

Matthew 17:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him.

Analysis

Moses and Elijah's appearance with Jesus reveals His divine nature and mission's continuity with Old Testament revelation. Moses represents the Law, Elijah the Prophets—together they comprise Israel's Scripture, both testifying to Christ. Their conversation about Jesus' 'decease' (Luke 9:31, Greek 'exodos'—exodus) in Jerusalem shows the cross as the ultimate exodus, liberating from sin. Reformed theology sees the Transfiguration validating Christ's deity and showing Old Testament Scripture pointing to Him. The glorified Christ prefigures His resurrection body.

Historical Context

Moses and Elijah both had unusual departures from earth—Moses died with God burying him (Deuteronomy 34:5-6), Elijah was taken up in a whirlwind (2 Kings 2:11). Both encountered God on mountains (Moses at Sinai, Elijah at Horeb). Their appearance demonstrates that death hasn't destroyed them and points to resurrection hope. The Transfiguration occurs six days after Peter's confession, connecting Christ's identity with His coming glorification.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does the Old Testament testify to Jesus Christ?
2. What does the Transfiguration reveal about Christ's true nature?
3. How should Christ's coming glory affect your present discipleship?

Interlinear Text

καὶ ἰδού, ὅφθησαν αὐτοῦ Μωσῆς καὶ Ἡλίας μετ'
And behold there appeared him Moses And Elias with
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αὐτοῦ συλλαλοῦντες
him talking
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Additional Cross-References

Mark 9:4 (Kingdom): And there appeared unto them Elias with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus.

Luke 24:44 (References Moses): And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.

Malachi 4:5 (Parallel theme): Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: