

# Luke 9:34

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud.

## Analysis

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**While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud.** Peter's confused speech was interrupted by divine intervention—*nephelē* (νεφέλη, "a cloud") appeared. The verb *epeskiasen* (ἐπεσκίασεν, "overshadowed") is the same term used of the Holy Spirit overshadowing Mary at the Incarnation (Luke 1:35) and the cloud covering the Tabernacle when God's glory filled it (Exodus 40:34-35). This is the Shekinah cloud—visible manifestation of God's presence that led Israel through the wilderness (Exodus 13:21-22).

The phrase **they feared as they entered into the cloud** (ephobēthēsan de en tō eiselthein autous eis tēn nephelēn, ἐφοβήθησαν δὲ ἐν τῷ εἰσελθεῖν αὐτοὺς εἰς τὴν νεφέλην) indicates holy terror at divine proximity. Moses and Elijah entered the cloud (likely returning to heaven), and the disciples' fear echoes Israel's terror at Sinai (Exodus 20:18-21, Hebrews 12:18-21). Yet the new covenant provides boldness to approach God (Hebrews 10:19-22)—the Transfiguration bridges old covenant terror and new covenant confidence.

## Historical Context

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The cloud held deep significance in Israel's history. It guided the Exodus generation (Exodus 13:21), covered Sinai during the giving of the Law (Exodus 24:15-18), filled the Tabernacle and Temple when God's glory dwelt there (Exodus 40:34, 1 Kings 8:10-11), and would accompany Messiah's coming (Daniel 7:13).

Jesus promised to return 'in a cloud with power and great glory' (Luke 21:27). The Transfiguration cloud authenticated Jesus as the divine Son—this was not a man among prophets but God manifest in flesh. The Father's audible voice from the cloud (v. 35) was the climax, silencing Peter and confirming Jesus' unique supremacy.

## Related Passages

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**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

## Study Questions

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1. What does the overshadowing cloud's connection to the Incarnation, Tabernacle, and Exodus reveal about the Transfiguration's theological significance?
2. How should the disciples' holy fear upon entering God's presence inform contemporary casual approaches to worship?
3. In what ways does the Transfiguration cloud point forward to Christ's return 'in the clouds with power and great glory'?

## Interlinear Text

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|              |         |             |          |            |         |          |
|--------------|---------|-------------|----------|------------|---------|----------|
| ταῦτα        | δὲ      | αὐτούς·     | λέγοντος | ἐγένετο    | νεφέλην | καὶ      |
| thus         | While   | he          | spake    | there came | a cloud | and      |
| G1982        | G1161   | G846        | G3004    | G1096      | G3507   | G2532    |
| ἐπεσκίασεν   | αὐτούς· | ἐφοβήθησαν  | δὲ       | ἐν         | τῷ      | ἐκείνους |
| overshadowed | he      | they feared | While    | as         | G3588   | they     |
| G1982        | G846    | G5399       | G1161    | G1722      |         | G1565    |
| εἰσελθεῖν    | εἰς     | τὴν         | νεφέλην  |            |         |          |
| entered      | into    | G3588       | a cloud  |            |         |          |
| G1525        | G1519   |             | G3507    |            |         |          |

