**This is my son…listen to him**

Mark 9:2-13 (Key verse 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!”

This passage begins by saying after six days? “2After six days Jesus took Peter, James and John with him and led them up a high mountain, where they were all alone.” Well what happed in the past six days? Jesus had asked his disciples who do you say I am? Peter confessed, “You are the Christ.” However, upon hearing this confession, Jesus revealed that he must suffer, be rejected, killed and raise again after three days. The disciples who heard this were greatly shocked. They had been dreaming of king Jesus who will be the turning point of their lives from suffering to a blissful life. However, what Jesus had said was depressing and unbelievable. Jesus even had to rebuke Peter, saying, get behind me Satan.

What the disciples heard from Jesus greatly shocked them. Same time the disciples were also caught in only thinking of the things of men. Rather In these six days Jesus finally taught them, whoever wants to save his life will lose, and whoever loses their lives for him will save it. Jesus words were clear, whoever is to follow him, should deny themselves take up their cross and follow him. And so the disciples struggled to listen to Jesus, all they could hear is our master is going to suffer, be killed and rejected. We are going to loose our positions. However, after six days, Jesus takes some of the disciples with up a high mountain, where they were all alone. May we learn why did Jesus do this? And finally what attitude should the disciples have towards this Jesus and to their life?

**Part I: The Transfiguration**

The last part of verse 2 says, there at the high mountain Jesus was transfigured before them. Look at verse 3, “3His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them.” His clothes became so white that no bleaching soap could even compete. At home my mom used Jik, but I can tell you know this whiteness was far better than what Jik could achieve. Why did Jesus show his disciples his transfiguration?

**Firstly, it was to show them his original self**. Jesus transfiguration was not a mere change of his clothes or of hairstyle. He was transfigured into his original being. So far, his appearance was not quite different from others. In fact, Jesus might have gotten a worse look, might have gotten sun burn as he used move a lot around. Isaiah even prophesied, he had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance we should desire him. People did not esteem him because he was despised and he suffered [Isa 53:2,3]. Actually contrast that with the Jesus we see in pictures and movies, he is actually a good looking Jesus.

However, Jesus is the son of God. His transfiguration revealed his original form. Jesus is holy and glorious, He is creator and the world is his creation. The world is sinful but Jesus is holy and pure. Jesus had said a number of times, after his suffering and death, he will be risen from the dead. That he would even come with the holy angels. At this very high Mountain the disciples were seeing a display of what the resurrected Jesus will look like when he returns with the holy angels. This how he will look like when he sits in glory with the father. When he first came, he came in a form of a humble figure to serve sinners. However, when he returns with the holy angels, he will come in his original form.

When Moses used to come down from meeting God from mount Sinai, the bible says, “It came about when Moses was coming down from Mount Sinai, that Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because of his speaking with Him” [exodus 34:29]. Moses was reflecting the glory of God on his skin and face. Whereas what we are seeing here with Jesus was the source of the glow of whiteness. We can see that Moses has been meeting Jesus on a high mountain.

However, the disciples did not have the fear of Jesus. Perhaps it is because they slept and ate with Jesus same way. Even his top disciples Perter, had the urge to rebuke Jesus. It is actually not just the disciples, even us the people of today, we have no fear of Jesus. We only have a one sided view of Jesus because we do not really know who Jesus is. Some people even have all sorts of things to say about Jesus and judge him recklessly. To some he is just this great and good person who ever lived. To some, he is just a prophet. However, Jesus glory and who he is cannot be degraded by anything in this world. Jesus will come gain on the last day to judge the world and declare his holiness and his glory. May the lord renew our hearts to meet the glorious and holy Jesus.

**Secondly, Jesus transfiguration was to teach the disciples the meaning of Jesus suffering and death**. Though it was amazing to see Jesus in his glorious form, after a while they saw another amazing thing. Look at verse 4, “4And there appeared before them Elijah and Moses, who were talking with Jesus.” This must have shocked the disciples. Why did Jesus show this to his disciples? Simply, put to really teach them the meaning of His suffering and death. The reason the disciples could not accept Jesus’ suffering and death was because they thought suffering was a shame, death was the last and miserable.

