

(Matt. 17:1-2) – Matthew, Mark (9:2-8), and Luke (9:28-36) were all inspired by the Holy Spirit to record this event known as the mount of transfiguration. This is where the Lord Jesus gave Peter, James, and John a vision of His majesty and glory that foreshadowed His coming exaltation. Christ had announced the necessity of His sufferings, death, and resurrection (Matt. 16:21) by which He would accomplish the Father’s redemptive purpose by saving all of His people from their sins to the praise of the glory of God’s grace (Matt. 1:21; John 17:4; 10:11; Heb. 10:10-17). The reward for the establishment of righteousness by His obedience unto death as Surety, Substitute, and Redeemer of His covenant people would be His own exaltation. The “*SIX DAYS*” in Matthew’s and Mark’s (9:2) account present no conflict with Luke’s “eight days” (9:28). Luke included the day of the events of Matthew 16:13-28 as well as the actual day Christ was transfigured. Matthew and Mark calculated only the six days in between.

“*TRANSFIGURED*” is the Greek word “metamorphoo,” which is “metamorphosis.” This vision showed a change as the Lord pulled back the cover of His human appearance (Isa. 53:2) and revealed His radiant glory as God manifest in the flesh – “*HIS FACE DID SHINE AS THE SUN, AND HIS RAIMENT WAS WHITE AS THE LIGHT.*” His “*face*” identified Him distinctly and showed for the glory of God (2 Cor. 4:6). His white “*raiment*” sets forth His righteousness as the Surety, Substitute, and Redeemer of His people, His righteousness imputed to His people (2 Cor. 5:21).

(Matt. 17:3) – The appearance of “*MOSES AND ELIAS*” (Elijah) sets forth a glorious revelation of Christ, the keeper of the law (represented by Moses) (Matt. 5:17-20; Rom. 10:4), and Christ the subject of all of the Old Testament prophecies (represented by Elijah) concerning the Messiah and salvation accomplished in and by Him (Luke 24:25-26,44-47; John 5:39). Christ came to fulfill what was already written “in the law and the prophets” (John 1:45). Luke tells us that the subject of their conversation with the Savior was “*His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem*” (Luke 9:31). Christ showed His disciples that what He had spoken before concerning His death and resurrection in the accomplishment of their redemption was the main subject of their Scriptures, and this was the reason He had come into this world (Gal. 4:4-6). The word “*decease*” in Luke’s account is the Greek word “*exodus*,” meaning that Christ’s death would be the way He would lead His people (God’s elect) out of the bondage of sin and death and into the promised land of God’s grace and glory.

(Matt. 17:4) – Luke records that these three disciples fell asleep, and when they awoke, “*they saw His glory*” (Luke 9:32). So, apparently, they were awakened by the brightness of this vision. Peter said, “*LORD, IT IS GOOD FOR US TO BE HERE.*” He spoke the truth as it is always good when the saints of God meet together and worship Christ as

He, by His Spirit, reveals His glory to us. But Peter went on to speak foolishly – *“IF THOU WILT, LET US MAKE HERE THREE TABERNACLES; ONE FOR THEE, AND ONE FOR MOSES, AND ONE FOR ELIAS”* as if he was putting Moses and Elijah on the same level as the Lord Jesus to worship them along with Christ. Mark added of Peter, *“he wist not what to say”* (Mark 9:6); i.e. Peter did not know what to say and did not realize what he was saying (Luke 9:33). He spoke rashly, as he often did. But there came a swift response from heaven.

(Matt. 17:5) – As soon as Peter spoke, *“A CLOUD OVERSHADOWED THEM,”* indicating the Divine presence. And the voice of God the Father said, *“THIS IS MY BELOVED SON, IN WHOM I AM WELL PLEASED; HEAR YE HIM.”* Moses and Elijah were sinners saved by grace and servants of the Lord. Christ alone is to be worshipped. The Father is pleased with His Son in the glory of His Person and in the accomplishment of His work of redemption as the Surety, Substitute, and Redeemer of His people.

(Matt. 17:6-8) – The voice of the Father filled these men with fear, and they fell down before the Lord. The Savior then *“TOUCHED THEM AND SAID, ARISE, AND BE NOT AFRAID.”* The only way we as sinners can approach God with confidence of being accepted and blessed is through His Son and based upon the blood and righteousness of Christ to cleanse us from our sins and justify us before God. Notice that when they looked up at this time, they did not see Moses or Elijah – *“THEY SAW NO MAN, SAVE JESUS ONLY.”* This is where the Lord brings all of His people – to look to Christ alone and nowhere else for all salvation, forgiveness, righteousness, eternal life, and glory (Heb. 12:2). Here we see a beautiful Gospel message. (1) The approach of grace – *“JESUS CAME”* to them. A sinner will not come to Christ until Christ comes to him (John 6:44-45). (2) The touch of grace – Christ *“TOUCHED THEM.”* The Lord must lay His hand upon helpless sinners. (3) The call of grace – *“ARISE.”* This pictures regeneration (John 3:3-7). (4) The Word of grace – *“BE NOT AFRAID.”* The Lord speaks peace to His people. (5) The fruit of grace – *“THEY SAW ... JESUS ONLY.”* This is the look of God-given faith that brings sinners to Christ for salvation.

(Matt. 17:9) – As the Lord had said before, He did not want the news of His glorious Person to be public till after His resurrection. Making this public too soon would fan the flames of enthusiasm among the Jewish people who believed that Jesus was the Messiah come to set up an earthly kingdom (John 6:14-15). It might also intensify the anger of the Jewish leaders to take Him before the appointed hour of His suffering unto death (John 7:30; 8:20; 12:23-24).