

The Transfiguration of Our Lord February 23, 2020*

Lectionary Year A – the Gospel of Matthew

Living the Lutheran Lectionary

A weekly study of the Scriptures for the coming Sunday since May 4, 2014.

An opportunity to make Sunday worship more meaningful and to make the rhythms of the readings part of the rhythms of your life.

Available on line at:

- ✦ www.bethlehemplutheranchurchparma.com/biblestudies
- ✦ Through www.Facebook.com at “Living the Lutheran Lectionary”, “Bethlehem Lutheran Church Parma”, or “Harold Weseloh”
- ✦ All links in this on-line copy are active and can be reached using Ctrl+Click

Gather and be blessed:

- ✦ **Thursdays at 10 AM:** At Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Road, Parma, OH 44134 and on line through <https://zoom.us/j/815200301>
- ✦ **Fridays at 7 PM in a house church setting:** For details, contact Harold Weseloh at puritaspastor@hotmail.com
- ✦ **First Sunday of the month at 11 AM:** St. Philip Lutheran Church, 11315 Regalia Ave., Cleveland, OH 44104
- ✦ **Tuesdays at 12:00 PM (8pm Kenya time)** via Zoom to the Lutheran School of Theology - Nyamira , Kenya
- ✦ **On Facebook through Messenger** in a discussion group shared by people throughout the United States, Kenya and Uganda. Contact Harold Weseloh on Facebook Messenger.
- ✦



<https://teachingcatholickids.com/celebrating-the-feast-of-the-transfiguration/>

Hymn of the Day

Lutheran Service Book (LSB) 413 The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH) Not listed

“O wondrous type! O vision fair”

This hymn comes to us in Latin written by an unknown author in 1495, just before the dawn of the Reformation... The Englishman John Mason Neale (1818–1866) gave us a fine translation of this hymn. His brilliance as a Greek and Latin scholar served us well, since he translated over 200 hymns from those two languages into our own. Two of his best-known translations are “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” for Advent, and “All Glory, Laud, and Honor” for Palm Sunday... writing a hymn be a clear confession of the Christian faith?...

The bold tune used for this hymn makes it a bit difficult to remain seated to sing it properly! One might be moved to make it a genuine “carol,” a hymn designed to be sung while walking around. Hence, there would not only be “Christmas carols,” but also “Epiphany carols.”

The joyous melody of this hymn and the clearly told facts of the transfiguration make it memorable. The very title of the hymn gives us a word that must be understood in its biblical sense — “type.” A type is a preview of what was fulfilled in Christ Jesus. So, Melchizedek (Gen. 14:17–24; Ps. 110:4) was a type of Christ. In the transfiguration, the radiant glory of Jesus, Moses, and Elijah was a type (again, preview) of heaven...”

- <https://www.lcms.org/worship/hymn-of-the-day-studies>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lhxyX-QcMBk> to the tune, Deo Gracias. “Hymns of the Church Year” © 2009 Concordia Publishing House
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M-blMxLvaDc&t=22s> Organist is Mark Peters. The prelude for hymn 413 in Lutheran Service Book is from Hymn Prelude Library, Vol. 3 (tunes D, E). Special effect for final verse.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5BnPYScCiMA> to the alternate tune, Wareham. The Schola Cantorum at St Andrew's Episcopal Church, Highland Park, Pittsburgh, PA, USA; Peter J. Luley, Organist-Choirmaster. [Mark Ferguson](#), SUPERBLY PLAYED!!!! What a nice way to end a final verse with full organ using the high pressure reed! I was happy to hear the 32' reed being used.

Commentaries have been chosen because the author has written in a way that compliments the reading. Not all of the commentaries are from Lutheran sources. They have been edited for length and in some cases for additional content that is not in keeping with a Lutheran understanding of Scripture. Links are provided for those who wish to read the entire commentary.

The Holy Bible, English Standard Version. ESV® Text Edition: 2016. Copyright © 2001
by [Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.](#)

O.T.— “Moses went up on the mountain (*and*) The glory of the LORD dwelt (*there*)”

Psalm — “I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill.””

