

The Gospel According to
Luke

**“Your Eyes (& Ears) Have Seen
the Glory of the Coming of the Lord”**

Chapter 9:27-36

Introduction

Julia Ward Howe had visited the Army of the Potomac, and there she saw the commotion of the Civil War. It lay heavy on her heart until one night in December, in 1861, she sprang from her bed and wrote a poem.

When she returned to Boston she showed the words to James T. Fields, then editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*. He published the words in February, 1862. The poem was set to a common tune and quickly became an anthem to rally the worn and weary Union troops.

You know it; it's *The Battle Hymn of the Republic*:

*My eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord...
Glory, glory Hallelujah!*

Peter, John, and James could have written something similar. Their eyes did **see** the glory of the coming of the Lord when Jesus was revealed before them on the mountain. They also **heard** the glory of the coming of the Lord, as the Father overshadowed them in a cloud and spoke audibly.

Writing about their experience, in his second letter, Peter encouraged all believers to **see** and **hear** the glory of the Lord:

2 Peter 1:16 ... we... were eyewitnesses of His majesty.

2 Peter 1:17 For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

2 Peter 1:18 And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.

2 Peter 1:19 And so we have [a more sure word of prophecy (KJV)], which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts;

Even though you weren't on the mountain with them, you have something better: You have a more sure word of prophecy, by which Peter means God's written Word.

The glory they saw and heard on the mountain is a glory **you** can see and hear through God's Word. It's an anthem to rally you in your battles against sin, and self, and Satan.

We'll organize our thoughts around two points: #1 You See The Glory Of Jesus In His Second Coming, and #2 You Hear The Glory Of Jesus Until His Second Coming.

#1 You See The Glory Of Jesus In His Second Coming (v27-32)

The Lord had just told His disciples that He was on His way to the Cross. As if that wasn't a blow, He then told them that they should deny themselves, and take up their Crosses.

Wasn't Jesus the promised King? Weren't they going around preaching the kingdom? There was a disconnect somewhere!

With the advantage of hindsight, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, we better understand what Jesus meant. Because the nation of Israel would officially reject Him as their King, the promised kingdom would be postponed. Jesus would ascend back to heaven, then return from heaven a second time, in power and glory, to establish and rule the kingdom of God on earth. In the mean time, His disciples, and all those after them, would be waiting and watching for His Second Coming.

While waiting... while watching... There are battles to be fought. To encourage you, you can see the glory of Jesus.

Luke 9:27 But I tell you truly, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the kingdom of God."

The kingdom of God is the real, literal rule of Jesus over this planet. He will be physically present. It will last for one thousand years. Afterwards, the Lord will dissolve this earth, and create a new heaven and a new earth that will endure for eternity.

How is it, then, that Jesus could promise that some of them would **not taste death till they see the kingdom of God**? It's answered for you in the very next verses.

Luke 9:28 Now it came to pass, about eight days after these sayings, that He took Peter, John, and James and went up on the mountain to pray.

Jesus had these three men as a sort of inner-circle. They alone accompanied Him on at least three separate occasions:

1. Earlier, when Jesus had raised Jairus' daughter from the dead.
2. Here, on the mountain.
3. And later, when Jesus would pray in the Garden of Gethsemane.

It's been noted by commentators that their three experiences mirror the verse, in Philippians 3:10, **that I may know Him** [the experience on the mountain], **and the power of His resurrection** [Jairus' daughter], **and the fellowship of His sufferings** [in the Garden].

Luke often mentions Jesus praying. He seemed constantly in prayer. If ever there was a secret, or a key, to life, it would be in joining the Lord often in prayer. You could put it like this: Prayer is the key to a transformed life.

Luke 9:29 As He prayed, the appearance of His face was altered, and His robe *became white and glistening*.

The other Gospel writers use the word, **transfigured**, to describe the change. It's the word that comes to us in English as 'metamorphosis,' and it means *a change in outward appearance that comes from within*.

Jesus was God in human flesh. He was (and is) the unique God-man – fully God, and fully man. His glory as God was veiled while He

walked the earth as a man, except on this one occasion when it was revealed.

In the context of our verses, what the disciples were seeing was Jesus as He would (and will) appear in His Second Coming to earth to establish the kingdom of God.

Luke 9:30 And behold, two men talked with Him, who were Moses and Elijah,
Luke 9:31 who appeared in glory and spoke of His decease which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.

Moses had died fifteen hundred years earlier. Elijah had been caught-up alive to heaven nine hundred years earlier. Yet here they were, alive and conscious. The disciples had never seen them; but they immediately recognized them. They had an interest in events on the earth. All of these things should encourage you, as a believer, to look forward to heaven.

Why Moses and Elijah? *I'm sure there were lots of reasons!* Most commonly, and certainly true, they were two men who best represented the Old Testament. Often Jews would summarize their Scriptures as 'the Law and the Prophets.' Moses represented the Law; Elijah represented the prophets. Moses, the great law-giver, is a witness that Jesus fulfills all the Law; and Elijah, the great prophet, is a witness that Jesus fulfills all the prophets and their prophecies.

Also, Moses had spoken of the coming of the King; and Elijah was predicted as the one who would precede and announce the King's arrival.

Keeping to our context, there's something else about Moses and Elijah. Moses died and was taken to heaven; Elijah was caught-up to heaven alive. Moses represents all believers who have or will die before the Second Coming of Jesus. Elijah represents all the believers who will be caught-up to heaven alive before the Second Coming of Jesus, in the Rapture of the Church.

The revealing of Jesus in glory, with these two guys, is a snapshot of the kingdom on earth. You look at them and you see that, one day,

Jesus will return in glory, with His saints, to rule and reign over the earth.

