

## Witnessed by Disciples

### **God's Word:**

*Matthew 17:1-12*

### **Key Verse:**

*"And He was transfigured before them; and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light."*

*-Matthew 17:2*



### **Breaking It Down:**



After Peter's confession in Matthew 16:16, scripture states "from that time on Jesus began to explain to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that He must be killed and on the third day be raised to life." (Matthew 16:21 NIV)

Peter, who loved Christ, took Him aside and scolded Him saying, "Never Lord, This will never happen to you." Jesus responded to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are standing in my way. You do not have in mind the things of God. Instead, you are thinking about human things." (Matthew 16:22-23 NIRV) Oh, how true this was for some, for they had not fully understood Jesus' true purpose here on earth. Instead, they were focusing on personal prestige and success at Jesus' expense.

After six days, Jesus took Peter, James and John -- Jesus' most intimate circle -- up a high mountain. There they were witnesses to the most awesome testimony of Jesus being God's Messiah. Scripture states that Jesus was transfigured before them. His face shined like the sun and His clothes were white as light.

Now let me ask you: What was the real miracle they saw? Was it Jesus' transformation, or was it that Jesus was keeping His glory from showing completely

while He was on earth? Don't forget that Jesus took the form of a human, while leaving behind His glory to come down to earth and make the ultimate sacrifice. (See Philippians 2:6-8.)

Before their very eyes, Moses and Elijah appeared and talked with Jesus. Moses, the giver of the law and greatest leader Israel had, was there, talking to Jesus. With them also was Elijah, the prophet who was taken up to heaven by God in a chariot of fire. The two people who represent the law and the prophets appeared there with Jesus. What do you think they were speaking about?

“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.’” (Matthew 17:7 NIV) It was not a bad idea that Peter had. Here comes the coolest part. God the Father heard what Peter said and a cloud enveloped them while a voice spoke to them saying, “This is My beloved son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!” (verse 5) God interrupts because Peter has not understood that Jesus is not at the same level as these two great men. Jesus is on a stage all by Himself. He is greater than Moses and Elijah put together. He is Messiah, the promised one, the everlasting, perfect lamb who would free all humanity from Satan's grasp. They are so terrified and don't know what to do, they fall face down to the ground. Jesus touches them and tells them to get up, and when they do, no one else is around but Jesus.



### **Living It:**

In the days that Jesus walked the earth, many witnessed His miracles and deeds. Even so, the Jewish teachers themselves were not convinced about Jesus' authority and origin. For it was thought that many of the miracles done here on earth were counterfeits of Satan. This is the reason why in Matthew chapter 16 the Pharisees and Sadducees come to Jesus asking for a sign from heaven. Maybe they wanted Jesus to command fire to come down from heaven on all those Roman soldiers who were oppressing them. Or, maybe they wanted to request the angels of heaven to come and destroy all of Israel's enemies. It is so incredible when we realize that these two groups of people were always disagreeing about something, but not when it came to Jesus. Both groups felt threatened by His teachings and wanted Him out of the picture at all costs.



The Pharisees and Sadducees had read scripture, came to a conclusion, and expected God to fulfill it exactly the way they had figured it out. They had taken the simplicity of the Kingdom of God and elaborated a 10-step program of how to recognize the true Messiah. God could have made Messiah's coming complex, for that wouldn't have been difficult for Him. Just think about our bodies and nature and all of the created things. But guess what? Not everybody understands. Then He sends His Son in human form, but still that's too simple for all to understand.

Jesus told the leaders of those days: "a wicked and adulterous generation looks for a miraculous sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah." (Matthew 16:4 NIV) There are many people out there asking for signs from God. Their attitude is, if you make this happen I will believe in you, or if you get me out of a jam, then I'll know you truly exist. I hope you are not included among these people. But, if you are, you must seek guidance from the Holy Spirit to convict you of who Jesus truly is. As we read in scripture, many saw Jesus' miracles at least once and didn't believe in Him. Still, those that believed saw Him perform miracles in and around them always, for He died and rose but He never left them. "And lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:20b)



### **Questions:**

1. What was the disciples' reaction to hearing God the Father's voice?
2. If you were to hear God the father's voice, what do you think your reaction would be?
3. Who was Jesus referring to when He stated that Elijah has already come?
4. Why do you think it was important that everyone on the mountain heard God the Father say that He loved His Son?



### **Do It!**

When the disciples were on the mountain, they heard God the Father say that He loved His Son, and they should listen to Jesus. God the Father is pleased with us when we obey His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Remember in your daily activities what is pleasing to God and continue to practice doing these things. Pray and ask God to reveal to you the things in your life that are not pleasing to God and then ask Him to help you remove them from your daily activities.

