

## Kefa Goes Up the Mountain

In my last post, we learned that **Kefa Rebukes Yeshua**. In this post, we see that **Kefa** accompanies **Yeshua, Ya'akov, and Yochanan Up to the Mount of the Transfiguration**.

### The Mount of the Transfiguration

This story has always fascinated me. It is told in all three of the Synoptic Gospels. As we explore this passage, put yourself on the mountain with **Yeshua, Kefa, Ya'akov, and Yochanan**. This passage includes so many allusions to God, revealing his glory to **Moshe** on **Mount Sinai** that most ancient Jewish readers would undoubtedly have caught them.

Chronologically, this occurs within a week of Kefa rebuking **Yeshua**. ***<sup>1</sup> Six days later, Yeshua took Kefa, Ya'akov and his brother Yochanan and led them up a high mountain privately.***

The reference to ***six days*** draws a parallel between **Yeshua's Transfiguration** and God's revelation of Himself to **Moshe** in Exodus 24:13-18. As we learn below, other parallels include the reference to a ***cloud***, a brilliant ***light***, a ***mountain***, and the separation of a small number of men from the larger group. **Moshe's** face shone brilliantly after he met with God, so **Yeshua's** Transfiguration serves to identify Him as the new **Moshe**.

Scripture records three times when **Yeshua** took these same three and ministered to them in very unique ways. Interestingly, each of those occasions dealt with death.

The first time we have learned that **Yeshua** singled out **Kefa, Ya'akov, and Yochanan**, He took them into the house of a man whose daughter had died. **Yeshua** brought the young girl back to life, and **Kefa, Ya'akov, and Yochanan** saw that He was victorious over death (see Luke 8:49-55).

On a second occasion, is our passage today.

The third occasion is when **Yeshua** takes them into the Garden of Gethsemane. As He prayed, *"Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not My will but Thine be done,"* **Kefa, Ya'akov, and Yochanan** would understand that He was submitted to death.

***<sup>2</sup> As they watched, He began to change form - His face shone like the sun, and His clothing became as white as light.***

These three Jewish fishermen were given a glimpse of the glory of the coming King and His kingdom).

***<sup>3</sup> Then they looked and saw Moshe and Eliyahu speaking with Him.***

Jewish people understood Scripture as denying that **Eliyahu** had ever died; God himself had buried **Moshe**. Jewish people expected the return of both **Eliyahu** and **Moshe** at the end of the age (Deut.18:15-18; Mal. 4:5). Both of them heard from God at Mount Sinai.

This scene informs us that those who experience death (**Moshe**) have a cognitive understanding and an ability to communicate. Together, they symbolize all those who make up God's kingdom - those who will be raptured and not see death (like **Eliyahu**) and those who will die and go to be with the Lord (like **Moshe**). Moreover, **Moshe** represented the Law, and **Eliyahu** represented the Prophets. Together they represented the complete **Tanakh**. Along with the **talmidim**, they represent both the **Tanakh** and **Brit Hadashah** centered on **Yeshua**.

***<sup>4</sup> Kefa said to Yeshua, "It's good that we're here, Lord. I'll put up three shelters if you want - one for You, one for Moshe, and one for Eliyahu."***

**Isra'el** had dwelt in shelters in the wilderness while the presence and glory of God was among them. Jews commemorated this annually by building shelters (**sukkahs**), so **Kefa** would know how to build one. But once again, **Kefa** has to control his impetuous behavior.

***<sup>5</sup> While he was still speaking, a bright cloud enveloped them; and a voice from the cloud said, "This is My Son, whom I love, with whom I am well pleased. Listen to Him!"***

The cloud of glory also overshadowed the mountain in Exodus 24:15 and the **Tabernacle** in 40:34.

As Jon Courson's says, "**Kefa**, I'm going to interrupt you once again," said God the Father from the cloud over the mountain. "You want to build three booths, but you can't put the Law and the Prophets on the same plane as My Son." <sup>1</sup>

***Listen to Him!*** because He is the "prophet like **Moshe**" (Deut. 18:15-19, Acts 3:22-23), whom you have just seen.

***<sup>6</sup> When the talmidim heard this, they were so frightened that they fell face down on the ground. <sup>7</sup> But Yeshua came and touched them. "Get up!" He said, "Don't be afraid." <sup>8</sup> So they opened their eyes, looked up, and saw only Yeshua by Himself.***

The **talmidim** fear and falling on their faces were characteristic of people in the Tanakh and later Jewish tradition when they experienced revelations of God. When **Yeshua touched them** and told them not to **be afraid**, the three disciples looked and saw no one but him. Why? Because **Yeshua** isn't merely one among many faithful servants of God. He is superior to them all. The ministries of **Moshe** and **Eliyahu** ultimately pointed toward **Yeshua**. In fact, all of Scripture has Him as its focus.

***<sup>9</sup> As they came down the mountain, Yeshua ordered them, "Don't tell anyone what you have seen until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead."*** ~ Matthew 17:1-9 (CJB)

The **Transfiguration** confirmed **Yeshua's** "coming in his kingdom" (Matt.16:28) to these three **talmidim**. Still, without the more public confirmation which followed His resurrection, the testimony would have been of little value in proving **Yeshua's** identity. It would have raised more questions than it answered. Hence **Yeshua** advised closed mouth for the time being. Given **Kefa's** personality, that must have been extremely hard to do. But wait until we get to Acts 2. For us, our job is to proclaim His resurrection and love from in the highways and byways. When is the last time you shared the Gospel with someone?

In my next post, we continue our chronological journey of **Kefa** and learn he is asked by **Yeshua** to go fishing again.

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<sup>1</sup> Jon Courson's Application Commentary New Testament.