

In the Name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

After Moses had spoken with God, when he came down Mount Sinai with the two Tablets of the Law in his hand, the people were afraid of him. But it wasn't the Law he carried, the will of God scribed into stone, that frightened them. The skin of Moses face shone. He had been in the presence of God. Moses face shone with a reflected glory.

That glory was not his own. But that brightness testified to the True Light who was to come into the world. So in his hands he bore the Law, but his face showed forth the Gospel. God desires fellowship with man.

To quell the fears of the people, Moses veiled his face when he spoke with them. The Glory of God is a fearful thing to behold, even in its reflected form. So Peter, James and John fell down on their faces. They saw the Christ in Divine Form. They heard the voice of God. They saw what Moses had seen – the Second Person of the Holy Trinity. They saw the True Light that had come into the world.

Before the Transfiguration, walking up the mountain with Christ, His Divinity wasn't apparent. In His State of Humiliation, He did not always nor fully use His Divine powers. They were His to use, always there, but He willingly put them off.

And as He walked up that mountain with his inner-circle, as the God that walked in the garden in the cool of the day walked up the mountain in the Syrian heat, His Glory was veiled. The men were not afraid as they walked up the mountain, for the Glory of the Lord was veiled in the Flesh of man.

But there, on that mountain, that veil was for a moment lifted. The Evangelist says that "He was transfigured before them." He underwent for a moment a metamorphosis, a radical change, that exposed what was always His, His Divinity, to mere men. St. Matthew describes it: "His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light."

The One who in the beginning said "Let there be light", and there was light, showed forth His Divine Light. Like Moses' face, the sun is only a dim reflection of God's glory. And so His raiment, the earthly wrappings of the Celestial God, appeared as the brightest light. But it was not the blinding glow of the Theophany, the vision of God, that caused the men to fall on their faces. It was at the voice of God the Father, the same voice that at the baptism in the Jordan said "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."

So the chief of the Apostles bears witness: "...we have the Prophetic Word confirmed." The Prophetic Word foretold the Divinity of God the Son. The Scriptures of the Old Testament cry out that the Promised Messiah is David's Son and David's Lord.

So now, more than by the worship of the Magi; more than Simeon's prophecy, more than by His being called out of Egypt; more than by His questions to Israel's teachers; more than at His baptism in the Jordan River, now in His miraculous Transfiguration is His Epiphany is complete, as He is revealed in His heavenly Glory.

At the vision of Christ transfigured, at the speaking of the Father, the three disciples were greatly afraid. They knew of Nadab and Abihu, who entered into the very presence of God, before His Glory. Fire came out from the Lord and devoured them. Nadab and Abihu were consumed by holy fire. Peter, James and John were right to be afraid.

So you too, like them, should fall on your face before God, for you have sinned. And as the smoke and tremblings and fire and lightning of Sinai testified, sin cannot stand before a Holy God. But the Lord touched those fearful men and said “Do not be afraid.”

He came to die for them. He came to die for you. In Christ, there is no fear, for He is Love incarnate. He died to take your sins away. And He rose that you be declared a child of God through faith in Him. So you need not be afraid, for what He did, He did for you. He died to take your sins away.

The Words of St. Peter and the Words of St. Matthew are for you. Matthew testifies of the Transfiguration. Peter, who was there, testifies that the Transfiguration is the fulfilment of Old Testament Prophecy. By their testimony, by the witness of the Apostles and the Scriptures they wrote, you know the nature and center of all Holy Scripture – Christ, the Son of God, fully God yet fully Man.

You have the Mystery revealed to you, but you need not be silent about it, nor need you be afraid. The Lord commanded the Apostles not to speak of His Transfiguration, until the Son of Man was risen from the dead. But the Son of Man is risen from the dead. The One who was Transfigured on the mountain defeated death and took up His life again.

Peter, confused, astonished, asked to erect three tabernacles – one for Moses, one for Elijah, and one for the Lord. But the Lord Christ already had a Tabernacle – His Flesh. He came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. For not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.

He came down from the heights of the Mount of Transfiguration to go down to the shadows of Calvary. The brightness of His Transfiguration was eclipsed for three bitter hours by the darkness of Golgotha. There even the sun withheld its light. But there too was the Prophetic Word made more sure, as God Enfleshed died for the life of the world.

So while the two tablets of Moses accuse you, the Blood of Christ vindicates you. And while Elijah was a great Prophet of the Old, Christ alone is Prophet, Priest and King, the God to whom Elijah’s name testifies, the risen, Living Lord.

In love, the Lord who dwelt between the cherubim, the Lord that called Moses up the mountain, the Lord that appeared to Peter, James and John in a heavenly form, comes to you this day under the forms of Bread and Wine. And He touches you, as His Body is laid upon your tongue, and His Blood flows over your lips and fills your soul. In Him your sins are forgiven, so you need not be afraid.

He has redeemed you. He has purchased you. He has won you back. Believing in Him, you are the True Israel, the Holy, catholic, Apostolic Church, His Blood-bought Bride.

You eat His Body and drink His Blood, and you can pray with faithful Simeon “Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy Word. For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people. A Light to lighten the Gentiles, and the Glory of Thy people Israel.”

And mystery of mysteries, in the Transfiguration there is a promise for you. For while Peter could not prepare a tabernacle for the Lord, the Lord has prepared not a tabernacle, but a mansion for you – a mansion in heaven, an eternal place in His Father’s House, that you may be transformed, that you may receive a heavenly body, and that you dwell on the celestial mountaintop of heaven, with Christ, without ever coming down.

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