

The Transfiguration of Christ Mt. 17:1-13

Introduction:

The account of the transfiguration is given in three of the four gospel accounts (Mk. 9:2-13 and Lk. 9:27-26). Peter also refers to it in II Pet. 1:16-21. The transfiguration was very significant to them when it occurred, and it is also very significant to us today.

I. The setting of the story.

- A. This event takes place about 8 months before the death of Jesus.
- B. Peter has just confessed Jesus as the Christ (16:16).
 - 1. Peter knows how great Christ is.
- C. It is called a vision in Mt. 17:9, but we can see by the definition of this Greek term that it was a real event.
 - 1. Strong's: "something gazed at, i.e. a spectacle (especially supernatural)"
 - a. This word is translated as "sight" or "vision."
 - b. Acts 7:31 – Moses saw a "vision" when he saw the burning bush.
 - 2. This is definitely a true story in the life of Christ.
 - 3. In fact, in the parallel accounts in Mark 9:2-13 and Luke 9:27-36 both indicate that it was a true event.
- D. Peter, James, and John are taken to the mountain by Jesus.
 - 1. This is the "inner circle" of the friends of Jesus.
 - 2. They were the only ones who went with Jesus when He raised the daughter of Jairus from the dead (Mt. 9:18-26).
 - 3. They were taken further into the garden when Jesus was praying before His betrayal and death (Mt. 26:36-46).

II. The actual event of the transfiguration and its significance.

- A. Notice the actual transfiguration, along with some comparisons between the three texts.
 - 1. Peter, James and John were with Jesus.
 - 2. Lk. 9:29 – Went up to the mountain to pray.
 - 3. Mk. 9:3 – Clothes were whiter than any launderer on earth can whiten them.
 - 4. All accounts place Moses and Elijah with Jesus.
 - 5. Luke tells us that they spoke of the decease of Jesus.
 - 6. God says "This is my beloved Son. Hear Him" in each account.
 - 7. However, Matthew gives more detail (17:5).
- B. Notice the significance of the transfiguration.
 - 1. Significance of the brightness of the clothes of Jesus.
 - a. Any time some one spoke to God they began to shine.
 - b. Moses face shone when he received the Law.
 - c. Ex. 34:30 - So when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him.

2. Significance of Moses and Elijah.
 - a. Moses and Elijah were two of the greatest people in the Old Testament.
 - b. Moses led the Children of Israel out of the land of Egypt.
 - 1) He caused the Red Sea to open for them to cross (Ex. 15).
 - 2) He let the children of Israel up to the land of Canaan.
 - 3) He is responsible for the Old Law being delivered to the people.
 - 4) It is Moses that the Jews claim to follow (John 9:28-29).
 - c. Elijah was the greatest prophet in the Old Testament
 - 1) He challenged the prophets of Baal (I Kgs. 18).
 - 2) He was taken into Heaven by a whirlwind (II Kgs. 2).
3. Significance of the statement of God (17:5).
 - a. This statement was made just after Peter offered to build a tabernacle for Moses, Elijah, and Jesus.
 - 1) Peter just had to say something, even if it was wrong.
 - 2) Also, this statement equates Moses, Elijah, and Jesus.
 - b. God lets it be known that Jesus is greater than Moses and Elijah.
 - c. This is not the first time that a similar statement has been made by God.
 - 1) Mt. 3:17 - And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."
 - 2) It was prophesied that we would have to hear Jesus.
 - a) Deut. 18:15, 18-19 - The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear, {18} I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. {19} And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him.
 - b) Matt 12:18 - Behold, My Servant whom I have chosen, my Beloved in whom My soul is well pleased! I will put My Spirit upon Him, and He will declare justice to the Gentiles.

III. The importance of the events of the transfiguration to us today.

- A. Peter gives us the main lesson in II Pet. 1:16-21.
 1. We are to follow His word, and His words alone.
- B. The most important lesson that we can learn today is that we are not to follow any other, except Christ.
 1. We do not follow anyone, including Mohammad or any one else who goes against Christianity.
 2. Acts 4:12 - Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

Conclusion: