

PM 2 Peter 1:16-21 Seeing the Son in the Prophetic Word

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[0:00] Old Testament reading, which is found in the book of Deuteronomy, and chapter 18, verses 15-19.

! These are the words of Moses, Deuteronomy 18, 15-19.

These are the words of the Lord.

My God, or see this great fire any more, lest I die. And the Lord said to me, they are right in what they have spoken.

I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.

[1:21] And we turn to the book of Hebrews for our New Testament reading. Hebrews chapter 1, verses 1-6.

Hebrews chapter 1, verses 1-6. Long ago, at many times, and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets.

But in these last days, he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.

He is the radiance of the glory of God. And the exact imprint of his nature.

And he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

[2:48] For to which of the angels did God ever say, You are my Son. Today I have begotten you. Or again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son.

And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, Let all God's angels worship him. Amen.

Let's do our main text for this evening, which is found in the book of 2 Peter, or 2 Peter, and chapter 1.

And we're going to read verse 16 down through to verse 21. This is 2 Peter, chapter 1, verses 16 to 21.

Let's hear the word of the Lord. For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[4:12] But we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For when he received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was born to him by the majestic glory, this is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.

We ourselves heard this very voice born from heaven. For we were with him on the holy mountain. And we have something more sure. The prophetic word to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

Knowing this, first of all, that no prophecy of scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man. But men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

[5:32] Amen. Amen. Let's turn to the Lord asking for his help in prayer. Heavenly Father, we thank you for your written word which reveals to us the person who is your eternal word.

Father, please show us the Lord Jesus this evening and help us to receive from him by the power of your spirit. Amen. Amen.

There are moments in the Bible, aren't there, when a person's life is changed forever. I think we could think of the patriarch Jacob, couldn't we?

And the night that he spent wrestling at Peniel. He would not let the man go. except he blessed him. And of course, he received an injury for his troubles. His thigh was put out of joint. But he knew by the end of that night that he had seen God face to face.

[6 : 48] That this man was more than an ordinary man. Or we could think about the Apostle Paul who, while he was still Saul of Tarsus, absolutely convinced that he was right to be persecuting Christians, followers of Jesus, on his way to Damascus to persecute yet more of them, found himself on his knees face to face with the one he was fighting against.

against. He saw Christ. He saw the risen Jesus. And he was never the same again. For Peter, I'm sure there were many moments that changed him forever.

But one of them has surely to be the moment we spent time looking at this morning on the Mount of Transfiguration. And I think we can say this with certainty because he comes back to it in the passage that we're looking at this evening.

It's clear from what we've just read that Peter is talking about that episode on the mountain when he, along with James and John, saw the glory of Jesus.

It's clear that that was a defining moment for him, isn't it, from this passage. It's clear that that was a moment that changed him forever and which shaped the things that he said, the way he lived, the passion that he pursued to the end of his life.

[8 : 33] He was an eyewitness of the glory of Jesus. And he lived to encourage the churches to honor the one that the Father had honored.

Now, as we go through this evening, as before, I do have a sheet for the children, so if you want to come up and get one now, it's a good time. If you'd like to do that, that's just there.

And, while you're getting your sheets, just pause for a second.

We're going to look at this evening's text in two parts, because Peter talks about two different but very closely related things.

And, he's going to focus, first of all, on an event, and then he's going to focus, more specifically, on a writing, or the writings of Scripture.

[9 : 55] I suppose we could say that we're looking at the mountain and the manuscripts. We're looking at the transfiguration and the text.

We're looking at the encounter that he had with James and John on the Mount of Transfiguration. and then we're looking to an encounter that he wants us to have through the Scriptures.

Okay? What we need to see is that whether we're talking about the transfiguration or whether we're talking about the Scriptures that we have in our hands that we look at from Sunday to Sunday, both of these are all about the Lord Jesus.

both of them have been given by God to show us who his beloved Son is.

So let's start with the mountain and then we'll move on to the manuscript. We'll move on to talk about the Scriptures. First of all, Peter wants us to know and he wants all Christians to know and especially Christians who are suffering that his testimony about Jesus is true.

[11 : 22] The testimony that he and James and John and the other apostles and the apostle Paul, the 13th apostle, the testimony that they have is true because it is based on an eyewitness, a true eyewitness account.

Peter knows what he saw. He begins this section by saying we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

You see, the world then was rather like the world now in that people came up with all sorts of fancy theories to explain what they didn't understand.

The Jews had many myths. Yes, they had the Old Testament scriptures but they had also gathered layer on layer of myths connected with things that God had said and things that God had done and these were cleverly devised myths.

They were stories that were plausible and Peter saying those myths and those legends and those ideas which travel so quickly and capture people's imaginations that's not what we're dealing with in the gospel.

[12 : 51] Amen? It's good news. It's relatively easy to fool people if you have a clever theory, a clever myth.

and you can shape it and you can spin it in a clever way. Maybe post it up on YouTube and it might go far.

See the world has always been full of plausible clever myths especially about God and about the way that the unseen world works.

But Peter says that's not what we're passing along to you. Because we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

The majesty of the Lord Jesus was seen on the mountain as we saw this morning. We looked in some detail didn't we?

[13:51] Mark chapter 9 and just by way of a recap the recap for us is here in verse 17. This is how Peter describes it for when he received honor and glory from God the father and the voice was born to him by the majestic glory.

This is my beloved son with whom I am well pleased. We ourselves heard. Now this testimony is the basis of our faith.

God's wisdom he chose 12 disciples who would become apostles. Later on he chose to add Paul to that number and he made sure that these men saw his mighty works.

miracles. And of course most of them were with him for three years seeing his wonders, seeing his glory. I don't know about you but if someone is with me for three minutes they will notice among other things that I am not the son of God.

I'm a very flawed individual. If someone was with me for three days that would give them lots of evidences that I am not a perfect person, that I am not an anointed person, that I am not a prophet from God.

[15:20] But these men were with Jesus day and night for three years seeing his wonders and they knew that they could not fault him at any point. And by God's grace overcoming the stubbornness of their hearts they eventually embraced him as the Holy One of God.

And maybe nowhere else and at no other time did they see his glory quite as clearly as on the mountain. If there had been any doubts in their hearts now Peter, James and John are absolutely certain we have seen his glory.

We have seen his glory. That of course is the way that John would remember that event, right? when John writes about it in his first epistle. Not only did this time on the mountain stay with Peter but it shaped John as well.

It's interesting isn't it? We, of course as Christians we believe on Christ and we know him personally. But our faith doesn't rest merely on things we have experienced but on true events. And those events were seen and they were faithfully recorded. They are historical. They really happened. Jesus was shown to be declared to be the son of God in power.

[16:58] So then that's the first revelation of the son. The revelation on the mountain.

But it's really interesting that Peter moves very quickly and very seamlessly into another revelation from God.

We come to that in verse 19. Peter says and we have something more sure. the prophetic word. What's he talking about here? What's the prophetic word? Well, he's talking about the whole of the scripture. He's talking about the whole of the writings that we call the Bible.

When he calls the Bible something more sure, does he mean that there are some doubts about what he saw on the mountain? Does he mean that he really wonders whether or not Jesus was really the Son of God based on that experience?

[18:05] Well, no. No, he has no doubts about that. He's just told us we saw and we heard Christ's divine glory.

We heard it from the lips as it were of God the Father. We saw it. We were eyewitnesses of his majesty. No, I think he's getting at the fact that God in his wisdom has given us a revelation that is built up of many of these experiences of God's people through the ages where God has revealed himself.

Something more sure, the prophetic word, because it is permanent and it stays with God's people through the ages until we will need it no more because we will be in the Lord's presence.

Perhaps we could also say that there is a certainty that comes from the different ways in which the scriptures bring Christ to our attention.

God has given us a sure, a permanent, even a physical record of Christ's glory. What we need to see is that the mountain and the manuscripts are both authored by God for one purpose, to bring us to Jesus Christ, to show us God's seal of approval on Jesus Christ.

[19:44] Both are about him. So, it's obvious, I hope, that the mountain was about Christ, but we can perhaps sometimes doubt that all the scriptures are about Christ, can't we?

But the more we come to understand them, submitting to the Father, asking the Spirit for insight, the more we see that all the roads in the Bible lead us back to Christ.

Let's consider some of those ways that the scriptures are about Christ. We can think about Luke 24, when it says that Christ opened the disciples' minds to understand the scriptures.

How did he do that? Well, he was surely showing them what the scriptures had to do with him and what he had to do with the scriptures.

I'm just going to briefly read from Luke chapter 24. Then he said to them, These are my words that I spoke to you, this is verse 44 of Luke 24, while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.

[21:14] We're also reminded of this very truth in John chapter 5. No need to go there, but I'll read from verse 39.

He says this to people who have the scriptures, in fact they spend all day in the scriptures, but they don't believe in him. John chapter 5 verse 39.

you search the scriptures, he says to these people, because you think that in them you have eternal life. And it is they that bear witness about me.

But you refuse to come to me that you may have life. life. You see the scriptures are God's testimony to God's Son.

Paul agrees when in Colossians 3.16 he tells us to let the word of Christ dwell in us richly.

[22:28] Isn't that a wonderful descriptor of the scriptures? The scriptures are all of them the word of Christ. So the manuscripts, just as much as the mountain are about Christ.

What do we see of Christ? What do we see of Christ in the scriptures? What do we see of Christ on the mountain? What unites the themes of these revelations?

I want to dwell briefly on two things. Both of them reveal to us Christ's essential glory.

Let's return to 2 Peter. Consider how Peter begins this section. He says, we didn't follow cleverly devised myths, when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. You see, we see on the mountain and in the manuscripts Christ's majesty.

[23:51] We see his oneness with the Father. We see that he is the Son of God. God. Have you thought recently about what it means that Christ is the Son of God?

The New Testament gives us different ways of understanding who the Lord Jesus is. We read earlier, didn't we, John 1, 1? In the beginning was the Word.

God. And the Word was with God and the Word was God. So we've got that Word, Word. We've also got what we read earlier in Hebrews chapter 1, that he is the radiance of the glory of God, the exact imprint of his nature.

nature. So he is the one who is from the Father, as the Father's Word, and he is the exact imprint of the Father's nature.

And the word they used is, I don't know if you've ever done ink stamping, or you've put an impression on some clay with a stamp.

[25:10] that's the word that's used, that it's almost as if the Father is putting his impression through the Son. Whatever the Father is, that the Son is also.

The Sonship of Christ didn't begin when he was conceived in the womb of Mary. He has always been the Son.

He has always been the Son. So we see his essential glory. One other place that we see this particularly clearly is John chapter 17 and verse 24.

This verse is so rich that the Puritan John Owen wrote a whole book about it called the Discourses and Meditations on the Glory of Christ.

Just one verse led him to write a whole book. Let's listen to what Jesus says here. This is just before he goes to the cross. So not long after the mountain top experience.

[26:21] He says this to his Father. Father, I desire that they also whom you have given me may be with me where I am to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

In this verse we see the heart of the Lord Jesus for us. That we who belong to him will one day be with him to see his glory.

And he describes this glory as the glory that the Father has given him because the Father loved him before the foundation of the world.

Now does that mean that there was a time when the Lord Jesus didn't have glory and the Father came along and gave him some glory? No. That's not what it means.

Rather it means that Jesus has this glory because of who he is without beginning. Who he is from before the foundation of the world.

[27 : 33] this is the glory he always had as the Son. Now these are deep waters and we could spend a long time here but simply simply expressed what we see in the scriptures is the same thing that the disciples saw so dramatically on the mountain that Jesus has the full glory of God God.

Because Jesus truly is God. So that's the first thing. We see his essential glory and then secondly we see his saving power.

