

After Six Days

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Exod 24:16

(BHS)	(RSV)
וַיִּשְׁכַּן כְּבוֹד־יְהוָה	1 The glory of the LORD settled
עַל־הַר סִינַי	2 on Mount Sinai,
וַיִּכְסֶהוּ הָעָנָן	3 and the cloud covered it
שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים	4 six days;
	5 and on the seventh day
וַיִּקְרָא אֶל־מֹשֶׁה	6 he called to Moses
בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי	7
מִתּוֹךְ הָעָנָן:	8 out of the midst of the cloud .

Yay more Hebrew! Obviously lines 5 and 7 relate. Pretty simple, don't you think? I color coded it to make it even more straightforward.

Israel and Moses waited for six days. Then, on the seventh day, Moses ascended the mountain, entered the Glory-Cloud of Yahweh, and there received part of the Law. He was there for 40 days and nights.

Interestingly, in the New Testament, the phrase “after six days” only occurs in one context. In Mark (paralleled in Matthew), Jesus had just asked his disciples, “Who do men say that I am?” Then he told them that the Christ must suffer and die. And “after six days”—a seemingly insignificant time reference—he was transfigured. (Luke 9:28 says that it was eight days later.) So I wondered, why does Mark 9:2 note this odd time reference, “after six days”?

The transfiguration of Jesus is the only time in history that Jesus' physical glory was revealed. Even after his resurrection, he appeared as an ordinary man—his disciples didn't even always recognize him. Only on the mountain after those six days was his true glory revealed.

William Lane suggests that Mark 9:2 makes an explicit reference to our verse.¹ Mark wants us to connect Moses with the disciples ascending the mountain into God's glory. As Moses entered the Glory Cloud after six days, and met God there, so also Peter, James, and John saw the Glory of God—and he was Jesus!

But there is more! The reference to six days and then the seventh can't help but connect with the Sabbath in the mind of any reader. In Genesis, after six days God rested. He blessed the seventh day and called it holy. It is as if the Day that Moses ascended into the cloud was a "theological" (rather than a calendar) sabbath. In a previous [essay](#) I wrote about the Sabbath Rest of God as a state of being that one enters by believing the gospel. I conclude there, "Today we believe the gospel—we rest in Christ from meritorious works—and paradoxically must strive and labor to be faithful. But the final, ultimate meaning of the Sabbath is yet to be seen. Jesus will return for us, and then we will enter into his consummate Rest." We will shine like Moses, like Jesus.

¹ *The Gospel According to Mark*. The New International Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974, 317 – 318.

On that Day we will enter into our final state of glorification. We will all be changed, says Paul, “Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven” (1 Cor 15:49). So on the mountain Jesus was showing us not only his glory, but the glory we will share with him, when the “six days” of all human history is done, and eternal Sabbath rest begins.

When we are faced with temptations of all sorts, forms of suffering and setbacks, disappointments and loss, we need to remember where we are headed. When we are tempted to despair, or envy, or are anxious, we can remember that our Sabbath rest is assured. Knowing this should help us cope when life gets us down.

Until, after all days, when Jesus returns for us, and we are metamorphosed into glorious people, ever with him!

Amen, Come Lord Jesus!