

THE TRANSFIGURATION OF CHRIST

—by Saint Nektarios—

“And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him. Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, ‘Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, let us make here three tents: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.’ While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, ‘This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased. Listen to Him!’ And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces and were greatly afraid. But Jesus came and touched them and said, ‘Arise, and do not be afraid.’ When they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only” (Mt. 17: 3-8).

The two God-bearing prophets, Moses and Elijah, appeared during this formal moment of Jesus’ divine transfiguration as witnesses of His identity; so that His disciples would be convinced, through the appearance of Moses and Elijah, that He is the God Who appeared to these prophets on Mount Sinai and Mount Horeb. And subsequently, in order for His disciples to comprehend that His crucifixion would be voluntary.

The presence of the two prophets and the three Apostles during the Transfiguration of the Lord has another mystical significance. During the Transfiguration, the heralds of the old worship meet with the preachers of the new worship; and the old withdraw before the new, as the formal transfer is being conducted. The prophets of the Law were handing their own commandments to the Apostles of grace. The entire setting expressed the official cessation of the old worship of the Law, and the official beginning of the new worship of Grace—of worship in spirit and truth.

—Saint Nektarios, *Gospel History*