Redaction Criticism

Read the account of the Transfiguration in the three Gospels in which it appears:

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<td>1 And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain apart.</td>
<td>2 And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart by themselves; and he was transfigured before them,</td>
<td>28 Now about eight days after these sayings he took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray.</td>
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<td>2 And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his garments became white as light.</td>
<td>3 and his garments became glistening, intensely white, as no fuller on earth could bleach them.</td>
<td>29 And as he was praying, the appearance of his countenance was altered, and his raiment became dazzling white.</td>
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<td>3 And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him.</td>
<td>4 And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses; and they were talking to Jesus.</td>
<td>30 And behold, two men talked with him, Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was to accomplish at Jerusalem. 32 Now Peter and those who were with him were heavy with sleep but kept awake, and they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. 33 And as the men were parting from him, Peter said to Jesus, &quot;Master, it is well that we are here; let us make three booths, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah:&quot; not knowing what he said.</td>
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<td>4 And Peter said to Jesus, &quot;Lord, it is well that we are here; if you wish, I will make three booths here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah.</td>
<td>5 And Peter said to Jesus, &quot;Master, it is well that we are here; let us make three booths, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah.&quot; 6 For he did not know what to say, for they were exceedingly afraid.</td>
<td>34 And as he said this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. 35 And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, &quot;This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him.&quot;</td>
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<td>5 He was still speaking, when lo, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, &quot;This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased: listen to him.&quot; 6 When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces and were filled with awe. 7 But Jesus came and touched them, saying, &quot;Rise, and have no fear.&quot; 8 And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only.</td>
<td>7 And a cloud overshadowed them, and a voice came out of the cloud, &quot;This is my beloved Son; listen to him.&quot;</td>
<td>36 And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silence and told no one in those days anything of what they had seen.</td>
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1. **Using colored pencils or pens**, do the following. You may substitute the colors, so long as you are consistent. Note, please, that not all identical words are located on the same line.

   Use a **RED** pencil to underline all the words that appear in all three gospels that are exactly the same.
   Use a **BLACK** pencil to underline words that are exactly the Matthew and Luke only.
   Use a **BLUE** pencil to underline words that are unique to Matthew alone.
   Use a **GREEN** pencil to underline words that are unique to Mark alone.
   Use a **PURPLE** pencil to underline words that are unique to Luke alone.

2. Matthew includes some details not included in Mark or Luke. Compare Mtt. 17:2 and Exod. 34:29, 35; Mtt. 17:5-6 and Exod 20:18-19. What do these details tell you about Matthew's understanding of Jesus?

3. Luke reports that Jesus spoke with Moses and Elijah about his "departure which he was about to accomplish in Jerusalem." The Greek word translated here as "departure" is "exodon" (the root of "exodus"). See also 2 Peter 1:15. What does this suggest about Luke's understanding of the crucifixion? You who are studying Greek should find the word in a lexicon.

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**Consider the following Psalm:**

1. I called to the LORD out of my distress, and he answered me; out of the belly of Sheol I cried, and you heard my voice.
2. You cast me into the deep, into the heart of the seas, and the flood surrounded me; all your waves and your billows passed over me.
3. Then I said, 'I am driven away from your sight; how shall I look again upon your holy temple?'
4. The waters closed in over me; the deep surrounded me; weeds were wrapped around my head at the roots of the mountains.
5. I went down to the land whose bars closed upon me forever; yet you brought up my life from the Pit, O LORD my God.
6. As my life was ebbing away, I remembered the LORD; and my prayer came to you, into your holy temple.
7. Those who worship vain idols forsake their true loyalty.
8. But I with the voice of thanksgiving will sacrifice to you; what I have vowed I will pay.
9. Deliverance belongs to the LORD!
Without doing any formal research, try to discern:

1. What is the problem faced by the psalmist? What is the cause of the poet's distress?

2. Put a star at the point in the psalm where the psalmist's despair turns to hope. What, in your view, caused that shift?

3. What is it that we are to learn from this psalm of thanksgiving? What do you think the psalmist wants us to "take away" from the poem?