


RELEARNING ANCIENT BIBLE STORIES IN A BRAND-NEW WAY

EPIC TALES

TOO





***Transfiguration
of Jesus***

Matthew 17

Luke 9

Six days later Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John his brother, and led them up on a high mountain by themselves.

Matthew 17:1

(Earlier) Jesus said, “Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom.” Matthew 16:28

Mount Hermon

**Jesus
“led them
up on a
high
mountain”**

**Matthew
17:1**



Land of Israel during the time of Jesus



Mount Hermon has elevation of 9,200 feet above sea level

A few days earlier

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He was asking His disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” And they said, “Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.”

He said to them, “But **who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” And Jesus said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.” Matthew 16:13-17**

Life's Most Important Question

**At some point in every person's life,
Jesus will ask...**

“Who do you say that I am?”



Why is knowing the true identity of Jesus so important?

- **If you are going to give your life to a cause, it must be something or someone you really know and trust and believe in**
- **Living a life of sacrifice and devotion to the cause of Jesus is impossible to do in human strength, so spiritual transformation is a must**

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

Matthew 17:2

**μεταμορφόω [*metamorphoo*] to change into
another form, to transform, to transfigure**

- Enhanced Strong's Lexicon



“His face **shone like the sun” Matthew 17:2**

But whenever Moses went in before the Lord to speak with Him, he would take off the veil until he came out; and whenever he came out and spoke to the sons of Israel what he had been commanded, the sons of Israel would see the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses’ face **shone. So Moses would replace the veil over his face until he went in to speak with Him.**

Exodus 34:34-35



And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him. Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, I will make three tabernacles [shelters] here, one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” Matthew 17:3-4

A reference to the booths used to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot), when the Israelites dwelt in booths for 7 days (Leviticus 23:34–42). Peter was expressing a wish to stay in that place.

“And while He was praying, the appearance of His face became different, and His clothing became white and gleaming. And behold, two men were talking with Him; and they were Moses and Elijah, who, appearing in glory, were speaking of His departure [ἔξοδος] which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.” Luke 9:29-31

- **Moses represents the Torah**
- **Elijah represents the Prophets**
- **They demonstrate that conscious existence follows this earth**
- **Of all topics, Jesus discussed with them His coming death**

English word “exodus” (Greek word ἔξοδος) literally means “departure” and is translated “death” in some versions. While Yeshua was indeed to “die” and then, after His resurrection, “depart” into heaven, the use of the word here, after the appearance of Moses, brings to mind everything connected with the Jewish Exodus from Egypt. The word “exodos” appears in the New Testament in only two other places—Hebrews 11:22, where it specifically refers to the Exodus from Egypt; and 2 Peter 1:15, where it means Peter’s own death.

Moses and Elijah spoke about His departure (exodon, “going out or away”) which He was about to bring to fulfillment at Jerusalem. “Departure” referred to Jesus’ leaving the world through which He would bring salvation—much as Yahweh had brought deliverance to Israel in its Exodus (departure) from Egypt. This departure was to be fulfilled in Jerusalem. From this point on, Jesus indicated several times that He was headed toward Jerusalem (Luke 9:51, 53; 13:33; 17:11; 18:31). Jesus did not want His miracles widely publicized at that time, for the fulfillment had to be at Jerusalem. - Bible Knowledge Commentary

Why were Moses and Elijah there?

The bodies of Moses and Elijah were never found. God buried Moses' body (Deuteronomy 34:5–6), and Elijah did not die but was taken up to heaven (2 Kings 2:11–12). -Bible Knowledge Commentary

Moses died approximately 1,400 years before this event took place, and Elijah had been taken up to heaven (raptured) about 850 years earlier.

The characters in the story

As Jesus discussed His coming death, the other characters suggest the categories of people who will be in Jesus' coming kingdom.

- Apostles Peter, James and John represented people who will be present in physical bodies.**
- Moses represents saved individuals who have died or will die.**
- Elijah represents saved individuals who will not experience death, but will be caught up to heaven alive (1 Thessalonians 4:17).**

These three groups will be present when Christ institutes His kingdom on earth. The Savior will be in His glory as He was at the transfiguration, and the kingdom will take place on earth, as this did.

The disciples were thus enjoying a foretaste of the kingdom as the Lord promised in Matthew 16:28. - Bible Knowledge Commentary

While he was still speaking, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the cloud said, “This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!” Matthew 17:5

After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and lighting on Him, and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.” Matthew 3:16-17

And as these were leaving Him, Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three tabernacles: one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah”—**not realizing what he was saying**. While he was saying this, a cloud formed and began to overshadow them; and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. Then a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is My Son, My Chosen One; listen to Him!” And when the voice had spoken, **Jesus was found alone**. And they kept silent, and reported to no one in those days any of the things which they had seen. Luke 9:33–36

***How did God the Father answer
Life's Most Important Question?***

“Who do you say that I am?”