Epistle — “for we were with him on the holy mountain ”

Gospel — “(Jesus) led them up a high mountain by themselves”

Exodus 24:8-18; Revised Common Lectionary (RCL), the same reading (Next week: Genesis 3:1-21; RCL, Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7)

“Exodus 24:12--18 has shaped the traditions of transfiguration that we find in the Synoptic Gospels. Placed on Transfiguration Sunday, this passage, which describes Moses' encounter with

the Lord on Mount Sinai, brings the season of Epiphany to conclusion. Thus, in this season of reflection upon God's manifestation and incarnation, today's lesson brings us to the place of revelation--God's holy mountain--where heaven meets earth and humans encounter the divine...

Exodus 24:1--11 represents a concluding ceremony at Sinai between the Lord and Israel. This ceremony ends with a ritual of blood (vv. 4--8) and a sacred meal (v. 11). Thus, the Lord's descent upon the mountain and Moses' ascent into the cloud in vv. 12--18 emerge from the broader context of covenant ratification. One can divide today's passage according to Moses' movement up toward the Lord's presence on the mountain:

- *The Lord's instructions to Moses (v. 12)*
- *Moses' ascent to the mountain (vv. 13--15a)*
- *The glory of the Lord settles on the mountain (15b--17)*
- *Moses enters the cloud (v. 18)..."*

➤ http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=34 Frank M. Yamada

Director of the Center for Asian American Ministries, McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago, IL

The Covenant Confirmed

24 Then he said to Moses, "Come up to the LORD, you and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and worship from afar. ² Moses alone shall come near to the LORD, but the others shall not come near, and the people shall not come up with him."

³ Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD and all the rules.^[a] And all the people answered with one voice and said, "All the words that the LORD has spoken we will do." ⁴ And Moses wrote down all the words of the LORD. He rose early in the morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. ⁵ And he sent young men of the people of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the LORD. ⁶ And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and half of the blood he threw against the altar. ⁷ Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it in the hearing of the people. And they said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient." ⁸ And Moses took the blood and threw it on the people and said, "Behold the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words."

⁹ Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up, ¹⁰ and they saw the God of Israel. There was under his feet as it were a pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness. ¹¹ And he did not lay his hand on the chief men of the people of Israel; they beheld God, and ate and drank.

¹² The LORD said to Moses, "Come up to me on the mountain and wait there, that I may give you the tablets of stone, with the law and the commandment, which I have written for their instruction." ¹³ So Moses rose with his assistant Joshua, and Moses went up into the mountain of God. ¹⁴ And he said to the elders, "Wait here for us until

we return to you. And behold, Aaron and Hur are with you. Whoever has a dispute, let him go to them.”

¹⁵ Then Moses went up on the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain. ¹⁶ The glory of the LORD dwelt on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days. And on the seventh day he called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud. ¹⁷ Now the appearance of the glory of the LORD was like a devouring fire on the top of the mountain in the sight of the people of Israel. ¹⁸ Moses entered the cloud and went up on the mountain. And Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.

a. Exodus 24:3 Or *all the just decrees*

Does it make you want to read what came next?

“Exodus 24 functions as a kind of “swing chapter,” in the words of Old Testament scholar, Terrence Fretheim. We might also (far less eloquently) call it a kind of “peanut butter and jelly” chapter. The Spirit “sandwiches” it, after all, between chapters 20-23 and 25-32’s guides for holy living. Among the things that distinguishes those two “slices of bread” is that while God speaks chapters 20-23 to all the people of Israel, God addresses chapters 25-32 to Moses, whom God, in turn, expects to relay that message to the Israelites.

Moses spends a fair bit of Exodus 19-33 clambering up and down Mt. Sinai, sometimes alone, sometimes with a hiking party. However, he’s always alone when he reaches its summit. There he sees and hears things no one on this side of the new creation’s curtain can even begin to imagine. After all, on Mount Sinai, Israel’s leader, encounters Yahweh, the living God of heaven and earth.

Exodus 24:1 reports that God calls Moses to leave most of the Israelites at Sinai’s base, but to take Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, as well as Israel’s seventy elders with him part way up the mountain. On their way, we learn in verse 10 ... that while they may join ancient cultures in expecting some kind of divine revelation, they actually glimpse the Divine himself: “the God of Israel.” We can only imagine how it must have made the Israelites’ eyes almost pop out of their heads and tongues nearly fall out of their mouths...

It’s no wonder, then, that when Moses obeys the Lord by telling all but Aaron to “Wait here for us until we come back to you,” those leaders don’t argue with him the way they so often do. Who on earth, after all, would want to risk running into the God of Israel a second time? Of course, those leaders eventually get so sick of waiting for Moses to come back to them that they do lethally dangerous things. But that’s another grim story for another Sunday.

