

If Anyone is Ashamed of the Son of Man, He Will Be Ashamed of Them When He Comes Matthew 16:27-28; Mark 8:38-9:1; Luke 9:26-27

DIG: What is the context of this message? What happens before and after it? Can you summarize **the first part** of the message? Why would the Lord say that to the Twelve? What does the term **Son of Man** mean? How are believers rewarded and unbelievers punished? Why does **the second part** of the message cause such confusion? How will Jesus give a foretaste of His **Kingdom**?

REFLECT: When was the last time you had to declare what side you are on? How did you do? You can have excuses or results, how does this message give you hope?

One thing that stands out from this passage is the confidence of **Yeshua**. Still at the base of Mount Hermon at Caesarea Philippi after **Peter's** confession that **Christ is the Son of the living God, Messiah** speaks of **His** death (**Fy - Jesus Predicts His Death**) and has no doubt that the Cross awaits **Him**. Nevertheless, **the Lord** is absolutely sure that **He** will triumph in the end.

The first part of this passage states a very natural and simple truth. When the King comes into **His** messianic **Kingdom**, **He** will be loyal to those who have been loyal to **Him**. No one can expect to escape all the trouble of some great undertaking and then reap all the benefit of it. No one can refuse service in some campaign and then share in the fruits of victory when the battle is won. It is as if **Yeshua** is saying, "In this difficult and hostile world, true believers will suffer much. But if those who profess to love **the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob** are ashamed to show which side they are on, they cannot expect to gain a place of honor when **God's Kingdom** comes."⁸⁶⁸

Since **Jesus** had been clarifying some of the principles of **God's Kingdom**, **He** brings it right down to **His** own **talmidim** . . . to **them** personally. **He** affirmed that **the Son of Man is going to come in His Father's glory with His angels** (**Mattityahu 16:27a**). **Messiah** referred to **Himself** as **the Son of Man** more than any other title. The name reflects **His** humanness and **His** incarnation, and of **His** fully identifying **Himself** with mankind as one of their own. For those who know and love **Yeshua Ha-Mashiach**, **His** return in **glory** is a comforting and thrilling promise that fills us with great hope and anticipation.

The apostles really needed a word of hope from the Lord. He had just told them of His impending suffering and death, and of the demanding conditions of true discipleship, of taking up one's cross and of giving up one's own life in order to save it (Matthew 16:21-25). Possibly for the first time it was becoming clear to the Twelve that their spiritual journey with Messiah would cost them more than they wanted to pay. It would not be easy, comfortable, pleasurable or financially profitable no matter what the health-and-wealth advocates of today have to say.

At His glorious coming, Jesus will reward each person according to what they have done (Matthew 16:27b). The believer looks forward to the Second Coming in the hope of sharing the Lord's glory, whereas, the unbeliever can only look forward to it with fear of condemnation. As a result, the Greek word *ekasto*, meaning *each one* and translated **each person** is all-inclusive. On the Day of Judgment **each person** will be judged on the basis of **what they have done**. **Deeds** are not the means of salvation, which is by grace through faith alone (Ephesians 2:8-9). Jesus is merely pointing out that it will be a time of glory and reward for those who belong to Him and a time of judgment and punishment for those who do not. His coming will resolve the eternal destiny of **each person** (Yochanan 5:25-29).

For believers, Messiah declares: Not everyone who says to Me, "Lord, Lord!" will enter the kingdom of Heaven, only those who do what My Father in heaven wants (Mattityahu 7:21 CJB). Rabbi Sha'ul told the Corinthian believers in his first letter: But each one's work will be shown for what it is; the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire - the fire will test the quality of each one's work (First Corinthians 3:13). To the church at Thyatira the Lord Himself announced: **I will repay each of you according to your deeds** (Revelation 2:23). Consequently, all believers will be rewarded at the *bema* of Messiah (see my commentary on Revelation Cc - **For We Will All Appear Before the Judgment Seat of Christ**).

For unbelievers, however, that truth is an ominous warning because at the Great White Throne Judgment they will have no acceptable **deeds** to present to the King of kings as evidence of salvation (see my commentary on Revelation Fo - **The Great White Throne Judgment**). Many counterfeit believers will say Jesus on that day, "Lord, Lord! Didn't we prophesy in Your name? Didn't we expel demons in Your name? Didn't we perform miracles in Your name?" Then He will tell them to their faces: **I never knew You! Get away from Me, you workers of lawlessness** (Matthew 7:22-23 CJB). That Day will be one of great terror when they finally realize that all their supposed good **deeds** on which they had been relying to make them right with ADONAI are nothing more than **filthy rags** (Isaiah 64:6) that leave them totally unfit to stand before the righteous King and Judge.⁸⁶⁹

Then **Christ** broadened **His** decree to include that the **adulterous and sinful generation** of **His** day by saying: **If anyone is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when He comes in His Father's glory with the holy angels** at the Second Coming (**Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26**). To be **ashamed** of **Jesus** is to reject **Him**. The Person and the message of **Yeshua** cannot be separated (**Romans 1:16**). And to us today, every time we repeat our confession that **Jesus Christ is Lord** (**Philippians 2:9-11**), the echo of **His** voice comes back across the chasm between **His** mind and ours and says, "Take up your cross, lose your life, gain your soul, and glorify your **God**." **Christ** takes away all our excuses.

The second part of this passage, however, has caused a great deal of confusion. **I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in His Kingdom** (**Matthew 16:28; Mark 9:1; Luke 9:27**). In just a few days, three of the **apostles standing** there with **Him** would see the glory of **the Kingdom** in the transfiguration. It does not say here that **the apostles** would not die, but rather that **they** would not die **before they** saw **Yeshua** come **in His** *royal splendor*.

To understand what **Jesus** meant, it is helpful to know that word **Kingdom**, or *basileia*, was often used as a metonym to mean *royal majesty* or *royal splendor* - in much the same way that *scepter* has long been used figuratively to represent royal power and authority. Used in that way, *basileia* would refer to a manifestation of **Christ's** *kingliness* rather than to **His** literal earthly reign. **His** promise could therefore be translated: **before they see the Son of Man coming in His** *royal splendor*.⁸⁷⁰

It is not uncommon for prophecies in the TaNaKh to combine a **near historical prophecy** with a **far eschatological prophecy**, with the earlier prefiguring the latter. The fulfillment of the **near historical prophecy** served to verify the reliability of the **far eschatological prophecy**. It seems reasonable, then, to believe that **Yeshua Ha-Mashiach** verified the reliability of **His** Second Coming by giving three of **His** *talmidim* a glimpse of **His** *royal splendor* before **they** would **taste death**.

The amazing thing about **the Lord** is that **He** knew despair. In the face of the dullness of the minds of men and women, in the face of **His** opposition, and in the face of **His** future crucifixion and death, **Yeshua Ha-Mashiach** never doubted **His** final triumph because **He** never doubted **ADONAI**. **He** was always certain that what is impossible with mankind is completely possible with **God**.⁸⁷¹