

Jesus' Mountain Top Transfiguration—Part 1

Matthew 16:28-17:8

(cf. Mark 9:2-8; Luke 9:28-36)

Introduction:

Matt. 16:28 is a promise that Jesus fulfills in Matt. 17:1-8 (cf. Matt. 16:16, 21, 24; 24:8ff, 24)

Preterists believe that all Old Testament Prophecy is history that already occurred in the first century, so they believe that Matt. 16:28 is fulfilled when Jesus spiritually returned in 70 A.D.

I. Jesus' Transfiguration (v. 1-2)

- a. **six days later** links this event directly to Jesus' promise in 16:28
 - i. Luke counted both the day of Jesus' promise and the Transfiguration, while Matthew and Mark only counted the 6 days in between (cf. Mark 9:2; Luke 9:28)
- b. **Peter and James and John his brother** constitutes Jesus' most inner circle of disciples
 - i. They are listed first in 4 lists (cf. Matt. 10:2; Mark 3:16-17; Luke 6:14; Acts 1:13)
 - ii. They were alone with Jesus during 3 important events:
 1. Resurrecting Jairus' daughter
 2. Praying in the Garden of Gethsemane
 3. The Transfiguration (cf. Matt. 26:36-46; Mark 5:37ff; 13:3; 14:33; Luke 5:10; 8:51)
 - iii. They fulfilled the Old Testament requirement of "**two or three witnesses**" (cf. Deut. 19:15)
- c. **a high mountain** that traditionally is thought to be Mt. Tabor, but is more likely Mt. Hermon or Mt. Meron (but we aren't sure)
 - i. Purposefully draw a parallel to Moses on Mt. Sanai
 1. Both on mountain tops
 2. Both waited 6 days
 3. God appeared in a cloud of glory at both
 4. God spoke audibly at both
 5. Both Moses' and Jesus' faces shone
 6. Men were terrified at both

- d. **transfigured = metamorphoō** (μεταμορφόω) = "transform the essential nature of something" (cf. Mark 9:2; Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 13:8; John 1:9)

- i. For the first time since His Incarnation, Jesus allowed the glory of His Divine Nature to be seen by human eyes!

- e. **His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light**

- i. Unlike Moses whose face reflected the glory of God, Jesus literally radiated the glory of God from the inside out.

II. Moses' & Elijah's Presence (v. 3)

- a. Moses and Elijah were not in a soul sleep and they had kept conscious existence after death.
 - i. They also had some sort of "intermediate body"
- b. But the key here is what their Presence meant:
 - i. They were the embodiment of the Law (Moses) and the Prophets (Elijah) (cf. Matt. 5:17; Luke 24:27; Heb. 1:1)
 - ii. They were both great miracle workers giving honor to Jesus (cf. Ex. 7-12; 33:21-23; Deut. 34:10-11; 1 Kings 17:8-24; 2 Kings 2:11)
 - iii. Neither of the prophets faces nor clothes shone
 - iv. Both of these prophets had spoken to God and seen His glory on mountain tops
 - v. Both of them are the last two saints mentioned in the Old Testament (cf. Mal. 4:4-5)
- c. They discussed Jesus' **departure = exodos** (ἔξοδος) = "departure, exodus, death" (Luke 9:30-31; cf. 2 Peter 1:15-18; Heb. 11:22)
 - i. Proving that Jesus' crucifixion was not an accident or an afterthought; it was an accomplishment!