

Discussion Guide to **Matthew 17:1-13**

**The Transfiguration**

After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. 2 There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. 3 Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus.

4 Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.”

5 While he was still speaking, a bright cloud covered them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!”

6 When the disciples heard this, they fell facedown to the ground, terrified. 7 But Jesus came and touched them. “Get up,” he said. “Don’t be afraid.” 8 When they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus.

9 As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus instructed them, “Don’t tell anyone what you have seen, until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead.”

10 The disciples asked him, “Why then do the teachers of the law say that Elijah must come first?” 11 Jesus replied, “To be sure, Elijah comes and will restore all things. 12 But I tell you, Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him, but have done to him everything they wished. In the same way the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands.” 13 Then the disciples understood that he was talking to them about John the Baptist.

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Before you begin your discussion of these verses, have a short time of prayer…asking the Spirit of Christ to guide your discussion, give you insight, and grant you courage in your next steps of following Jesus.

Feel free to use these words to open your prayer:

*Gracious Father, Son and Holy Spirit—reveal to us truths about your reality hidden in plain sight all around us. Give us ears to hear from you as we open your Word and discuss with one another how you are speaking to us and inviting us to follow you more confidently and courageously. In Jesus’ name, Amen.*

**Intro:**

In light of the puzzling verse that ends chapter 16, the opening verses of chapter 17 portray a grand vision of Jesus. Could this be what Jesus was referring to about seeing the “Son of Man coming in his kingdom” in 16:28? Could be. If not, this is at least a sneak peek into what Jesus is talking about there—and a sneak peek of what we all will experience IRL one day.

**\*1. Using your imagination, how would you describe the probable “atmosphere” of the incident recorded in verses 1-8?**

**\*2. In verse 3, what do you know about Moses and Elijah that explains (or strongly hints at) the significance of their presence here?**

**3. Look (and listen!) closely to the words God speaks in verse 5: “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!”**

a. What would you say is the significance of each phrase?

b. How do you respond to the words this ‘voice from the cloud’ speaks? What comes to mind for *you* as God the Father says, “Listen to him!”?

**4. What do you think terrified the disciples in verse 6? How do you understand Jesus’s response to his disciples here?**

**5. What, if anything, did you take to heart from the sermon preached on this passage?**

**\*6. From God’s point of view, what was the purpose of Jesus’ transfiguration?**

**\*7. Look at 2 Peter 1:16-18… What seem to be the most important things Peter learned from being a witness to this transfiguration of Jesus?**

**8. What do you think might change about your life—if even only in your heart—if you were to see the glory and power of Jesus Christ firsthand, in person, tomorrow?**

Close in prayer for each other,

*asking for words of blessing to each of us from God the Father—*

*asking for the gracious touch of Jesus the Son on our lives—*

*asking for the love of God to be poured out into our hearts by the Holy Spirit—*

*that we might listen anew to Jesus, that we might take heart and not be afraid. Amen.*