

The transfiguration in synoptic comparison

(elements unique to each gospel in bold; elements in Mark omitted by Luke underlined)

MARK 9.2-13

Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white, **such as no one on earth could bleach them**. And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with **Jesus**. Then Peter said to Jesus, "**Rabbi**, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." He did not know **what to say, for they were terrified**. **Then** a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud **there** came a voice, "This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!" **Suddenly when they looked around**, they saw no one **with them any more, but only Jesus**. As they were coming down the mountain, he ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead. So they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what this rising from the dead could mean. Then they asked him, "Why do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?" He said to them, "Elijah is indeed coming first to restore all things. How then is it written about the Son of Man, that he is to go through many sufferings and be treated with contempt? But I tell you that Elijah has come, and they did to him whatever they pleased, as it is written about him."

LUKE 9.28-36

Now **about eight** days after these sayings Jesus took with him Peter and **John and James**, and went up on the mountain **to pray. And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed**, and his clothes became dazzling white. **Suddenly they saw two men**, Moses and Elijah, talking to **him. They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. Now Peter and his companions were weighed down with sleep; but since they had stayed awake, they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. Just as they were leaving him**, Peter said to Jesus, "**Master**, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah"--not knowing **what he said. While he was saying this**, a cloud **came** and overshadowed them; **and they were terrified as they entered the cloud**. Then from the cloud came a voice that said, "This is my Son, **my Chosen**; listen to him!" **When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and in those days** told no one any of the things they had seen.

MATTHEW 17.1-13

Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James **and his brother** John and led them up a high mountain, **by themselves**. And he was transfigured before them, **and his face shone like the sun**, and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. Then Peter said to Jesus, "**Lord**, it is good for us to be here; **if you wish, I will** make three dwellings here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." **While he was still speaking, suddenly a bright** cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud a voice said, "This is my Son, the Beloved; **with him I am well pleased**; listen to him!" **When the disciples heard this, they fell to the ground and were overcome by fear. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Get up and do not be afraid." And when they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus himself alone**. As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus ordered them, "Tell no one about **the vision** until after the Son of Man has been raised from the dead." **And the disciples asked him**, "Why, then, do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?" He replied, "Elijah is indeed coming and will restore all things; but I tell you that Elijah has already come, **and they did not recognize him**, but they did to him whatever they pleased. **So also the Son of Man is about to suffer at their hands.**" **Then the disciples understood that he was speaking to them about John the Baptist.**