

ON THE MOUNT OF TRANSFIGURATION  
MATTHEW 17:1-13

Introduction:

1. Matthew, Mark and Luke all record Jesus' transfiguration.
2. Peter also wrote about it. **2 Peter 1:16-18** *For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.*
3. The word "transfiguration" comes from the Greek, "metamorphoo", where we get our word "metamorphosis" which means, "to change into another form."
4. Here in our text in verse 2 we see Jesus changing before Peter, James and John.
5. What was the significance of this transfiguration?
  - A. Every mention in the NT assumes that this was a deliberate self-revelation of specific needs.
  - B. The primary needs were those of His disciples. Their faith needed to be strengthened.

I. WHY MOSES AND ELIJAH? **v. 3** *And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him.*

- A. Why not some other characters from the OT? Because Moses and Elijah were representatives.
- B. They were the only two who could meet the qualifications for what they would represent.
- C. Both were men whom the people could look to as spiritual leaders. Both had enough faith in God to be used of Him.
  1. Moses was chosen to lead Israel out of Egypt.
  2. Elijah was chosen to lead Israel out of idolatry.
- D. Both were men whom the people could look to as spiritual leaders.

II. MOSES AND ELIJAH REPRESENTED THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS.

- A. Moses received the law from God on Mt. Sinai. **Exodus 19**
  1. God chose him to be the human author of the first five books of the Bible. In them the law told of the coming Messiah. **Genesis 3:15** *And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.*"; **Deuteronomy 18:15** *The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear...*
- B. Elijah was a prophet who received the Word directly from God. **1 Kings 21:17** *Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying..*
- C. So when Moses and Elijah appeared on the mount with Jesus, they were representing the law and the prophets bearing witness of Jesus as the Messiah. **Luke 16:16** *The law and the prophets were until John. Since that time the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is pressing into it.*

III. MOSES AND ELIJAH REPRESENTED THE COMING RAPTURE.

- A. Consider the death of Moses. **Deuteronomy 34:5** *So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD.*
- B. Consider Elijah's translation. **2 Kings 2:11** *Then it happened, as they continued on and talked, that suddenly a chariot of fire appeared with horses of fire, and separated the two of them; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.*

C. Moses' death pictures those saints who have gone on before us. Their souls to the Lord and their bodies into the ground. **2 Corinthians 5:8** *We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.*

D. Elijah's translation pictures those saints who will be alive on the earth when Jesus comes back. **1 Thessalonians 4:16-17** *For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.*

#### IV. MOSES AND ELIJAH WERE NOT TO TAKE AWAY FROM THE MAJESTY OF JESUS.

A. The reason for the transfiguration was to strengthen the disciples' faith in Jesus, not in Moses and Elijah. **vv. 5-6** *While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!" And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces and were greatly afraid.*

B. They were speaking of Jesus' death on the cross for mankind. **v. 9** *Now as they came down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, "Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man is risen from the dead."*

C. It is this majesty that we must look at, not the law, not the prophets, not even the coming rapture, but the offering of Jesus on the cross for our sins. **Romans 5:6** *For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.*

#### Conclusion:

1. It is Jesus, and Jesus alone, who can give you eternal life.
2. Don't look to others, don't look to yourself, look to Jesus.
3. He is the Savior, the Messiah, the King of kings and the Lord of lords. There is no other who can save and make righteous. **Acts 4:12** *Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.*