

The Transfiguration of Our Lord 2020
Matthew 17

Holy Spirit, Light Divine/Shine upon this heart of mine
Chase the shades of night away/Turn the darkness into day.
Let me see my Savior's face/Let me all His beauties trace.
Show those glorious truths to me/Which are only known to Thee

Matthew 17:1–9*And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. 2And he was transfigured before them,*

....

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."*

In the Name of Jesus.

When the Son of Man was raised from dead, His angels—and He!—directed the women and the apostles...to where?! Galilee! To another MOUNTAIN, Saint Matthew records:

¹⁶ Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. ¹⁷ And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. ¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them¹...

Let us pause there...

It must be fair to ask the eleven: 'So, what have we learned?' Saint Peter makes bold to say that the rest of us disciples—numbers 12 and up!—have faith 'equally treasured' by our God and Savior Jesus Christ. For them; for us; to make disciples of ALL NATIONS: 'What is the Spirit teaching us?'

¹ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Mt 28:16–20). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

Moses had written that the testimony of two or three witnesses settles things. Peter, James and John. That's three. We learn:

First of all, Peter never wanted to LEAVE the Mount where Jesus was all shiny and lit up! 'Lord, it is good that we are here!'

Unlike WE 'goyim,' Gentiles, the nations, these 2-3 KNEW well what it meant to have the greatest of the writing prophets—Moses—and greatest of those who left nothing written—Elijah—'talking with him.' When Israel insisted on having a king—so they could puff out their chests among the nations, the 'goyim'—people like US???!!!! 'Hey! Now WE'RE as appetizing as the people in Washington, D.C.!' (Now, there's a feather in your cap!)

Moses first, then Elijah—those two—defined 'king' for Israel. This counts for us too!

¹⁴ "When you come to the land that the LORD your God is giving you, and you possess it and dwell in it and then say, 'I will set a king over me, like all the nations that are around me,' ¹⁵ you may indeed set a king over you whom the LORD your God will choose. One from among your brothers you shall set as king over you. You may not put a foreigner over you, who is not your brother. ...

¹⁸ "And when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself in a book a copy of this law, approved by the Levitical priests. ¹⁹ And it shall be with him, and he shall read in it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God by keeping all the words of this law and these statutes, and doing them, ²⁰ that his heart may not be lifted up above his brothers, and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, either to the right hand or to the left, so that he may continue long in his kingdom, he and his children, in Israel. ²

There's a simple, little 'trick'—if I may—a little 'go-to' when you read instructions from the Lord through Moses—or Elijah!—to the people Israel. And that is to read what's suppose-ta go on; and then you say, 'Well, they ain't doin' THAT!'

² [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Dt 17:14–20). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

The best of them—David—was a violent, sinful man. And the rest were even worse. Folk like Elijah circled one king after another—PLEADING with them to learn and recite their catechism, morning, noon and night—and then to pray through the catechism—and then live from the catechism! (I try really hard to imagine their frustration, when people would rather do anything other than the simple catechism. Hmnn.)

Ah! But now—Two! Three! Witnesses! THEY see the greatest of prophets ‘talking with Him!’ Him Whom? The Son! Whom the Voice from the cloud called ‘well pleasing.’ And then added, ‘Listen to Him!’

What have we learned, my dear ones? ‘Listen to HIM!’

Oh! ‘Ain’t gonna do THAT!’

Right BEFORE the holy mountain:

²¹ From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.

²² And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you.” ²³ But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.” ³

Then, right AFTER the holy mountain:

²² As they were gathering in Galilee, Jesus said to them, “The Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men, ²³ and they will kill him, and he will be raised on the third day.” And they were greatly distressed. ⁴

³ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Mt 16:21–23). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

⁴ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Mt 17:22–23). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

O.K. Maybe they're STARTING to listen! But then,
ONE...MORE...TIME!

¹⁷ And as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside, and on the way he said to them, ¹⁸ “See, we are going up to Jerusalem. And the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death ¹⁹ and deliver him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified, and he will be raised on the third day.”

So, what have we learned?! No doubt, James and John made sure Saint Matthew recorded THIS—RIGHT..AFTER...THE...WORD OF...DOOM!....

²⁰ Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came up to him with her sons, and kneeling before him she asked him for something. ²¹ And he said to her, “What do you want?” She said to him, “Say that these two sons of mine are to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your kingdom.” ²² Jesus answered, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am to drink?” They said to him, “We are able.” ²³ He said to them, “You will drink my cup, but to sit at my right hand and at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father.” ²⁴ And when the ten heard it, they were indignant at the two brothers. ²⁵ But Jesus called them to him and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. ²⁶ It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, ²⁷ and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, ²⁸ even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” ⁵

O.K. NOW they got it; right?! Well....

