

LISTEN TO JESUS!

Matthew 17:1-8; Mark 9:2-8; Luke 9:28-36
Yeshua §88

All of us experience pain in this life. Most of the pain we experience happens to us by accident or illness, but some types of pain we choose. We choose pain when we believe it will accomplish something of value, something we want. If we choose the pain associated with a sport like football or soccer, we do so because we believe the fun of competition and the joy of winning are worth the pain of the workouts. When we choose the pain of the dentist's big fat syringe we do so because we believe it's worth taking care of the cavity today to avoid the toothache tomorrow.

The question for the disciples was, "Is it worth it to follow Jesus into suffering and possible death?"

After Peter's confession that Jesus is the Messiah, Jesus began to reveal that He must go to Jerusalem where He will suffer many things at the hands of the spiritual leaders, be killed and rise on the third day. After Peter responded negatively, Jesus issued a challenge to His disciples: to continue to follow Him would require them to give up their lives and follow Him even unto death.

MATTHEW 16:24-25 (ESV)

24 Then Jesus told his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. 25 For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it."

Jesus promised there would be reward for following Him and then He completed His challenge with a prophecy:

MATTHEW 16:27-28 (ESV)

27 For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done. 28 Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."

This prophecy was fulfilled about a week later in the event we call, *The Transfiguration*. In all three Gospel accounts, Matthew, Mark

- Part 1. The Coming of the King
- Part 2. The Authentication of the King
- Part 3. The Controversy over the King
- Part 4. The Training of the Twelve by the King
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- Part 5. The Opposition to the King:
- Part 6. The Preparation of the Disciples by the King
- Part 7. The Official Presentation of the King
- Part 8. The Preparation for the Death of the King
- Part 9. The Trial of the King:
- Part 10. The Death of the King
- Part 11. The Resurrection and the Ascension of the King
- Part 12. The Sequels



and Luke follow the prophesy with the Transfiguration event. An observation at this point: Jesus knew when and where the Transfiguration was going to take place. And I believe the Transfiguration was in large part connected to Jesus' challenge to His disciples to follow Him unto death.

The Transfiguration took place on Mt. Hermon, the highest mountain in Israel rising to 9200 feet above sea level. Jesus and the disciples have been in Caesarea Philippi at the base of Mt. Hermon.



About a week after the challenge to follow, Jesus chose Peter, John and James to hike with Him up Mt. Hermon.

We pick up the story in Luke 9:28-29:

Now about eight days after these sayings he took with him Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray.

This probably happened in the early morning hours of the day following their hike. The disciples, exhausted, were still sleeping when Jesus awoke and stepped away to pray. As He prayed, He was transfigured:

²⁹And as he was praying, the appearance of his face was altered, and his clothing became dazzling white.

Matthew says... *his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light.*

Mark says... *and his clothes became radiant, intensely white, as no one on earth could bleach them.*

The light was coming out of Jesus! This is the

Shekinah-glory of God. As the Second Person of the Trinity, Jesus possesses the Shekinah-glory. In emptying Himself (Phil. 2) and taking upon Himself our humanity, Jesus willingly veiled His Shekinah-glory by His physical body.

On this morning the veil was "pulled back" and the innate glory of Jesus' deity shone forth. When Jesus comes again and sets up His kingdom on earth, His Shekinah-glory will be unveiled; He will reign in all His glory!

LUKE 9:30-31 (ESV)

³⁰And behold, two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah, ³¹who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.

Jesus was joined by Moses and Elijah. Scripture does not explain why these two, but it may be because Moses represented the Law and Elijah represented the Prophets. Both the Law and the Prophets point to the Messiah.

The presence of Moses and Elijah is powerful evidence that there is life after death. Moses, who died before entering the Promised Land (Deut. 34:5), had to have been in the form of a *glorified soul* because he has not yet been resurrected. Old Testament saints like Moses will be resurrected between the end of the Tribulation and the beginning of the Messianic Kingdom (Dan. 12:11-13).

