful? They are talking with the Lord about His death. How striking a theme on that mount of glory! These two men are conversing with Jesus as to His death, while they at the moment see Him glorified. Marvellous mystery! He told them, as He had told His disciples a few days before, that He must die. Why die? Because there is no way for you and me into God's presence except through death. There is no life for you and me except by death; not our own death, but the death of One upon whom death had no claim, and who was going down to die for God's glory, to destroy the power of Satan, and to deliver and redeem man. And Moses and Elias were talking with Him about His death. And do you know what you and I will do in heaven? We shall always be talking either with Him, or about Him, and about His death.

What is the song of Revelation? "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for *thou wast slain*, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood." Eternal paean of the redeemed! The love of Christ will evoke it, for although He said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15: 13), yet Christ has laid down His life

for us when we were not His friends but were opposed to Him, and when we did not love Him. Could you honestly say that you have loved Jesus? No! Then learn this — Jesus loved you, and, sent of God, He went down into death for you; and therefore death is the basis and groundwork of salvation. It is by His death that our redemption is accomplished. It is by His death that sin is put away. It is by His death that Satan's power is broken, and by which you and I are brought to God. It is only by His death — nothing but His death.

And now at this moment we are told that Peter, James, and John wake up, for "they were heavy with sleep, and when they were awake they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him." It is all perfectly plain that there will be recognition in eternity. There will be recognition in the Father's house. They knew Moses, and they knew Elias. They confounded neither of them. They were confident about each. I do not think when, by-and-by, we pass into eternity, that we shall fail to recognise each other, for recognition after resurrection is clearly seen here. The relationships of life are for time, but individuality is clearly maintained into eternity, and a very blessed thing for us that it is so. Peter, ever impetuous, and stirred by this marvellous vision, yet not knowing what He said, exclaims, "Master, it is good for us to be here." That was quite true. It was a very nice thing for him to see the glory of the Lord. And you, Christian friend, will say similarly some day, "It is good for us to be here," when you see His glory.

Peter's heart began to get warm, and I see the reason. He saw the Messiah, the lawgiver, and the reformer together, and was charmed. He saw everything that was important to a Jew's mind and a Jew's heart. In Moses he had the lawgiver; by his side was Elias, the prophet and reformer; and, above all, now he sees the Messiah — and to his Jewish mind the scene was so beautiful that he desired to perpetuate it. He spoke out first as they were retreating out of sight. Matthew and Mark do not note this circumstance, but Luke records when Peter said these foolish words: "And it came to pass as *they departed* from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said." And what had he said? What had he done? He had put the Son of God, the Messiah, Moses the lawgiver, and Elias the reformer, on a dead level. He had equalised them, so to speak. He thought this scene should be perpetuated, and to retain them he would give each a tabernacle. But "while he thus spake there came a cloud, and overshadowed them; and they feared as they (those) entered into the cloud" — Peter, James, and John feared as the cloud enclosed the others. And what was the cloud? The Shekinah — the glory of God. The cloud that had tabernacled with Israel in the days of the wilderness reappeared to guard the person of the Son of God. That cloud bespoke the immediate presence of the Father — was, in fact, the expression of the Father's house, and into it Moses and Elias go. Thank God. That is where you and I, fellow-Christian, are going. And we need not be afraid to go there. If you have the Father's thoughts about the Son, all is right. Moses and Elias had got the thoughts of the Father about the Son. And what is the result? He stoops down and takes them into the cloud. Poor Peter! How foolishly had he spoken, and then must have felt. "Let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias," was his estimation of the comparative value of his Master. You will understand that the Father could not brook this insult to His Son. And immediately there comes out of the cloud this voice, "This is my beloved Son; hear him." Ah! hear Him! Not "Hear Moses." No; his day is gone by. Nor Elijah? No; his day is also gone by. Hear Jesus, and Jesus only. This is Jesus' day.

Do you think the law, or Moses, can help you? No; they can only condemn you. Do you think Elias can help you? Oh, no! He can tell you that you are wrong, and exhort you to reform, but cannot help you. Elijah may exhort you, and Moses will condemn you, but Jesus only can save you; and therefore the voice of the Father says, "This is my beloved Son; hear him." That is the Father's word now — "Hear him." You must listen to Him. Let me ask you, Have you listened to Him? Oh, friend, you had better hear the voice of Jesus; you had better listen to what He says. You know what He said to the religious unconverted man? Perhaps you are that person. "Marvel not that I said unto thee, YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN." The Father says to you, religious, unsaved soul, "Hear him!" Worldling, do you not hear His voice? "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mark 8: 36, 37.) You had better hear Him. Are you a troubled, anxious soul? Hear what He says to the troubled soul: "Thy sins are forgiven. Thy faith has saved thee. Go in peace" (Luke 7: 48, 50).

Listen again, the Father says, "Hear him." Ah, friend, it is life to hear the voice of Jesus. To you He says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live" (John 5: 25). And if you hear His voice it will be life to your dead soul. "Hear, and your soul shall live," says Scripture, by the pen of Isaiah (Isa. 55: 3). Again the apostle Peter says: "Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me: him shall ye hear in all things, whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which *will* not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people" (Acts 3: 22, 23). Jesus was that Prophet. Have you heard Him? I ask, for "Faith cometh by hearing; and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10: 17). He rose from the dead, and now from the heavenly glory He says, "Look unto me and be ye saved;" "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." And the Father says concerning Him, "Hear him! Ah, friend, have you heard Him?"

The effect of this word of the Father's was very great on these three men. I read that the "disciples fell on their face, and were sore afraid." They felt that they had missed God's mind entirely. But "Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid." Are you troubled, and trembling, and feeling anxious, because you have missed the mind of the Lord, and missed blessing by not hearing Him, and loving Him? "Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid." He is not changed. He is the same Jesus now. He filled their hearts with peace, not fear. He says to you, as to them, "Arise, and *be not afraid*." That is what the Saviour says to a troubled soul.

And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only." Thank God. I am very thankful that I live in a day when I have only got to do with Jesus. I have not to tremble before Moses now. I have not to fear Elijah now. I have not to think that redemption is to be got by what I ought to be, or by turning my thoughts in upon myself. Neither law-keeping nor reformation can meet my case. The moment has arrived when God the Father says, "This is my beloved Son, hear him." I have heard the voice of Jesus. Have you heard His voice? Have you not? Ah! do you not hear it now? If you hear, you live. Thank God, you have to do with Jesus only.

There is something brought out in this scene that is analogous to what we find in Acts 7. There you see that, when they were stoning Stephen, he looked up and "saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God." He saw "Jesus only," and was sustained. You turn your eyes upward, and you too will see the risen Saviour in glory. What has He done between this night scene on the mount and that recorded in the seventh of Acts? He has glorified God infinitely about sin. He has gone down into death, and annulled it. He has broken the power of Satan. He has borne the sinner's sins, and put them away. He has accomplished redemption. He has been raised for the believer's justification. He has been among the dead, but He came out of death. He is risen from the dead, and He lives now on high the sinner's friend, the mighty, blessed Saviour, "Jesus only." Is it only Jesus you need, you want now? Then you may have Him just now; and if you receive Him as your Saviour you will be truly happy, and you will want everybody to know the Jesus you know. Oh! may God give you in His grace to receive Jesus simply, to believe Him, to confess Him, and to enjoy Him.