



# REFLECTIONS

May 23, 2010

**“If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.”**

*Luke 9:23-24*

## Mountain Climbing

Rising to a height of more than 9,000 feet above sea level, the snowy top of Mt. Hermon can be seen from a hundred miles away. Located just northeast of Caesarea Philippi, it is commonly believed to be the mountain where Jesus led Peter, James, and John to “see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.”<sup>1</sup>

The biblical account of the mountain climbing adventure doesn’t mention the rugged terrain they traveled or the strenuous ascent up the mountainside; but a 9,000 foot mountain presents a formidable trial of human endurance. Steep inclines, jagged boulders, loose and unstable ground made the climb a stern test of courage and stamina. It was a taxing expedition for the trio, but what they saw when they reached the summit was more than their minds could imagine. But it was everything Jesus promised.

There [Jesus] was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus. ...a bright cloud enveloped them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!" (*Matthew 17:2-3, 5*)

What a day that must have been. In their awestruck state, the disciples may have overlooked the challenges they faced coming down the mountain. Or maybe they were accustomed to the demands. Following Jesus was never easy. He didn’t promise it would be. “In this world you will have trouble,” He warned. And He cautioned, “They will deliver you to synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors, and all on account of my name.”<sup>2</sup> It wasn’t easy. Yet they followed him.

In each of our lives there will be a Mt. Hermon. Jesus will invite us to do some mountain climbing there. It will be a formidable trial of our human endurance. We will face steep inclines, jagged boulders, and unstable ground that will make the climb a test of courage and stamina. Yet when we follow him to the summit, we will see more than our minds can imagine—

And it will be everything Jesus promised.

*“You are the light of the world.”*

*Richard* +

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<sup>1</sup> Matthew 16:28

<sup>2</sup> John 16:33; Luke 21:12

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