In verse 12 of the text the Lectionary appoints for this Sunday, God picks up on verse 2’s theme by telling Moses to come closer so that God can give him “two tablets of stone, with the laws and commands” God has “written for” the Israelites’ instruction. Though our text doesn’t actually say so, it implies that Moses sheds even Joshua on the final leg of his climb to the top. After all, God has insisted even Joshua “must not come near” (2) the Lord.

God (and Israel, cf. Exodus 20:19) gave Moses the unique and, as it will turn out, dangerous job of serving as a mediator between the Lord and Israel. Moses speaks to Israel for God and for God to Israel. So the text the Lectionary appoints for this Sunday serves to impress on God’s

Israelite sons and daughters that what Moses eventually brings back to them is not the result of his own brainstorm, but the very message of God delivered through him. It is to be faithfully obeyed in grateful response to God's saving and sustaining work for her...

It's interesting to note that when the Israelites catch a glimpse of Mount Sinai, they don't apparently see the cloud that has swallowed up Moses. Verse 17 says, "The glory of the Lord looked like a consuming fire on top of the mountain." God is, after all, utterly holy...

And yet Moses, at God's gracious summons, does approach the Lord. With what I imagine to be fear and trembling, with each passing day, six of them, in fact, he sits before the holy and living God of heaven and earth. Only on the seventh day does God finally call him to come even closer to the Lord. Where Moses promptly ends up sitting forty more days and nights. Where Moses hears God explain just what it will mean for Israel to live in holy ways when they finally arrive in the land of promise...

On this Transfiguration Sunday the parallels between the Old and New Testament texts the Lectionary appoints are almost too numerous to list. Of course, no one gets transfigured in Exodus 24. But Moses does appear, of course, both there and in Matthew 17. On a mountain. In a cloud. From which people hear God speaking.

However, Moses doesn't really share Matthew's spotlight with God the way he does in Exodus 24. He, in fact, seems to play a more minor part. After all, at the center of Matthew 17 is Jesus, the one whom the voice from the cloud calls God's "Son," with whom God is well-pleased and whom God wants Jesus' followers to listen to..."

- <https://cep.calvinseminary.edu/sermon-starters/last-epiphany-a/> Doug Bratt

Psalm 2:6-12; RCL, the same reading (Psalm 32:1-7; RCL, Psalm 32)

"Few passages of Scripture could be considered more significant for the study of the Messiah's reign than Psalm 2. Gauged statistically on the basis of New Testament quotations, allusions and verbal parallels, Psalm 2 is one of the most frequently referred to of all the Psalms.

This Psalm is quoted, either directly or indirectly, seven times in the New Testament (Matthew 3:17 [= Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22]; 17:5 [= Mark 9:7; Luke 9:35]; Acts 4:25–26; 13:33; Hebrews 1:5; 5:5; Revelation 2:27) and clearly alluded to at least another five times (John 1:49; Hebrews 1:2; Revelation 12:5; 19:15, 19)..."

- https://www.shasta.edu/uploads/1/6/7/0/16705804/psalm_2_reign_of_messiah.pdf
George A. Gunn, Professor of Bible and Theology, Shasta Bible College and Graduate School, Redding, California.

"This Psalm will be best understood if it be viewed as a four-fold picture. (In verses 1, 2, 3) the Nations are raging; (4 to 6) the Lord in heaven derides them; (7 to 9) the Son proclaims the decree; and (from 10 to end) advice is given to the kings to yield obedience to the Lord's anointed. This division is not only suggested by the sense, but is warranted by the poetic form of the Psalm, which naturally falls into four stanzas of three verses each..."

- <https://www.christianity.com/bible/commentary.php?com=spur&b=19&c=2> Charles Spurgeon

The Reign of the LORD's Anointed

- 6** “As for me, I have set my King
on Zion, my holy hill.”
- 7** I will tell of the decree:
The LORD said to me, “You are my Son;
today I have begotten you.
- 8** Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage,
and the ends of the earth your possession.
- 9** You shall break^[a] them with a rod of iron
and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.”
- 10** Now therefore, O kings, be wise;
be warned, O rulers of the earth.
- 11** Serve the LORD with fear,
and rejoice with trembling.
- 12** Kiss the Son,
lest he be angry, and you perish in the way,
for his wrath is quickly kindled.
Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

“The first psalm began on a note of happiness, with the sounds of prayer and meditation and the sight of a tree planted by a stream. Psalm 2 returns to the everyday world of politics and plots. These two psalms are artfully linked. They are bracketed by a pair of “Happy are...” sayings ...Neither psalm has a heading, and the pair form an introduction and kind of “readers guide” to understanding the psalms that follow...

