



# REFLECTIONS

June 21, 2020 Refreshed from the Archives of 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 comes into view from a hundred miles away. Located just northeast of Caesarea Philippi, it is the place commonly believed to be where Jesus led Peter, James, and John to “*see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.*” (Matthew 16:28)

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 soil, and unstable footing make for a stern test of stamina and courage. The expedition taxed the trio, but what they witnessed at the summit exceeded anything their minds could imagine. Just as 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. Awestruck, 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. (John 16:33) 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.*” (Luke 21:12) Still, they followed him.

At some time, perhaps even now, each of us will stand at the foot of a Mt. Hermon somewhere. Jesus will challenge us to some mountain climbing there—a formidable trial of human endurance. Steep inclines, jagged boulders, loose soil, and unstable footing will sternly test our stamina and courage. Yet when we follow him to the summit, we what we witness will exceed anything our minds can imagine—

Just as Jesus promised.

*“You are the light of the world.”*

*Richard* +

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