

Longview Baptist Temple
Sunday School Lesson
September 28, 2008



=BIBLE MOUNTAINS=

The Mount of Transfiguration (Mount Tabor)

INTRODUCTION: Mount Tabor was a mountain that was very notable to Israel, Psalm 89:12. It was not a magnificent mountain in size and could not be compared to Mount Hermon.

It was there that the forces of Issachar and Zebulun assembled in preparation to fight the battle with Sisera, Judges 4:6, 12, 14.

It was a great wall of defense. It is a hill made basically out of limestone. It is 1,843 feet above the level of the Mediterranean Sea. The sides of Mount Tabor are steep. The northern side is covered with thickets of oak. It is flat on top.

Buildings have been erected from time to time on the mount to commemorate the Transfiguration, for many believe that the Transfiguration took place here.

Jesus took Peter, James, and John with Him up on the mountain. There they were met by Moses and Elijah in a little sneak preview of the coming Kingdom. Jesus was showing to us what the thousand-year millennium would be like as far as our bodies are concerned. Peter, James, and John were there in their physical bodies—just like ours today. Moses was there in the body that people who are saved and have passed away have in Heaven today. Jesus was there in His glorified body, which is the same type body that we will have at the Resurrection. Elijah was there in his physical body that was residing in Heaven, for Elijah did not see death; he was taken up to Heaven in a whirlwind and will not die until the tribulation period when he will be one of the two witnesses killed on the streets of Jerusalem. So, we have four bodies—a heavenly-earthly body, an earthly-earthly body, the body that the saints in Heaven have today, and the body that all saints will have after the Resurrection. Let us notice these bodies.

- I. **THE PHYSICAL BODY ON EARTH.** This is the body as we have it and as we see it now. That body is inhabited by a soul. It is that soul that enables us to have fellowship with each other. That soul is inhabited by a spirit. It is that spirit we receive when we are born again that enables us to fellowship with God and makes us a new creature in Christ. In that spirit is the Holy Spirit Who comes in to live when we are saved. (Romans 8:9; I Corinthians 6:18-20) So a Christian on earth today has the Holy Spirit living in his spirit which lives in his soul which lives in his body. This is the body we now possess—a body of flesh and blood and bones.
- II. **THE FLESHLY BODY IN HEAVEN.** This is the body of Elijah. Just exactly what this body is, we do not know. We know it is a fleshly body like ours, but what has enabled it to live for several thousand years in Heaven, we do not know. This, however, was a body represented at the Transfiguration.
- III. **THE BODY IN HEAVEN NOW.** This is the body that our loved ones and friends who have passed away in Christ have now. Not as much is said about this body as is said about the Resurrection body. However, we do know that this body can be seen because Samuel came back and was seen. We know that it can be seen because in Luke 16:23 it says that the rich man in Hell looked up and saw Abraham and Lazarus. Both of these had their heavenly bodies—not the body that they will have at the Resurrection, but sort of a temporary body which can be seen. We know that it is a real body. It is called by Bible students a “soul body.” It is a real body which lives in a real city which has real streets, a real river, real trees. This is the body that those in Heaven have now, awaiting the Resurrection of the saved.

- IV. **THE GLORIFIED BODY.** This is the body that Jesus had when He rose from the dead and the body that we will have at the first Resurrection, because we are told in I John 3:2 that "...we shall be like him..." So, what kind of a body will this be?
1. It will be flesh and bone. They thought the resurrected Christ was a spirit, but Jesus asked them to feel Him and to see if He was not flesh and bone. (Luke 24:39)
 2. This is a body without blood. The Bible says that the life of the flesh is in the blood. (Leviticus 17:11) Our blood is tainted; consequently, the Resurrection body will have no blood; it will be just flesh and bone.
 3. It will be a body that cannot be limited by material or solids. Jesus appeared to the disciples without opening the door; He just appeared. Our body will be like His.
 4. It will be a body that will be recognizable, but somewhat difficult for the natural body to recognize. When Jesus was walking on the road to Emmaus with the disciples, He talked with them; they did not know who He was until He opened their eyes. Then they recognized Him. When Mary Magdalene saw the resurrected Christ, she did not recognize Him until He opened her eyes.

The Apostle Paul tells us that the Resurrection body will be much like a seed and plant. I Corinthians 15:42 and following tells us that the Resurrection body is sown in corruption and raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor and raised in glory; it is sown in weakness and raised in power; it is sown a natural body and raised a spiritual body. The key word here is the word "sown," which means that the physical body is a seed. The Resurrection body is the plant. So, as the seed is planted and brings forth a plant, even so the Resurrection body will be planted and bring forth a new body.

5. The Resurrection body will have the power and privilege of eating. In John 21, Jesus shared a meal in His Resurrection body. In Revelation 19, the Bible says that the Resurrection bodies will be called to the Marriage of the Lamb. There is a wedding feast, or what is called the marriage supper, so we will eat. We are also reminded that there is a tree of life for the healing of the nations in the New Jerusalem. So, the Resurrection body will be privileged to eat. (No calories, of course!)

CONCLUSION: For a thousand years Jesus shall reign as King of the whole world. He will come back to earth at the end of the Tribulation Period, after He, with us, has celebrated the Marriage of the Lamb, and we have received our rewards at the Judgment Seat of Christ. At the end of the seven-year Tribulation Period which comes after the Rapture, He will come back with us. He will rule from Jerusalem as King of the whole world. We will rule and reign with Him for a thousand years. The power that we have to rule will be determined by our faithfulness and service in this life. It is during this 1,000-year period that peace will prevail. God's people will be in charge. We will be the kings, the governors, the presidents, the senators, the judges, the city councilmen, etc. and will rule and reign with Christ for that thousand years of peace. The prophet tells us that during that period our swords shall be turned into plowshares and our spears into pruning hooks. (Isaiah 2:4; Micah 4:3)

Now, during that time there will be physical bodies on earth, for many people and nations will enter into this Kingdom in their physical bodies. They will be those who will be here when Jesus returns with His own at the end of the Tribulation Period. Then there will be those of us in our glorified bodies who will be the ones to rule and reign for a thousand years.

Jesus had said that there would be some who would not see death before they saw the kingdom. He was speaking about this Transfiguration when He, along with Peter, James and John, Elijah and Moses, would fellowship on the mount. There they talked about His coming death, and there they showed us just a little sneak preview of the wonders of the Kingdom of Christ when he shall rule and reign on earth for a thousand years.