Elijah, on the other hand, never physically died but was taken up into heaven by a whirlwind (2 Kings 2:11). Elijah had to have been in the form of a *glorified body and soul*. His body was translated from a mortal body to an immortal body just like the bodies of believers who are alive at the time of the Rapture (1 Cor. 15:50-58, 1 Thess. 4:13-18). The presence of Moses and Elijah was powerful proof of the afterlife.

Luke also tells us that Jesus, Moses and Elijah talked about Jesus' departure which He would make from Jerusalem. This is what Jesus had begun to reveal to the disciples after Peter's confession (Matt. 16:21). *Departure* is from the Greek word, *exodos*. In the Septuagint (Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures) the same word is used for Israel's exodus from Egypt. Just as Israel's departure from Egypt liberated them and freed them from slavery, Jesus' departure by means of His sacrificial death would also bring liberation. Jesus would be liberated from all the limitations of His humanity, such as the veiling of His glory and all believers would be liberated from enslavement to sin.

All this happened while the disciples slept. Boy were they surprised when they woke up!

LUKE 9:32-33 (ESV)

32 Now Peter and those who were with him were heavy with sleep, but when they became fully awake 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, "Master, it is good that we are here. Let us make three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah"—not knowing what he said.

Peter's suggestion may not be as bizarre as it sounds. The seventh Feast of the Lord is *The Feast of Tabernacles*. Worshipers built and lived in temporary shelters for a week commemorating the Wilderness Wanderings. The Feast of Tabernacles is associated with the Messianic Kingdom in that, according to

Zechariah 14:16-19, families of the gentile nations who survive the Tribulation will come up to Jerusalem annually and celebrate The Feast of Tabernacles.

Seeing Jesus transfigured and seeing Moses and Elijah, Peter may have thought that the Messianic Kingdom had begun and suggested building the three booths in celebration of The Feast of Tabernacles. Associating the Messianic Kingdom with The Feast of Tabernacles was correct, but Peter's timing was incorrect. As we learned a few weeks ago, The Feast of Passover, the killing of the Lamb, must be accomplished first, then, The Feast of Tabernacle will follow.

LUKE 9:34-36 (ESV)

34 As he was saying these things, 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, "This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!" 36 And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and told no one in those days anything of what they had seen.

Peter, James and John experienced the *bat kol*; the heavenly voice. The *bat kol* spoke almost the exact same words at Jesus' baptism, but here added; *listen to him!* As Peter, James and John have listened to the Law and the Prophets, it is now time for them to listen to Jesus.

There are several important truths that come from The Transfiguration.

First, The Transfiguration authenticated the Messiahship of Jesus, as the *bat kol*, the heavenly voice, the voice of God the Father, confirmed that Jesus is His Son.

Second, The Transfiguration was a preview of Jesus coming in glory to establish His Messianic Kingdom. For Peter, this was one of the main take-a-ways for this experience as he wrote in 2 Peter 1:16-18:

2 PETER 1:16-18 (ESV)

16 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. 17 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," 18 we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain.

Third, the Transfiguration guaranteed the fulfillment of all prophecy. Moses and Elijah discussed with Jesus His coming death which would fulfill the messianic prophecies contained in the Law and the Prophets. This was another main take-a-way for Peter as he wrote in 2 Peter 1:19-21:

2 PETER 1:19–21 (ESV)

19 And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, 20 knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. 21 For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

Fourth, the Transfiguration is a pledge of life beyond the grave. Moses, who died, was there, representing the saints who await the resurrection. Elijah, who never died, was there, representing the saints who will be translated.

Fifth, the Transfiguration is a testimony to the love and humility of Jesus for both His heavenly Father and for humanity. Taking upon our humanity required Jesus to veil His glory not once, but twice: at the incarnation and again after the Transfiguration. Only at His ascension was Jesus' glory unveiled forever. At His second coming, Jesus will come with power to establish His kingdom and He will reign and rule in the radiance of His Shekinah glory!

Sixth, the Transfiguration was given to infuse Peter, James and John with necessary courage to follow Jesus through suffering even unto death. This experience answered the question we humans always ask about suffering, "Is it worth it?"