

Matthew 16:28

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.

Analysis

Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death (ἀμὲν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι εἰσὶν τινες τῶν ὧδε ἐστώτων οἳτινες οὐ μὴ γεύσωνται θανάτου)—The solemn ἀμὲν (truly, verily) introduces weighty truth. The phrase οὐ μὴ γεύσωνται θανάτου ('will never taste death') uses the strongest Greek negative, guaranteeing some present will survive until seeing **the Son of man coming in his kingdom** (ἕως ἂν ἴδωσιν τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐρχόμενον ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ αὐτοῦ). This controversial verse is best understood as fulfilled in the Transfiguration (17:1-8, occurring six days later), where Peter, James, and John saw Christ's glory, Moses and Elijah (representing Law and Prophets), and heard the Father's voice—a preview of kingdom glory.

Alternatively, some see fulfillment in Pentecost (Acts 2) when the Spirit inaugurated Christ's kingdom reign, or in AD 70's Jerusalem destruction demonstrating Christ's judgment authority. The immediate context (following discussion of Christ's return, 16:27) and the transitional 'And after six days' (17:1) strongly link this to the Transfiguration—a proleptic glimpse of Christ's eschatological glory.

Historical Context

Jesus spoke this around AD 29-30, roughly six days before the Transfiguration. The promise that 'some' (not all) would see this indicates select disciples would witness

it—Peter, James, and John became the inner circle privileged to witness Jesus's glory (17:1), raising of Jairus's daughter (Mark 5:37), and Gethsemane agony (26:37). These three would indeed not taste death before seeing Christ's glory manifested.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does the Transfiguration as a preview of Christ's kingdom glory strengthen your hope in His promised return?
2. What does Jesus selecting only three disciples teach about God's sovereign distribution of revelation and privilege?

Interlinear Text

ἀμὴν	λέγω	ὕμῖν	εἰσὶν	τινες	τῶν	ᾧδε	ἐστηκότων,	
Verily G281	I say G3004	unto you G5213	There be G1526	some G5100	^{G3588}	here G5602	standing G2476	
οἵτινες	οὐ	μὴ	γεύσονται	θανάτου	ἕως	ἂν	ἴδωσιν	τὸν
which G3748	^{G3756}	^{G3361}	shall G1089	of death G2288	^{G2193}	till G302	they see G1492	^{G3588}
υἱὸν	τοῦ	ἀνθρώπου	ἐρχόμενον	ἐν	τῇ	βασιλείᾳ	αὐτοῦ	
the Son G5207	^{G3588}	of man G444	coming G2064	in G1722	^{G3588}	kingdom G932	^{G846}	

Additional Cross-References

Mark 9:1 (Kingdom): And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.

Luke 9:27 (Kingdom): But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God.

John 8:52 (Parallel theme): Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death.

Matthew 26:64 (Parallel theme): Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

Matthew 10:23 (Parallel theme): But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.

Mark 13:26 (Parallel theme): And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.

Luke 2:26 (Parallel theme): And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

Hebrews 2:9 (Parallel theme): But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.