

## Who Do You Say I Am?

When YAHSHUA had gone to the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked the disciples the following question: Who do people say that the Son of Man is? But who do you say I am? That's when Peter, inspired by the Holy Spirit, answered, **You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God** (Matt. 16:13-15). At that time YAHSHUA instituted the foundation of the church on a Rock, Who is Himself and the strength on which it will remain. These events took place at YAHSHUA'S last forty days on earth before His death. At that time He began instructing the disciples about His sufferings at the hands of the elders, high priests and scribes and be killed, and be resurrected on the third day. These last forty days are marked by four events of great significance in the Christian faith: (1) Peter's confession of the deity of Christ, You are the Christ, the Son of the living God; (2) the institution of the foundation of His church; (3) His announcement of His impending death and resurrection; (4) the appearing of Moses and Elijah on the mount of transfiguration, where He was transfigured.

We read in the report of Matthews that these events happened while He was in the "region of Caesarea Philippi". This city was the capitol city of Phillip, the brother of Herod; it is situated 25 miles north of the Sea of Galilee, at the base of Mount Hermon, the location of the largest springs feeding the Jordan River. These facts are important for us to know, to understand the location where YAHSHUA'S transfiguration took place and its importance in the frame of the divine time. The end of His earthly ministry was closing, with its finale at the cross, and resurrection, fulfilling the law and all that was said about Him by the prophets. Six to eight days had passed since Peter's confession Who YAHSHUA was, YAHSHUA'S institution and foundation of His church, and the announcement of His death and resurrection. The time had arrived when He would climb the tallest mountain, where He would be glorified in the views of three of His disciples, Peter, James and John. They saw the appearance of His countenance altered, and His raiment became dazzling white (Luke 9:29). This experience printed the veracity of His deity, confessed by Peter. That was the moment of its confirmation, where no doubt would arise in the minds of the disciples.

On that Mount, appeared Moses and Elijah to converse with Him about His exit from earth, which was to happen in a few days in Jerusalem. They appeared in splendor and majesty and brightness of their glorified body. Moses represented the law, Elijah represented the prophets and the Lord YAHSHUA was the Savior through Whom the law and the prophets were to be fulfilled in His death and resurrection. In Moses we have the picture of the resurrected dead ones in Christ in the time of the rapture and in Elijah, the picture of those who will be living at time of rapture to experience transfiguration. The Mount of Transfiguration's events represent those that will take place at the time of YAHSHUA'S second event, when He comes for His church. The dead in Christ will rise first, then we, the living ones who remain, shall simultaneously be caught up along with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so always we shall be with the Lord ( I Thess. 4:16-17)!

While in the Mount, the disciples heard God's coming out of the cloud, saying, This is My Son, My Chosen One: Listen to and yield and obey Him! (Verse thirty-five of Luke nine). Here the

Trinity is represented by God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit – the voice. Thirty-three days before His death, heavens and earth met to confirm YAHSHUA'S reason to have come to earth in the form of a man to fulfill the law and the prophets there represented. In that mountain the New Covenant was then confirmed to the three witnesses. YAHSHUA'S blood which was to be shed in a few days would seal the New Covenant with mercy and His grace and no more condemnation would be for those who would receive Him. He also became the mediator of the New Covenant. There on Mount Hermon, God confirms to the world the promise of salvation given to Adam and Eve when they sinned. He had come to that mountain, to offer humankind the most precious gift of eternal life – His Son. Salvation echoed through the whole mountain as the theme of comfort and hope. The disciples had not come to a mountain where the presence of YAHWEH would cause fire and fear to them, as it was for those who had heard Him at the giving of first covenant at Mount Sinai; God the Father had come to confirm the New Covenant of His sacrificial love in the person of His Son.

YAHSHUA'S transfiguration at Mount Hermon was His glory before He had left heaven to take the human form in the body which had been prepared for Him, as we read in the letter to the Hebrews, Because the blood of bulls and goats is powerless to take sins away, Here I am, coming to do Your will, O God- [to fulfill] what is written of Me in the volume of the Book (Heb. 10:4,7). He had come as the Lamb of God Who would take the sin of the world and crucify them on the cross, giving men life eternal, as John the Baptist introduced Him: Behold, the Lamb of God, Who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29b)! While the Law had brought condemnation unto men, the blood of YAHSHUA would bring forgiveness by His grace and mercy. "Where there is absolute remission of sins, there is no longer any offering made to atone for sin" (Heb. 10:18). The disciples had no understanding of what was happening at that Mount, for they were down with sleep; but they were witnesses of YAHSHUA'S glory, His deity, and of the fact that YAHSHUA was in reality the Son of God, as God Himself proclaimed Him to be. There they saw YAHSHUA in His glorified body, Who had come to save, not to judge. Therefore there was no adverse consequence on their lives for have seen the Lord in His glorified body. When John, who was one of the witnesses, saw the Lord many years later while in the Island of Patmos, it was all together a different experience. John saw YAHSHUA as [One] like the Son of Man, clothed with a robe which reached to the His feet and with a girdle of gold about His breast; His head and His hair were white like white wool, as snow and His eyes like a flame of fire; His feet glowed like burnished bronze as it is refined in a furnace, and His voice was like the sound of many water; in His right hand He held seven stars, and from His mouth there came forth a sharp two-edged sword, and His face was like the sun shining in full power at midday; when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as if dead. But He laid His hand on me and said, Do not be afraid! I am the First and the Last, and the Ever-living One, I died but see, I am alive forevermore; and I possess the keys of death and Hades (Rev. 1:13-18). YAHSHUA had come to John this time as the Eternal God, the Judge, the Ruler of all the earth and heaven. John's reaction was one to fall at His feet as if he were dead. No one can stand before the holiness and righteousness of our Sovereign Lord without recognizing their sinful nature!

At Mount Hermon He had come as the Savior of the world; but when He comes again, He will come as judge to perform judgment on those who rejected Him. We can experience Him as our

Savior now; we can have a relationship with Him now as our Lord; but if we neglect His salvation now we must face Him as our judge in fear and hopelessness. Mount Hermon is ever before us to climb and fellowship with Him now. Now it is the time! Find rest on the top of the mount, where He is waiting for you. Salvation is His gift to you; it is not based on your own merits; salvation is through faith and His grace. Receive Him now!