To understand Psalm 2, one ought to remember that the psalm came out of a time when the form of government was monarchy. The psalm was designed for when a new king was being installed. Other nations were subject to the king in Jerusalem, and the kings of these nations were on hand for the event.

Imagine their mood.. These minor kings ruled over nations that were satellites of Jerusalem. This meant they had to pay taxes and furnish military troops when needed. They and their people wanted one thing: freedom...

The background for understanding this psalm is not the quiet time of meditation alone or in a synagogue but the noisy sort of conspiring and plotting that goes on in smoke-filled rooms of a political convention...

Verses 1-3 (*not included in the reading*) set the scene. Representatives of these nations are...gathering together in back rooms, planning a rebellion...not only against the king but against the Lord and his king! ...

With **verses 4-6**, (*verses 4-5 not included in the reading*) the scene shifts to where the Lord sits on a heavenly throne. The first thing we hear from the Lord in the book of Psalms is *laughter*... that laughter will turn to fury, and the Lord will inform these would be rebels that “ I have set *my* king on Zion, *my* holy hill...

With **verses 7-9**, the king himself speaks. He makes some extravagant claims ... (*that*) the king will rule over these nations indeed, his rule will extend over the entire earth.

The psalm comes to an end with some words of warning in **verses 10–12**, addressed to the plotting politicians. They would do well to “serve the Lord,” which in terms of practical politics,

means to be loyal to the king. Finally there is a “Happy are...” saying, which links up with the first words of Psalm 1 and concludes the double introduction to the Psalms.”

- [Psalms, Westminster Bible Companion](#) by James Limburg, pages 4-6. Westminster John Knox Press, Louisville, Kentucky 2000

2 Peter 1:16-21; RCL, the same reading (Romans 5:12-19; RCL, the same reading)

“So, in a world of viral half-truths and rumors, of spin-doctors and P.R. machines, how do you discover the truth? One helpful tool in that regard is the website “Snopes.com.” Snopes evaluates rumors, myths, and urban legends to see whether they’re true or not. Hundreds of thousands of people go to Snopes.com every day to check out whether what they’ve heard is true or false. The researchers of Snopes try to provide the real story behind the rumor. They dig around to find eyewitnesses and accurate data that can help clear up controversy.

Well, today, the Bible wants you to know the truth too; and we’re not just talking about day to day rumors or urban legends; we’re talking about the truth of the big questions of life, especially the truth of God at work in the world through Jesus Christ. With this word from Peter, he wants to be your “Snopes.com” for the things that ultimately matter in life!

Peter says, “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” (2 Peter 1:16).

For truth and life, we need to know The Way, The Truth, and the Life. And the Bible says that anyone looking for those things needs to look to Jesus Christ alone for the answers. But already during the first century, about 30 years after Jesus’ resurrection, some rumors and false teachings were threatening to go viral about Jesus. False teachers were trying to change the clear message of Jesus as the world’s Savior. Some people were adding to the message by requiring special secret knowledge, knowledge they invented. Others were making up stories to discredit Jesus so that they could gain a following and make lots of money...”

- <https://www.lutheranhour.org/sermon.asp?articleid=24388>
Rev. Dr. Gregory Seltz, Lutheran Hour Speaker

Greeting Verses 1-3

Confirm Your Calling and Election Verses 3-15

Christ's Glory and the Prophetic Word

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,^[a] 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. 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.

a. [2 Peter 1:17](#) *Or my Son, my (or the) Beloved*

“The transfiguration of the Lord Jesus as recorded here in 2 Peter is a message to us about the content and character of the coming king and his kingdom.

