

I am not sure how often you go to movies, but it seems like each year I go – which isn't all that often – the previews for the movies get longer and longer. They will give you the highlights so to speak trying to draw you in so that you will go so the movie. Sometimes we say, "That looks great, I want to go see that" or "seriously, that looks terrible, forget it – who would go see that!" The disciples for their part, get a preview of both the Cross and the glory of Christ that is to come with today's feast and the Transfiguration.

To help put today's Gospel, it might be helpful to put it in context. Immediately before the Transfiguration, Jesus asked the disciples, "*Who do the people say that I am?*" And the disciples respond by throwing out all kinds of names, "*John the Baptist; but others say, Elijah; and others, that one of the old prophets has risen.*" From this, we can understand that there was quite the confusion about the identity of Jesus. Who is this man? While Peter will eventually gets it right, "*You are the Christ of God,*" he doesn't understand what this means. The humiliation, suffering, death of the Messiah has yet to be revealed.

In this context, then, we can understand how the Transfiguration helps clarify exactly who Jesus is – both for the disciples and for the reader. For example, Jesus appears conversing with Moses and Elijah. These two figures symbolically represent the Law and the Prophets, two huge figures of the Old Testament. It might be that Luke wants us to see that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets. They bear witness to him.

Additionally, they speak to Jesus about His exodus, His departure – His Cross and Resurrection. In other words, the Messiah must first suffer before He is glorified.

Additionally, Peter wants to build three tents for all three of them. These tents remind us of when the Israelites travel in the wilderness where the glory of the Lord descended upon the Tabernacle in the middle of the camp. Thus, by building the tents, Peter in some sense wants to prolong the experience. By assigning each a tent, Peter treats Jesus as equal with Moses and Elijah. However, the Father corrects this by stating, "*This is my chosen Son; listen to Him.*"

With the Transfiguration, then, we learn all a lot about Jesus. He is the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets, as represented by Moses and Elijah. He is not equal to them, but greater than them because He is God's only Son. Before He is glorified, He must first suffer before His exodus. And finally, once he has suffered, He will enter into His glory, a glory which recalls the "*One like a Son of Man*" in our first reading from Daniel who receives "*dominion, glory, and kingship – whom all peoples, nations, and language will serve.*" In this sneak preview, then, we invited to follow Jesus so that somewhat akin to watching the actual movie, we will enter into the fullness of life where we will worship Him for all eternity.