

MATTHEW 17:1-13

1 After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. **2** There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. **3** Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus.

4 Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.” **5** While he was still speaking, a bright cloud covered them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!”

6 When the disciples heard this, they fell facedown to the ground, terrified. **7** But Jesus came and touched them. “Get up,” he said. “Don’t be afraid.” **8** When they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus.

9 As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus instructed them, “Don’t tell anyone what you have seen, until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead.” **10** The disciples asked him, “Why then do the teachers of the law say that Elijah must come first?”

11 Jesus replied, “To be sure, Elijah comes and will restore all things. **12** But I tell you, Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him, but have done to him everything they wished. In the same way the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands.” **13** Then the disciples understood that he was talking to them about John the Baptist.

MARK 9:1-13

1 And he said to them, “Truly I tell you, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see that the kingdom of God has come with power.” **2** After six days Jesus took Peter, James and John with him and led them up a high mountain, where they were all alone. There he was transfigured before them. **3** His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them. **4** And there appeared before them Elijah and Moses, who were talking with Jesus.

5 Peter said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.” **6** [He did not know what to say, they were so frightened.] **7** Then a cloud appeared and covered them, and a voice came from the cloud: “This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!” **8** Suddenly, when they looked around, they no longer saw anyone with them except Jesus. **9** As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus gave them orders not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead. **10** They kept the matter to themselves, discussing what “rising from the dead” meant.

11 And they asked him, “Why do the teachers of the law say that Elijah must come first?” **12** Jesus replied, “To be sure, Elijah does come first, and restores all things. Why then is it written that the Son of Man must suffer much and be rejected? **13** But I tell you, Elijah has come, and they have done to him everything they wished, just as it is written about him.”

LUKE 9:28-36

28 About eight days after Jesus said this, he took Peter, John and James with him and went up onto a mountain to pray. **29** As he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning. **30** Two men, Moses and Elijah, appeared in glorious splendor, talking with Jesus. **31** They spoke about his departure, which he was about to bring to fulfillment at Jerusalem. **32** Peter and his companions were very sleepy, but when they became fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men standing with him. **33** As the men were leaving Jesus, Peter said to him, “Master, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.” [He did not know what he was saying.]

34 While he was speaking, a cloud appeared and covered them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. **35** A voice came from the cloud, saying, “This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to him.” **36** When the voice had spoken, they found that Jesus was alone. The disciples kept this to themselves and did not tell anyone at that time what they had seen.

STUDY NOTES

BlueLetterBible.org Commentary

And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him. It is fair to think that these two particular persons from the Old Testament appeared because they represent the Law (Moses) and the Prophets (Elijah). The sum of Old Testament revelation came to meet with Jesus at the Mount of Transfiguration.

We can also say that Moses and Elijah represent those who are caught up to God (Moses at Jude 9 and Elijah at 2 Kings 2:11). More specifically, Moses represents those who die and go to glory, and Elijah represents those who are caught up to heaven without death (as in the rapture described in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

Talking with Him: Luke 9:31 tells us the theme of their conversation; they spoke of His decease which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. They spoke of the upcoming work of the cross, and presumably of the resurrection to follow.

Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, let us make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah: Mark 9:6 and Luke 9:33 point out that Peter didn't know what he was saying when he said this. Though said without careful thought, the effect of his words put Jesus on an equal level with Moses and Elijah, building equal shrines for each of them. Peter equates Jesus with Moses and Elijah and is dramatically rebuked by a voice from the cloud of God's glory.

A bright cloud overshadowed them: "When God draws near to man it is absolutely necessary that his glory should be veiled. No man can see his face and live. Hence the cloud, in this instance, and in other cases." (Spurgeon)

