

Behold the King—Matthew 17

- **Intro:**
 - Matthew 14-17—Jesus teaches disciples; they learn; then they fail; understanding followed by misunderstanding; progress followed by failure!
 - This is the story of the disciples and this is our story! Victory and failure; understanding and confusion; progress and regress. Jesus is a PATIENT Savior!!
 - **As we behold the glories of Jesus we become more like him**
- **Behold the Divine Glory of the King (v.1-13)**
 - **Moses—represents the Law (reflected the glory of God)**
 - **Exodus 19**—Moses Received the 10 Commandments on a Mountain (Sinai)
 - **Exodus 33**—Moses asks God, on Mt. Sinai, to see his glory (God shows Moses his back)
 - **Elijah—represents the Prophets (proclaim and predict the glory of God)**
 - 1 Kings 18—Mt. Carmel proclaiming God’s glory against the prophets of Baal.
 - **Jesus—the fulfillment of Law and prophets (reveals the glory of God)**
 - Jesus doesn’t just mirror or imitate the glory of God...he IS the glory of God.
 - **John 1:14** (John was on the mountain)—The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. We observed his glory.”
 - **Peter—misses the mark by equating Moses and Elijah with Jesus**
 - God’s response—he silences Peter, tells him to listen to Jesus, as establishes Jesus as the centerpiece and focal point of all Scripture, redemptive history, etc.
 - **Warning—don’t try to tone Jesus down or equate him with any other people/gods**
 - **Jesus radiates the splendor of God (v.2)—“his face shone like the sun...his clothes became as white as the light.”**
 - **Hebrews 1**—he is the radiance of the glory of God—Jesus was pulling back the curtain of his humble humanity to show them a glimpse of his full glory.
 - **Jesus unveils the presence of God (v.5)—“a bright cloud overshadowed them”**
 - Glory cloud led God’s people through the wilderness (Ex. 13); cloud descended on Mt. Sinai in Exodus (Ex. 19); cloud enveloped the tabernacle (Ex. 40); cloud descended on the temple upon its completion (1 Kings 8).
 - **Jesus embodies the pleasure of God (v.5)—“my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased”**
 - Fell on their faces terrified—Just like Moses, when God speaks, they are terrified!
 - **Clear for disciples—God’s pleasure in them was based on Christ, not their merit!**
 - Echo of Psalm 2 (Son of God) and Isaiah 42 (Suffering Servant)
 - **Jesus speaks the truth of God (v.5)—“listen to him”**
 - **Jesus comes to us speaking, teaching, leading us. We have a speaking God.**
 - **Before we speak or act...we ought to sit still and listen to what Jesus is saying! How do we listen? Through the Word and Prayer! Are you abiding/listening there?**
 - Peter (on the mountain with Jesus), says the Bible is a more sure word to us than even what was spoken on the mountain that day!
 - **2 Peter 1:19**—reading your Bible is an even better mountaintop experience than having been on the mountain in the Transfiguration! Wow!!
 - **Jesus is the prophet promised by Moses—we should listen to and follow him!**
 - **Jesus’ Cross precedes his Crown—“tell no one”—Jesus knew the disciples and the crowds wanted a political kingdom where reigning and domination happened without suffering.**
 - Jesus knew There is no true glory apart from the cross
 - **v.3—“Moses and Elijah, talking with him.”**
 - What were they talking about!?
 - **Luke 9:30-31**—“...speaking of his departure, which He was about to accomplish in Jerusalem”
 - “departure” = the Greek word from which we get our English word, “exodus”
 - **Jesus would accomplish a new kind of exodus for God’s people—v.26 = FREE**
 - **Moses was used by the Father to lead his people out of physical slavery in Egypt**

- Jesus was used by the Father to lead his people of spiritual slavery to sin
- Elijah and John the Baptist—Evidence that Jesus was the Messiah!
 - Malachi 4: 5-6—Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes. And he will TURN the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers.
 - Elijah had to come BEFORE the Messiah and would restore all things.
 - For John the Baptist—he did come before Jesus but his ministry of preparation and restoration ended in suffering and death (beheaded) which caused the religious leaders to miss who he was and what he was accomplishing.
 - For Jesus—the truest ministry of restoration ended in suffering and death (crucifixion)
- Behold the Compassionate Service of the King (14-21)
 - Jesus comes down off a mountain of splendor into a world of pain and suffering
 - Philippians 2—Incarnation—forsakes glory to endure the cross!
 - True compassion is not an emotion or a feeling...it always requires ACTION!
 - Jesus exhorts and endures our unbelief
 - Endures—“how long am I to bear with you?”
 - Exhorts—“bring him here to me”—the God of all glory, Jesus himself, is enduring with great humility and patience, the lack of faith and the unbelief of his disciples
 - Jesus enables our ministry (v.19-20)
 - The disciples come privately to him asking why they couldn’t cast it out.
 - Mark 9:29—Jesus told them, “this kind can come out by nothing but prayer.”
 - The disciples had turned ministry into a mechanical and pragmatic operation and had forgotten that their power, authority and ministry capacity was DERIVED from Christ alone! Without Jesus they were hopeless and powerless.
 - “grain of mustard seed”—the reminder to the disciples that the issue is not SIZE of faith but OBJECT of faith and that faith in any object other than Jesus was powerless.
 - People of God, with faith in the power of a great God, can accomplish great things
 - To live as missionaries OFF the mountain we need to enjoy God’s glory ON the mountain
 - Behold the Willing Sacrifice and Certain Victory of the King (v.22-23)
 - Jesus is the full glory of God and nothing can come against him. Therefore, he dies willingly. No one takes his life, rather, he lays it down!
 - Matthew 16 emphasized necessity of Christ’s death and resurrection. Matthew 17 emphasizes its CERTAINTY.
 - Just as certain as Jesus was that he would only accomplish redemption through his death, he was equally certain that the grave could not hold him! Indeed, in him, death was defeated.
 - Without his death and resurrection, Jesus’ power is meaningless/useless! His death and resurrection affirm and validate his glory!
 - Behold the Humble Authority of the King (v.24-27)
 - Temple Tax NOT taken by Rome but by Jews to care for the temple.
 - Jesus has already pronounced that he is greater than the temple
 - He is the literal dwelling place of God and the means by which man can worship God
 - In absolute humility and passion for the souls of the people, he submits to the regulation!
 - Jesus sovereignly works for the salvation of the lost—the shekel had to be dropped, the fish had to swallow it but not all the way, the fish had to swim to the bank, it had to be near where Peter was, he had to bite the hook! All that happened so that the temple tax could be paid so that people who God desired to save would not be unnecessarily offended!
 - Be Transformed by the Glorious King (v.1-27; 2 Peter 1:16-18)
 - 2 Peter 1:16-18—For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his

majesty. For when he received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased," we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain.

- Beholding the full divinity of Christ, the tender compassion of Christ, the sacrificial death of Christ and the humble authority of Christ TRANSFORMED Peter's life.
- The 2 other uses of "transfigure" describe inner transformation in lives of believers...when we behold the transfigured glorious Christ, we are transformed at the depths of our core!
 - 2 Cor. 3:8—And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.
 - Romans 12:2—Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.
- We become like what we behold!
- Jesus' transfiguration REVEALED his glory...our transformation REFLECTS his glory!