They did not know Jesus death was different form that of the people. People death is the end of life and the result of sin [at least the cause of death]. However, Jesus death and suffering had a special meaning. Jesus gave his life as a ransom, he took upon himself the sin of me ad you so that all people may be saved through faith in Him. Jesus death was for our salvation. Moses is a representation of the law, whereas Elijah the prophets. The law and the prophets is the old testament, in essence it is the promise that God will save us all from sin by sending Jesus to die to die for our sins. In Luke 9:31, the conversation between Jesus, Moses and Elijah is about his death in Jerusalem. The show of these men was to confirm that Jesus death is a glorious one that will fulfill God’s salvation plan promised throughout the old testament. Them seeing Moses should have also encouraged the disciples, that those who suffer and die for the lord will be risen from the dead. I believe their presence was also a great encouragement to Jesus. It was important that the disciples got the grasp of the meaning of Jesus death. Because, after Jesus ascension they were to preach the good news. That all mankind is saved from sin and death through faith in what Jesus had done.

**Thirdly, Jesus transfiguration was to show the glory that comes after suffering and death**. In the past six days, the disciples only thought about suffering and death. Their main focus was on thinking that suffering is a loss and death was a defeat and the end. However, sufferings comes before glory, and death before eternal life resurrection. Suffering and glory, death and resurrection are inseparable. If you suffer today for the lord, you will be honored tomorrow, if you want to be honored tomorrow, you must suffer today. Moses and Elijah are the most admired and honored men of Israel. But when they were in the world, they had to endure a lot of sufferings.

Jesus would also suffer and die, but in three days he would rise again. Jesus helped his disciples see glory and hope beyond sufferings and death by showing them the appearance of glory in advance. He hoped his disciples will deny themselves, take their cross and follow him in this world.

**Part II: Listen to Him**

How did the disciples react to this amazing sight? How should we react? Look at verse 5, “5Peter 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.” Peter said this because he was so frightened did not know what to say (6). Though true intention was revealed unconsciously. His true intention is particularly revealed in his use of the word “it is good for us to be here.” What is ‘here’, where Peter wanted to stay forever? The high mountain. It was a place where there were no stubborn bible students to deal with, a place where Elijah and Moses were, where the great servants of God where. A place high up above everyone else in the world.

They were happy to be right here in this world in greatness. He was still concerned with things of man and not of God. There was a pastor who asked his congregation, who wants to go to heaven. Everyone raised their hands, however, when he asked, who wants to go to heaven now. No one raised their hands. I believe Peter felt the same way. He wanted to live long in this world. He wanted the worldly Messianic Kingdom on earth.

Therefore Peter’s ‘here’ was, neither heaven after death nor a world with sufferings. Peter’s hidden life wish was to build three humbled houses for Moses, Elijah and Jesus here in this world to live there forever. He rebuked Jesus not to suffer and die because in his hearts of hearts, he longed for an easy going and comfortable life. Jesus tried to teach Peter why he had to suffer and die, and showed him the glory beyond death. Jesus also tried to teach the disciple to carry their cross in this world with this glorious hope.

God himself helped the disciples, let us all read verse 7, “7Then a cloud appeared and covered them, and a voice came from the cloud: “This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!” While the disciples were busy focused on what they were seeing and hopes and dreams they were thinking about what this all meant. A cloud appeared and a voice came from the cloud, “this is my son, whom I love. Listen to Him!” God himself says that Jesus is His beloved Son. Jesus is the Son of God who was sent by God. He is the Christ. Therefore, it is not our choice to obey him or not. Jesus’ word is God’s word. We must listen to him and obey him.