By the way: In the Book of Acts, forty days after Jesus has risen from the dead, He ascends into heaven. As the disciples look up at His departure, two men appear and speak to them. They are commonly believed to be angels; but the text does not say they are angels. It is just as likely that they are Moses and Elijah. Also, in the Revelation of Jesus Christ, you see two witnesses – two Old Testament saints who hassle the antiChrist for the first three and one-half years of the Tribulation. They, too, are most likely Moses and Elijah. Those guys have a full schedule! (People are always wondering if heaven will be boring...)

Moses and Elijah spoke about Jesus' **decease**. The word means *departure*. Jesus' death on the Cross was a planned event; it was His method of departure from earth back to glory – the Cross, the resurrection, the ascension.

The word **decease** can also be translated *exodus*. Jesus made His entrance from heaven to earth, at His incarnation; He would make His exit, His *exodus*, from earth to heaven. Exodus is a word filled with symbolism, to a Jew, which is something to keep in mind in the next few verses.

Peter, John, and James almost missed everything:

[Luke 9:32](#) But Peter and those with him were heavy with sleep; and when they were fully awake, they saw His glory and the two men who stood with Him.

I can relate, *because I'm a sleeper!* Let's not immediately chide them. They may have 'Petered-out' at the end. But they did climb the mountain with Jesus; they did, for a time, pray with Jesus; and they did recover to reveal and later record this amazing episode. They were moving forward, even if it was three steps forward and two steps back.

You may not have trouble staying awake at prayer meetings. Ask yourself, "Am I sleeping in any area of my spiritual life?"

Thy kingdom come is our prayer; but it has been delayed. Cross-walking is difficult and dangerous; it can be discouraging. We battle sin, and self, and Satan as we watch and wait for the Lord to come. It is a tremendous encouragement, therefore, to see Him in His glory. By eyewitness testimony, recorded in God's living Word, you are enabled to 'see' Jesus as He truly is – King of kings, and Lord of lords.

They were also **ear**-witnesses. Because of their faithfulness,

#2 You Hear The Glory Of Jesus
Until His Second Coming
(v33-36)

Wiping the sleep out of their eyes, the three disciples tried to put what they were seeing into perspective. Here is what they came up with:

Luke 9:33 Then it happened, as they were parting from Him, *that* Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah" - not knowing what he said.

Let's start at the end, where Peter is described as **not knowing what he said**. It can be taken several ways. Normally, it is explained as Peter just blurting-out something, without thinking. Well, it certainly was blurted-out; but not without thinking. I mean, who automatically blurts-out and says, **let us make three Tabernacles**? Only a Jew! We unnecessarily criticize Peter because of our own lack of understanding of the Jewish mindset of the first century.

Peter may have been an ignorant fisherman, but he was no dummy when it came to the Scripture. Tabernacles was a feast on the Jewish calendar. It was called the Feast of Tabernacles, or sometimes, the Feast of Booths. It was held during the time of harvest, and was also referred to as the Feast of Ingathering. The Jews would pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and set-up temporary shelters – called tabernacles or booths – and camp-out in them with their families. It commemorated the wilderness wanderings of the Exodus generation.

More importantly, it was commonly believed that the Feast of Tabernacles would immediately precede the establishing of the

kingdom of God on earth. Just as the harvest was being in-gathered, so God would gather-in His scattered people to Jerusalem and establish them in their kingdom, ruled by their King.

Peter was wrong, but not stupid. He fell back on his Scriptural training. By the way, what you believe is important; it is what you will fall back on in times of crisis.

It would take a long time for the disciples to finally realize that the establishing of the kingdom on earth would be postponed until Jesus' Second Coming.

Luke 9:34 While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were fearful as they entered the cloud.

Luke 9:35 And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!"

This is more Old Testament symbolism. During the Exodus, God was present with Israel as a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night. His presence, called the *Shekinah*, was in the Tabernacle, and later the Temple. This visible manifestation of the glory of God had been removed from the Temple six hundred years earlier; but here it was again – a glimpse and a promise of the coming kingdom.

Peter had seen Jesus, Moses, and Elijah. He then addressed Jesus (in verse thirty-three) as *Master*. It's a title that means *teacher*. It seems that Peter was putting Jesus on a par with Moses and Elijah. Even though Peter had recently confessed that Jesus was *the Christ of God*, he didn't understand that Jesus was God.

The Father set him – and us – straight. Jesus is the unique *Son* of God. What that means, as you trace it through the Bible, is that Jesus was always God, but came as a man, submitting Himself on earth as a Son to His Father, in order to save mankind.

Luke 9:36 When the voice had ceased, Jesus was found alone. But they kept quiet, and told no one in those days any of the things they had seen.

Could you imagine the other disciples, asking these three, "How was the prayer meeting?" *They kept quiet*. Everything they had ever

learned was true, but was being stood on its head. Perhaps they were starting to learn that some things require careful thought.

Eventually, they did tell others, and that's why Luke could write about it. Through the Gospels, and in Peter's own second letter, you still **hear** the glory of God. Not *audibly*, from heaven; but *authoritatively*, in your heart. Jesus, writing to the Churches in the Revelation, would repeat the phrase, **He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches**. If you are a Christian, you can hear (spiritually) what the Holy Spirit has to say as you read God's Word. He speaks to you through the Scriptures.

You should hear the glory of God as you read the Bible. The coming King is speaking to you, as you watch and wait for His imminent arrival. The glory that awaits makes ample amends for any current afflictions.

Conclusion

Your eyes have seen... And your ears have heard... the coming of the glory of the Lord.

Glory, glory, Hallelujah! is still being put to a common tune. It is put to the tune of **your life**, as you watch and wait for Jesus.