We see his saving power. You see our problem as a human race is that God is not pleased with us. Right?

we go back in the Bible's revelation we remember that our first father Adam did he continue in the state in which he was created?

No. He fell and in him we fell too. and that means that every human baby born to Adam and Eve and to the race of Adam and Eve has been separated from God.

[28 : 59] We're not God's friends naturally. God is not pleased with us. So what we need is someone with whom God is pleased to take up our cause don't we?

We need to become friends of God by the help of another. And that's why this sentence this is my beloved son with whom I am well pleased is gospel for us.

It's good news because unlovely ourselves we need one who is lovely who is perfect who can do what we cannot do because apart from perfection and apart from a redeemer we have no hope. But praise God Jesus came he fully pleased the father with his perfect life. He obeyed the law which we can't keep and he died on the cross.

as God and man for the sins of all who will believe in him. Have you believed on him?

[30 : 25] Have you stopped leaning on yourself and have you lent on him? Have you given up trying to earn your way into God's smile?

And have you rested on Christ? Because if you haven't he invites you tonight to trust in him. The father is pleased with him and by God's grace the father is pleased with everyone who trusts in him. Paul tells us that God is just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Christ. Christ. If we have faith in Christ if we believe in him then all the acceptance that Jesus has with the father can be ours and he will save us to the uttermost and forever.

Isn't that good news? And if you do believe in Christ don't you find it easy to forget the glory of that acceptance in him?

I know I do. as we live our lives day by day and often struggle on from task to task feeling ourselves every day to be failing and falling short we can forget this can't we?

[31 : 52] That we are joined to the one that the father is pleased with. I think this is expressed very well by a Scottish divine of the 17th century Alexander Nisbet he says this it is not easy for awakened sinners who are often times much unsatisfied with themselves to believe and take comfort from this that God is well satisfied with Christ for them therefore though Isaiah preached and wrote this truth this is my beloved son with whom

I am well pleased at the beginning of his ministry and then this second time this other bookend of Jesus ministry this is my beloved son with whom I am well pleased do you struggle to believe that God loves you do you wonder if after another failure that might be it for you God may have had enough do you wonder if there is a way back into his fatherly smile then maybe you need to hear these words this is my beloved son with whom I am well pleased if you're in him then your acceptance is in him and in him you can know the restoration of that fatherly smile and full forgiveness the father's pleasure in the son not in us is the ground of our acceptance let me quote the words of

Catesby I am not sure how to pronounce this name but Catesby Paget's hymn about the Christian about the one who trusts in Christ so near so very near to God I cannot nearer be for in the person of his son I am as near as he and then we kind of look back to ourselves in another verse of the hymn by nature and by practice far how very far from God yet now by grace brought nigh to him through faith in Jesus blood brothers and sisters we are by nature even now because of our

fallenness and our brokenness we are by nature and practice often very far from God aren't we but by grace we have been brought near by grace we have been saved all glory be to God he invites us to come to him especially when we're weary and especially when we are discouraged we're reminded in our passage tonight that we are to pay attention to the word this is what Peter says see we're not going to see Jesus on the mountain that privilege was given to Peter to James and to John and it was given to them for our sake too because they've passed on what they saw but God has given us it's within reach the prophetic word and Peter says this to encourage us we have something more sure the prophetic word to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts has the day dawned yet has Christ come back not yet has the morning star risen in our hearts yet no when that happens we will be with

Christ we will no longer need the scriptures they will still be true but we won't need them anymore we won't need the ordinary means of grace because we will be with him who is the fountain of all grace it's going to be a good time isn't it it's going to be the end of all our longing the fulfillment of all our hopes and it's going to happen but until then we're in a dark place and so we need the lamp of God's word as it points us again again to the Lord Jesus Christ let us pray as we close and then we will sing father we thank you for your gracious provision for us you have shown us who your son is you have shown us where we need to find our everything our forgiveness our peace our strength our hope

[38:17] Lord root our hearts in Christ we pray until that day when we are with him and with you and with your Holy Spirit forever in Jesus name we pray Amen Amen