The writer of this letter, along with his sisters and brothers in Christ, is clearly facing opposition to the message that he has sought to faithfully proclaim. At the heart of the opposition are the objections to either the entirety or to aspects of the message about the return (*parousia*) of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It may well be the key to this opposition is not simply the timing of this turn (2 Peter 3:4), but also the preached character of the king and his kingdom. Sometimes we see that people would prefer Jesus to be some kind of tyrant king, rather than the king revealed in the transfiguration—a king of good, loving, and generous character.

We cannot be entirely sure about the precise content of the objections faced by the preachers and teachers, but within the whole context of 2 Peter we note that there seems to be a relationship between the *parousia* of Jesus rooted in the prophetic words we read in the Old Testament (2 Peter 1:19; 3:2) and an emphasis upon living lives of good character (2 Peter 1:5-7; 3:11).

The writer is adamant that his testimony is true and writes about his eyewitness (and ear-witness) account of what we know as the transfiguration...”

- https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=4373
[Edward Pillar](#) Minister, Evesham Baptist Church, Evesham, United Kingdom

+++++

It’s wonderful when you can see that a very important lesson finally took hold and sunk in for someone. If you are a teacher, then seeing a student avoid making the same mistakes all over again as a result of your instruction is so very rewarding. Some days those of us who teach wonder if we are doing any good at all—does anyone really listen or learn? And then the day comes when you realize people do learn and can change for the better as a result and that’s a mighty fine day!

Among the many interesting things going on in these verses from near the beginning of 2 Peter is precisely a revealing of just such learning. When Jesus had been on earth, Peter had for so long been focused on the wrong things. He wanted Jesus to wield political power, to wow the world with power and strength. When Jesus talked about sacrifice and death, Peter tried to dissuade Jesus. That was no way for a Messiah to talk! ...

And then there was that remarkable day up on a mountaintop when it was just Peter, James, and John. They had no idea why they climbed up to the peak in the first place but not long after they were there, it happened! They became eyewitnesses to one of the biggest light shows in history as Jesus became dazzlingly bright and glorious. Next thing you knew, Moses and Elijah showed up to have a conversation with Jesus (who knows just how the disciples recognized it was Moses and Elijah but somehow they knew). For Peter one very clear thought popped immediately into his head: “Now THIS is more like it! This is what I’ve been talking about: not death and

sacrifice and humility but spine-tinging, eye-popping power! Just imagine how the Romans would scurry away like scared children if they got a load of THIS version of Jesus!”

With holy radiance reflecting off his eyes, Peter made a proposal: “Lord, this is more like it! Let’s bottle this glory and set up three permanent shelters here so this can become our base of operations in re-taking the world for ourselves and for a New Israel!” Well, let’s admit Peter and the others were scared silly and awed beyond rational thought so we can give him a break for making this rather unhelpful suggestion. Still, it betrayed the kind of spectacle Peter actually had been waiting for all along.

But in the end, it turned out that the world’s greatest light and glory show was not about the light and the glory per se. After all, the divine voice of God the Father that came out of the cloud did not say—as you actually might expect—“This is my Beloved Son. LOOK at him and be amazed and afraid!” Nope. God says “This is my Beloved Son. LISTEN to him.”

Listen? This whole sight and sound spectacular had been about NOT the light show but about listening to something? Turns out, the outward razzle-dazzle was in service of making the disciples stop foisting their own agendas onto Jesus so they could just listen to HIS teachings about sacrifice and humility. Jesus had been saying right and true things all along but the disciples didn’t really hear him. They were not listening...

All of which brings us back to 2 Peter 1. This is a relatively rare passage in the New Testament in which something written in an Epistle harks back directly to a very specific Gospel narrative/event. Clearly Peter is remembering the Transfiguration here. But notice how he frames it: he almost blows clean past the razzle-dazzle glory light show and zeroes in instead on what the voice of Majestic Glory SAID from the cloud. Verse 18 is all about their having HEARD the voice from heaven. The fact that Jesus was shining brighter than 1,000 suns at the time is like an afterthought now in Peter’s memory. It is what God SAID that mattered because it pointed to what Jesus had been saying all along, too... “

- <https://cep.calvinseminary.edu/sermon-starters/last-epiphany-a/> Scott Hoezee

Matthew 17:1-9; RCL, the same reading (Matthew 4:1-11; RCL, the same reading)

“Epiphany is about light, about illumination, about revelation.

Across its Sundays we discover the significance of the Jesus whose birthday we just celebrated. We learn about how the babe born at Bethlehem is also the light of the world as well as about how we as his followers are also called to be light. We are drawn more deeply into an understanding of who and what the infant greeted by shepherds and magi is for us and for all the world and of our role to share what we have learned.