Just like the disciples, are we not trying to listen to the bible, only what we like but refuse to listen to what we feel uncomfortable with? On walls of people’s houses, we can easily find verses like, “Your beginning will seem humble, so prosperous will your future be” [Job 8:7], ““He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in Him I will trust.” [Ps 91:1-2] all which is wonderful and great. However, you will not find, “Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven, then come follow me.” [Mark 10:21] We find it difficult to listen to words, “He must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me” [Mark 8:34]. The lord is speaking to us to us today and daily, “This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!” May we obey Jesus with reverence fear, he is approved by God and loved by God dearly.

In the past six days, the disciples were terribly upset and opposed to Jesus when they heard him say, he must suffer and be killed. But when they saw Jesus transfiguration and heard the voice of God saying, “Listen to Him!” they could be changed and encouraged. For a moment they could begin to revere Jesus and His words. However, look at verse 9-10, “9As 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. 10They kept the matter to themselves, discussing what “rising from the dead” meant.” However, disciples seem not in full agreement with Jesus words, they wondered, what rising from the dead meant. They then asked, why do teachers of the law say that Elijah must come first (11).

At that time the teachers of the law emphasized that Elijah must come before Christ. They believed that after Elijah came and restored everything, Christ would appear in glory and establish the Messianic kingdom. In other words, the disciples raised questions about the suffering and death of Christ based on the teachings of the teachers of the law. It was true that Elijah must come first before Christ. But Jesus responded back with a question to his disciples, look at verse 12, “…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?” Though there are many prophesies in the Bible that Christ must suffer and die. The teachers of the law did not teach about the sufferings and death of Christ. They taught only the glorious Messiah, and only the words that fit their ideals.

Not only that, in verse 13, Jesus said, “Elijah has come” we learn through the bible that John the Baptist was John. He called on all people to repent and accept Jesus to restore Israel. However, he was treated harshly and finally was killed horribly. Though they waited for the forerunner of Christ to come, when he did come, they killed him. They tried to only accept words that fit their tastes and ideal. Words that do not disturb their comfort zones and easy going life. This is actually scary, for if the people of those time could become like that, especially the so called believers and teachers of the law. How about us today? Are we really listening to Jesus? Verse 7 says, “This is my Son, whom I love, **listen to him**!” for example said, “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever looses his life for me and for the gospel will save it.” Jesus was not saying this for the spiritual leaders like the disciples, but anyone who would truly follow him. In other words anyone who would claim to be a Christian. Look at verse 7 again, God himself spoke to the disciples. “This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!” I pray that we may listen to Jesus rather than words of those who teach the Bible to fit own worldly ideals.

**In conclusion,** in todays passage we learned about the Transfiguration of Jesus. It was firstly to show them his original self, secondly, to teach the meaning of suffering and death of Jesus and thirdly it was to show the glory that shall come after suffering and death of Jesus. Jesus did this because it was important that his disciple can have a vision of who Jesus is. They could also see the law and the prophets come together before Jesus. They saw something out of this world, for they could see Jesus in his truest self. Same time this did not change that this very Jesus, had to suffer, be humiliated and be killed. When believers hate suffering and only seek glory and praise, he or she cannot accept God’s word. They can only become a servant of Satan. If we are to truly listen and follow Jesus, then the mark of a true believers life is not comfort, but rather suffering for Jesus. There is no middle zone, neither the world neither the kingdom of heaven. There is only this world or the kingdom of God. And this world is a sea of suffering. People want to believe in Jesus in order to escape sufferings. But Jesus does not teach us how to avoid suffering. Rather he teaches, whoever desires to come after him, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow him. Jesus teaches the meaning of suffering and shows the glory that comes with it. The more you try to avoid suffering the bigger it gets. But when we know the meaning of suffering and accept it, it will be gone, because when we look up the glory behind it, we will have the strength to deal with it. Jesus showed the disciples this glory. We too can have the glory of Jesus in our hearts through the word of God. If we can but listen to Jesus. Jesus says, if anyone would come after me, he or she must deny himself, take us their cross and follow me. When we obey Jesus word, then I believe the glory will follow. May we have the holy fear of Jesus, so we may be freed from the complacent life, walk the truth and carry our cross daily. Amen!