

Peace be with you. We greet you in the name of God, the Lord of peace, who wants everyone to understand and submit to the way of righteousness that He has established, and have true peace with Him forever. We are happy to be able to return today to present your program *The Way of Righteousness*.

In the last lesson, in our study in the book of the Gospel, we heard how Jesus the Messiah opened the eyes of a man who was born blind. Nothing is impossible for Jesus because He is the very Word of God which appeared on earth as a man. That is why Jesus could control every force on earth—the wind, the sea, demons, disease and death. Everywhere Jesus went the crowds pressed in on Him, but **few recognized who He really was**. They considered Him a prophet, but did not recognize that all the fullness of God dwelt in Him. They did not understand that Jesus was the Lord of Glory, who came from heaven. In our lesson today, God willing, we will see how **the Lord Jesus was full of the light of the glory of God**, and how He displayed it for a brief moment one day when He was on a mountain with three of His disciples.

Now let us return to the holy Gospel. The Scripture says:

Once when Jesus was praying in private and his disciples were with him, he asked them, "Who do the crowds say I am?" They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, that one of the prophets of long ago has come back to life." (Matt. 16) "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ (the Messiah), the Son of the living God." Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven."

Let us stop here and consider the question Jesus asked His disciples one day when He was alone with them. Jesus asked them, "Who do **people** say that I am?" The disciples answered Jesus that most people said that He was one of the prophets. Then Jesus

questioned them again, saying, "But who do **you** say that I am?" One of the disciples, Simon Peter, answered Jesus, "*You are the Messiah, the Son of the Living God!*"

Truly, what Jesus asked His disciples is an important question that every one of us must answer! You who are listening today, who do you consider Jesus to be? What do you think about Him? Do you merely classify Him with the prophets? Or do you agree with Peter who declared that Jesus is "the Messiah, the Son of the Living God"? **Who do you think Jesus is?** Do you believe that Jesus is the Messiah--the Redeemer whom God promised long ago on that day when our ancestors, Adam and Eve, sinned? Do you believe that Jesus is "the Son of the Living God"--the Word of God which came down from heaven?

As you know, to this very day, **many people deny that Jesus is the Son of God.** They think that this name means that God took a wife and had a child by her! But it does not mean that. God's glory is greater than that! God is Spirit and does not beget as a man begets, **but that does not keep God from calling Jesus His Son.** We have already illustrated it like this: If I go outside the country, and people call me "a son of South Africa," for example, that does not mean that South Africa took a wife and had a son! No, I am called "a son of South Africa" because South Africa is where I come from.

That is how it was with Jesus, the Messiah, who was born of a virgin. Even before He was born, He was in heaven. He is the "*Kalimat Allah*" and the "*Ruh Allah*"--the very Word and Soul of God.

Only Jesus is worthy to be called the Son of the Most High, because He alone is the Word that was with God in the beginning. This is a **great mystery**, but more than that, it is a **great truth!** God sent His Son into the world not only to save us from our sins, but also to show us what He is like. Jesus displayed God's character on earth. Whoever sees the Son knows what the Father is like. Whoever sees Jesus knows what God is

like. Jesus is called the Son of God, because **He came from God**, because **He is like God**, and because **He is the very Word of God and Soul of God**. Dear friends, whether we believe it or whether we refuse to believe it, the truth remains: **Jesus is the Son of the Living God!**

Let us now continue in the Gospel of Matthew and listen to what happened after Peter declared Jesus to be the Messiah, the Son of the Living God. The Scripture says:

From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life. Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. "Never, Lord!" he said. "This shall never happen to you!" Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling-block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men."

Did you hear what Jesus said to His disciples? He told them that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that He must be killed and then be raised to life again on the third day. Thus Jesus announced that He would pour out His blood to pay the debt for our sin.

