

# Transfiguration of Our Lord

## CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE GODLY KIND

Exodus 24:12-18

### Transfiguration of Our Lord

#### Analysis by Mark Marius

12The LORD said to Moses, "Come up to me on the mountain, and wait there; and I will give you the tablets of stone, with the law and the commandment, which I have written for their instruction." 13So Moses set out with his assistant Joshua, and Moses went up into the mountain of God. 14To the elders he had said, "Wait here for us, until we come to you again; for Aaron and Hur are with you; whoever has a dispute may go to them."

15Then Moses went up on the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain. 16The glory of the LORD settled on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days; on the seventh day he called to Moses out of the cloud. 17Now the appearance of the glory of the LORD was like a devouring fire on the top of the mountain in the sight of the people of Israel. 18Moses entered the cloud, and went up on the mountain. Moses was on the mountain for forty days and forty nights.

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## DIAGNOSIS: God Will See You... Now

### **Step 1: Initial Diagnosis (External Problem)** : *Summoned*

God is calling. And if God is calling it probably isn't good news. God wants (needs) to give the Israelites instructions on how to live: with God, with each other, and in a new land with different customs. Not knowing how to live is our problem. Not

being able to live as obedient and faithful creations of YHWH is our problem. So God will lay down his law and chisel them in stone tablets.

**Step 2: Advanced Diagnosis (Internal Problem) :** *Out of Sight out of Mind [Meanwhile—Down the Mountain (Exodus 32:1-6)]*

We have our own convictions and instructions that we would like to give to God. We have no patience for God's time. And on top of that we feel the distance between God and ourselves is too great, so we take things into our own hands. We want a God that we can touch and feel, and makes us think that we are being obedient. A god we can create and therefore control. A god that lets us live by our flesh and selfish desires. This idolatry produces even greater problems for us. Not only is the law given to us because we need it to guide us, but even with it, we tend to reject it.

**Step 3: Final Diagnosis (Eternal Problem) :** *Firestorm*

Our rejection of God creates a real firestorm. Because when we come face to face with God, we are in the face of the devouring fire. No one can survive. We will surely burn. We have no excuses for not obeying God's law. Our unfaithfulness will only bring God's wrath and punishment.

## **PROGNOSIS: Now We See God**

**Step 4: Initial Prognosis (Eternal Solution) :** *Revelation in the Afterglow*

Moses enters the cloud and meets God face to face. Which means certain death from this devouring fire that is God. But no, Moses survives (for the time being). And we get a glimpse of a merciful God?, a loving God? But even while Moses is spared in that encounter, the instructions given to Moses on this mountain weren't enough to save us. For that we must skip to Matthew and hear the new instruction given; "This is my Son, the beloved...listen to Him." In Jesus we have God transformed into

human, human transformed into God, and a way for our salvation. The mountain that is Calvary will be where this new instruction will lead us. Christ on the cross will reveal God, and all who look to it will not experience a devouring fire, but be cleansed and forgiven. Jesus does the burning for us which allows God's glory in Christ's resurrection to be shared with all of us who are down the mountain.

**Step 5: Advanced Prognosis (Internal Solution) : *In God's Presence***

Moses entered the cloud and kept company with God. God enters us through the sacraments and keeps company with us. The Holy Spirit leads us to do the instructions God is giving us: Love, forgive, trust, obey. This is only possible with God. So we seek to acknowledge God's presence at all times.

**Step 6: Final Prognosis (Internal Solution) : *Sent***

We are sent down the mountain to all those who need God. And having God in our presence they can see God through us. It is our love, forgiveness, our pointing others to the cross and resurrection which allows others to enter into this cloud of witnesses. And it doesn't have to be temporary. Forty days and 40 nights become the fullness of time where we live in God's kingdom and delight in God's instructions.