In this regard, I like to think of the Christmas message as a tightly, even intricately packaged Christmas gift which takes us the whole of Epiphany to unwrap and discover. Transfiguration Sunday draws the season to a close, and Matthew’s account provides the nearly perfect bookend to the story of Jesus’ Baptism that we read on the first Sunday of Epiphany...”

- https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=900
[David Lose](#) Senior Pastor, Mount Olivet Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, Minn.

“The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 17th Chapter”

The Transfiguration (verses 1-13)

17 And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. **2** And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light. **3** And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. **4** And Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah." **5** He was still speaking when, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son,^[a] with whom I am well pleased; listen to him." **6** When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces and were terrified. **7** But Jesus came and touched them, saying, **"Rise, and have no fear."** **8** And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only.

9 And as they were coming down the mountain, Jesus commanded them, "Tell no one the vision, until the Son of Man is raised from the dead." **10** *And the disciples asked him, "Then why do the scribes say that first Elijah must come?"* **11** *He answered, "Elijah does come, and he will restore all things. **12** But I tell you that Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him, but did to him whatever they pleased. So also the Son of Man will certainly suffer at their hands."* **13** *Then the disciples understood that he was speaking to them of John the Baptist.*

Jesus Heals a Boy with a Demon Verses 14-20

Matthew 17:20 *Some manuscripts insert verse 21: "But this kind never comes out except by prayer and fasting"*

Jesus Again Foretells Death, Resurrection Verses 22-23

The Temple Tax Verses 24 - 27

- a. ***Matthew 17:5*** *Or my Son, my (or the) Beloved*

"This is the Gospel of the Lord" "Praise to You, O Christ"

"The primary source is Mark--the parallels are Mark 9: 2-9 and Luke 9: 28-36. Both Matthew and Luke follow Mark fairly closely, but with some "tweaks" and changes. As in Mark, Matthew's account of the Transfiguration follows Jesus' remarks about suffering and cross.

Prior to that, Mark has Peter's confession--"You are the Messiah"--and his subsequent rebuke for not understanding the theology of the cross. Matthew has a similar scene, including a rebuke, but over-all makes Peter look much better than Mark does.

"And he was transformed before them and his face shone like the sun, and his garment became white as the light." Our vision is clouded. "Now we see through a glass darkly," said St. Paul. In the "transfiguration", however, the veil is pulled back for a glimpse of the universe's essential spiritual reality, the centrality of Jesus in the world of light.

Matthew tells us that this occurred "after six days" following Jesus' remarks about suffering and the way of the cross. In keeping with the Matthean theme of Jesus as the "new Moses," the "six days" recalls Moses being on the mountain six days in Ex 24: 16. "Six days" also recalls the beginning of creation, and anticipates the seventh day when God's work was completed and God rested. Here, "after six days," Jesus himself is the embodiment of the seventh day, the completion of God's work...

The "high mountain" also recalls Moses and Mt. Sinai, and correlates with several other instances in Matthew where the author locates important and momentous events with mountaintops, notably the Sermon on the Mount. In fact, whenever mountains are mentioned in scripture as a whole, they usually indicate a special revelation of some kind. Think "window into the divine" or "glimpse into heaven."

Moses and Elijah represent the law and the prophets, here witnessing to the fulfillment of law and prophets (5:17). Both Moses and Elijah had had ecstatic associations with mountains. Both, some had thought, had been taken directly to heaven.

Matthew had one small problem to resolve. People of the day--and since--believed that Elijah would be a forerunner of the Messiah. If he shows up here on the mountain, after the ministry of Jesus has already begun, how can he be said to have been a forerunner? Matthew will solve this problem by reminding his readers shortly (17: 12) that Elijah has already come in the person of John the Baptist.