But **Peter could not accept** that the Lord Jesus, who possessed all power and all authority, would allow the evil rulers of the Jews to arrest Him, torture Him and kill Him. That was why Peter said to Jesus, *"Never, Lord! This shall never happen to you!"* However Jesus knew that He had come into the world to shed His blood as a sacrifice that takes away sin. That is the reason He said to Peter, *"Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling-block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men!"*

Jesus knew why He had come into the world. He came to give His life by shedding His holy blood for sinners, just as God's prophets had predicted long beforehand. Jesus came so that the symbol of the sacrificial sheep might be fulfilled in Him. Ah, fellow listeners, if we remember only one thing from our lesson today, let it be this: **Jesus the Messiah came into the world to die as a sacrifice to pay for sin--my sin and yours!** God willing, a few lessons from now, we will see how Jesus' prophecy about His own death was precisely fulfilled in Jerusalem. And so friends, even if some may proclaim another message which does not agree with what the Lord Jesus and the prophets prophesied so long ago, the truth concerning Jesus' death and resurrection does not change. **God Himself is the One who decreed the death of the Messiah on the cross**, and no one can change the decrees of God! **Jesus chose to die as the supreme Sacrifice**. He did it because He loves you and me and does not want us to perish.

Now let us see what happened one week after Jesus made known to His disciples that He would offer up His life in Jerusalem. The Scripture says:

*After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. There **he was transfigured** before them. **His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light.***

*Two men, Moses and Elijah, appeared in glorious splendor, talking with Jesus. They spoke about his departure, which he was about to bring to fulfillment at Jerusalem. Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters-one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah." 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 him I am well pleased. Listen to him!**" When the disciples heard this, they fell face down to the ground, terrified. But Jesus came and touched*

them. "Get up," he said. "Don't be afraid." When they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus. As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus instructed them, "Don't tell anyone what you have seen, until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead."

Did you grasp what happened on that high mountain? It was an amazing and wonderful event! We read that Jesus' outward appearance was transformed--His face shone like the sun and His clothes radiated a sparkling white light. The same awesome, dazzling pure light that shines out of God and surrounds the throne of God in heaven was now shining out of Jesus! The glorious light that filled the Holiest Place in the Tent of the Meeting in the days when Moses and the Israelites were in the wilderness--that same glory was in Jesus, though men could not see it. But for a few brief moments, in the presence of Jesus' three disciples, God unveiled His awesome glory which was hidden in Jesus' body! And at the same moment, God sent down from heaven two prophets, Moses and Elijah, to talk with Jesus concerning His death in Jerusalem. We also read that a bright cloud covered the mountain, and the voice of the Almighty echoed forth from the cloud, saying, *"This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!"*

What was the reason for all this? Why did God do all these glorious things in the presence of Peter, John and James? This is the reason. God wanted to give those three witnesses an unshakable proof that, in truth, Jesus is the Eternal Son of God from heaven, and that all must listen to Him! That is what the Scripture proclaims, saying:

*"He who does not honor **the Son** does not honor **the Father, who sent him.**" "In the past God spoke to our forefathers through **the prophets** at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by **his Son**, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. **The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his***

powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven."

What do you think of Jesus? What do you say about Him? Do you believe that Jesus is the Lord of Glory, who came from heaven? Or do you merely classify Him with the prophets as most people in the world do? Before we end today, let us listen to some excerpts from Jesus' apostles, Peter and John, who wrote in the Holy Scriptures several years after they saw the glory of God shine out of Jesus on top of the mountain.

The apostle Peter wrote:

*"We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but **we were eyewitnesses of his majesty**. For he received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying, 'This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.' **We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain!**"*

The apostle John wrote:

*"That which was from the beginning, which we have **heard**, which we have **seen** with our eyes, which we have **looked at** and our hands have touched-this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it...We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth!"*

And in the end of the Gospel of John, he wrote,

*"Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. **But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name!**"*

Do you find all this hard to understand? God wants to give you insight into these marvelous truths. The Scripture says:

*"The man without the Spirit **does not accept** the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned...We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. No, we speak of **God's secret wisdom**, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory!"*

May God make clear what we have read today....

Until next time, keep thinking about what Almighty God declared on top of the mountain concerning the Lord Jesus, when He said,

"This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!"