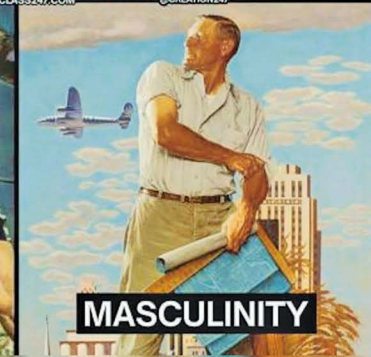
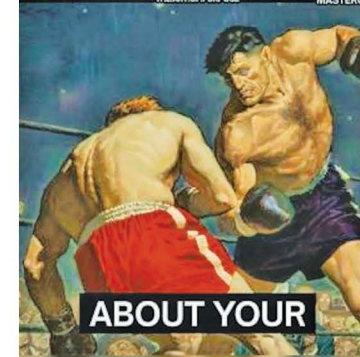
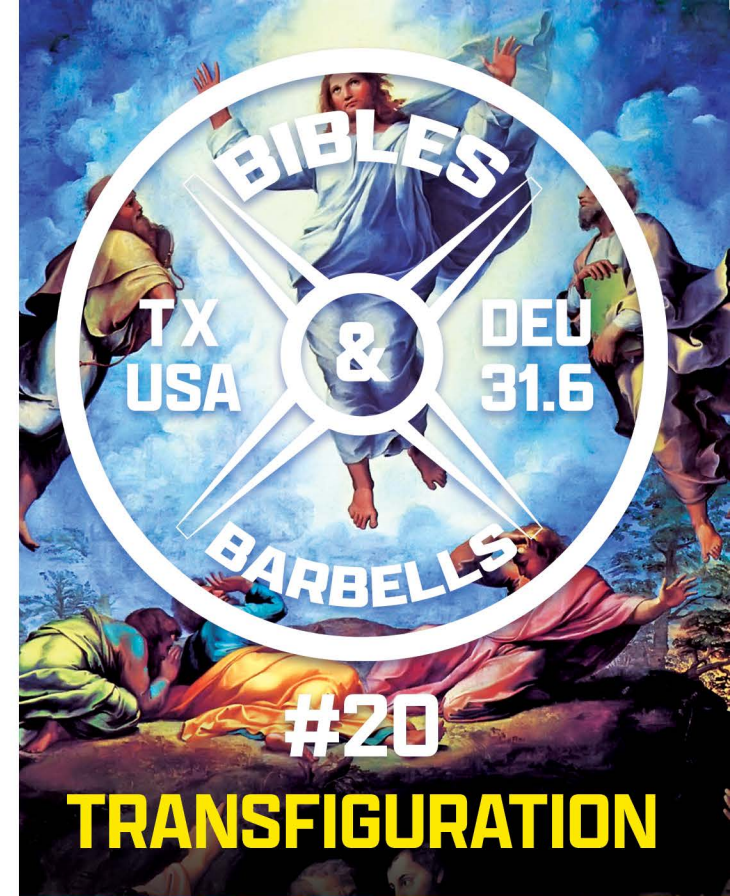
This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him! This is another development of the significant theme in Matthew of the conflict between Jesus and the religious leaders. With these words from heaven, God the Father clearly set Jesus above the Law and the Prophets. He is not merely another or even a better lawgiver or prophet. Jesus is the only begotten Son.

Hear Him! If we should listen to anyone, we should listen to Jesus. One would think that a voice from heaven would say, "Listen to me!" But the Father said, "Hear Him!" Everything points us to Jesus.

They fell on their faces and were greatly afraid: They didn't fall on their faces when they saw Jesus transfigured; not when His face shone like the sun; not when His clothes became as white as the light; not when Moses and Elijah appeared with Him; not when Moses and Elijah spoke with Jesus; and not even when the cloud of glory appeared and overshadowed them. But when the disciples heard the voice from heaven, they fell on their faces and were greatly afraid. "They were in the immediate presence of God, and listening to their Father's voice: well might they lie and prostrate and tremble. Too clear a manifestation of God, even though it related to Jesus, would rather overpower than empower us." (Spurgeon)

Arise, and do not be afraid: The disciples were once again uniquely in awe of Jesus. This helps explain the purpose of the Transfiguration: to reassure the disciples that Jesus was the Messiah, even if He would indeed be crucified as He had so surprisingly revealed. Note the context: Jesus just revealed His humiliation and sufferings to them. It makes sense that they receive another divine testimony to Jesus' status as the Son of God at this time.

When they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only: It is significant that their entire focus was forced upon Jesus once again. The cloud was gone; Moses had left, and Elijah had disappeared. "Though the apostles saw 'Jesus only,' they saw quite sufficient, for Jesus is enough for time and eternity, enough to live by and enough to die by...O look to him, and though it be Jesus only, though Moses should condemn you, and Elias should alarm you, yet 'Jesus only' shall be enough to comfort and enough to save you." (Spurgeon)



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