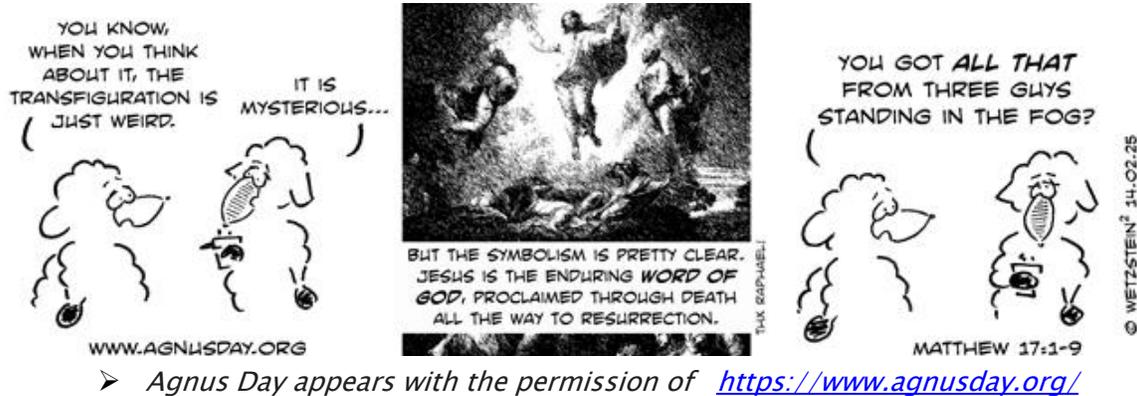
In Mark, Peter addresses Jesus as "rabbi." Matthew changes this to "Lord."...

The voice from heaven recalls the voice that spoke at Jesus' baptism, and, in Matthew, speaks exactly the same words with the addition of: "Hear him." The exhortation to "hear" recalls Deuteronomy 18:15 where Moses says that, some day, God would bring another prophet-like-Moses: "him shall you hear."

Hear him when he is shining in glory between Moses and Elijah, and hear him as well as he is hung between two criminals on the cross. Hear him when he talks of the way of the kingdom, and hear him when he says to do it...

In the transfiguration, the disciples, then and now, are given a glimpse of God's glorious victory, an assurance that the way of Jesus is indeed the true way, and that the "new world" as seen in the ministry of Jesus will indeed come to pass."

- https://www.progressiveinvolvement.com/progressive_involvement/2011/02/lectionary-blogging-matthew-17-1-9.html John Petty



➤ *Agnus Day appears with the permission of <https://www.agnusday.org/>*

*While researching a future hymn by John Mason Neale, author of “All Glory, Laud and Honor”, LBW, 442, I found this quote at www.hymnary.org - “In the following spring his health, which had always been delicate, completely broke down, and after five months of acute suffering he passed away on the Feast of the Transfiguration (Aug. 6), 1866”. Note the date for Transfiguration. **The following summary from Wikipedia gives the background for the changeable date for Transfiguration.**

“The **Feast of the Transfiguration** is celebrated by various Christian communities in honor of the transfiguration of Jesus. The origins of the feast are less than certain and may have derived from the dedication of three basilicas on Mount Tabor.^[1] The feast was present in various forms by the 9th century, and in the Western Church was made a universal feast on 6 August by Pope Callixtus III to commemorate the raising of the Siege of Belgrade (1456).^[2]

In the Syriac Orthodox, Indian Orthodox, Revised Julian calendars within Eastern Orthodoxy, Catholic, Old Catholic, and Anglican churches, the Feast of the Transfiguration is observed on 6 August. In some Lutheran traditions preceding the reforms to the liturgy in the 1970s, the 6th of August was also observed as the Feast of the Transfiguration...

In the Revised Common Lectionary, followed by Lutherans, United Methodists, Episcopalians, and others, the last Sunday in the Epiphany season (that immediately preceding Ash Wednesday) is also devoted to this event. In the Church of Sweden and the Church of Finland, however, the Feast is celebrated on the seventh Sunday after Trinity, the eighth Sunday after Pentecost.

In the Roman Catholic Church, the Transfiguration was once celebrated locally in various parts of the Catholic world on different days, including August 6, but was not universally recognized. In 1456, the Kingdom of Hungary repulsed an Ottoman invasion of the Balkans by breaking the Siege of Belgrade. News of the victory arrived in Rome on August 6.^[3] Given the importance to international politics at that time of such battles between Christian and Muslim nations, in celebration of the victory Pope Callixtus III elevated the Transfiguration to a Feast day to be celebrated in the entire Roman rite...”

➤ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feast_of_the_Transfiguration

*How are you doing with **The Matthew Challenge**, a handwritten copy of the book of Matthew? If you haven't started consider this as a Lenten Discipline – read a chapter a day and see where you are by Easter.*