³⁰ And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. ³¹ Then Jesus said to them, “You will all fall away because of me this night. For it is written, ‘I will strike the shepherd, and

⁵ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Mt 20:17–28). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

the sheep of the flock will be scattered.’³² But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee.”³³ Peter answered him, “Though they all fall away because of you, I will never fall away.”³⁴ Jesus said to him, “Truly, I tell you, this very night, before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times.”³⁵ Peter said to him, “Even if I must die with you, I will not deny you!” And all the disciples said the same.⁶

How long does THAT last?!

³⁶ Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, “Sit here, while I go over there and pray.”³⁷ And taking with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, he began to be sorrowful and troubled.³⁸ Then he said to them, “My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch with me.”³⁹ And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, “My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will.”⁴⁰ And he came to the disciples and found them sleeping. And he said to Peter, “So, could you not watch with me one hour?”⁴¹ Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”⁴² Again, for the second time, he went away and prayed, “My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done.”⁴³ And again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy.⁴⁴ So, leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words again.⁴⁵ Then he came to the disciples and said to them, “Sleep and take your rest later on. See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.”⁴⁶ Rise, let us be going; see, my betrayer is at hand.”⁷

And then:

⁶⁹ Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. And a servant girl came up to him and said, “You also were with Jesus the Galilean.”⁷⁰ But he denied it before them all, saying, “I do not know what you mean.”⁷¹ And when he went out to the entrance, another servant girl saw him, and she said to the bystanders, “This man was with Jesus of Nazareth.”⁷² And again he denied it with an oath: “I do not know the man.”⁷³ After a little while the bystanders

⁶ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Mt 26:30–35). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

⁷ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Mt 26:36–46). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

came up and said to Peter, “Certainly you too are one of them, for your accent betrays you.” ⁷⁴ Then he began to invoke a curse on himself and to swear, “I do not know the man.” And immediately the rooster crowed. ⁷⁵ And Peter remembered the saying of Jesus, “Before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times.” And he went out and wept bitterly. ⁸

What do Peter James and John ‘teach’ us goyim, Gentiles, nations?

NEVER...BE...SAD...AGAIN!

Until the End of the age, THIS KING is with those two, three; with Israel; with Galilee; with the nations; with you; even with me!

Authority, as King that no one ever chose. Hoisted up on the cross by the hands of no devotees. HAILED as King—by a crown of thorns and a sign of judgment; from the lips of violent men who beat Him, holy men who were terrified that what He was all about is REALLY what this is all about!

And then; now:

“Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. ⁶ He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. ⁷ Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. See, I have told you.” ⁸ So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. ⁹ And behold, Jesus met them and said, “Greetings!” And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him. ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me.” ⁹

Lutheran pastors are suppose-ta keep things private. But I found out a few things recently, about some of y’all, that I must address this morning. (Run for the doors!)

⁸ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Mt 26:69–75). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

⁹ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Mt 28:5–10). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

From little birds, the wind and whispers, I have found out:

That on Tuesday last week, someone in this room was shaken, then settled, to have a real 'go' at asking God to lead and guide them in the day. The spirit was indeed willing! But then came up the flesh. 'Flesh' means giving in to our lusts and appetites; AND, it means our religious bigotry that goes, 'Well, I may be a sinner! But I sure ain't....!' (King JESUS? Not even MOSES!)

A couple days later, two, maybe three of y'all committed to stop what WE call 'pet sins,' 'bad habits;' what Moses call 'cursed,' 'rebellion,' 'sin and damnable!'

There was some success. How much?

Prayer was an issue for eleven or twelve of y'all. How do I pray? What do I pray? My mind as it is, am I even praying? Still, you prayed. Still, y'all were surrounded by worries, doubts, guilt, and accusation.

This week, and today's readings: what have we learned?

Sounds to me like Christ is reigning just fine among this group gathered right here!

It is evident—to this pastor—that our Father in heaven is well pleased with you! In the midst of spirit versus flesh success and failure: as ONE, we call on Him as Father and as OURS!

The Holy Spirit cannot contain Himself in ONE Man—not even Christ, the King!

He has flown to the nations, even to you and me. Resting where He rested FIRST: on the One Who knew no sin but insisted on being baptized with those confessing what you and I confess.

My dear ones, learn this:

Follow Moses. Trust Christ.

Live, work, repent, improve—all in line with the Ten Commandments—as if life and death is hanging in the balance. Moses is no jokester. Elijah played no games with sin. And we had better listen to the Law; or else!

But rise from pretend-dead every morning—rise BAPTIZED! At the authority of the One Who came—Who COMES—NOT to call the perfect, but people like Me. You too!

LIVE among commands and guilt and promises kept partially, or hardly; LIVE as one Whom Such a King rules. ‘Well, at least He’s got ME to forgive today; even if no one else!’

Eat and drink His Body and Blood—together; 2, 3, 11, more or less. That’s disciples; that’s Galilee; that’s Jesus, risen from the dead and excited forever about
PEOPLE...WHO...STILL...HAVE...EVERYTHING...TO...LEARN!

Then, my dear ones, all you gotta do is wait for the End. Wait as One with Whom GOD-IS.

What have we learned? ‘We are in the Kingdom—what a KING!—at the authority of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit!’ Amen.