**“This is My beloved Son,
with whom I am well-pleased”**

Matthew 17:5

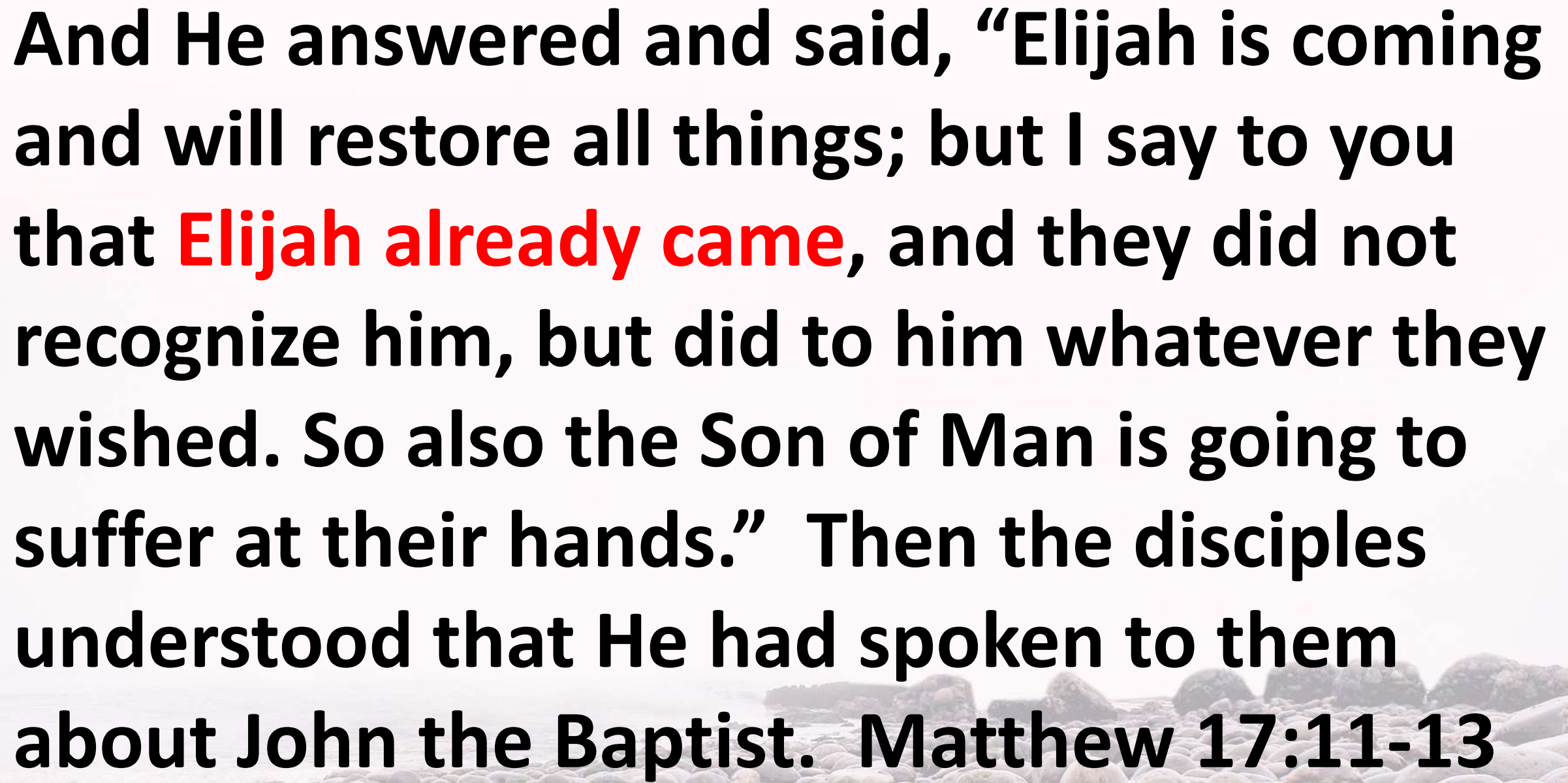
When the disciples heard this, they fell face down to the ground and were terrified. And Jesus came to them and touched them and said, “Get up, and do not be afraid.” And lifting up their eyes, they saw no one except Jesus Himself alone. Matthew 17:6-8

***What if we lived so spiritually focused?**

As they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, “Tell the vision to no one **until the Son of Man has risen from the dead.” And His disciples asked Him, “Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?”**
Matthew 17:9-10

- **The Lord said, “Behold, I am going to send you **Elijah the prophet** before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord.” Malachi 4:5**

And He answered and said, “Elijah is coming and will restore all things; but I say to you that **Elijah already came, and they did not recognize him, but did to him whatever they wished. So also the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands.” Then the disciples understood that He had spoken to them about John the Baptist. Matthew 17:11-13**



John the Baptizer was the one coming after Elijah

- An angel said to Zacharias (father of John)...

“It is he who will go as a forerunner before Him in the spirit and power of **Elijah**, to turn the hearts of the fathers back to the children, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous, so as to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.” Luke 1:17

- Jesus said, “And if you are willing to accept it, John [the Baptizer] himself is **Elijah** who was to come.”

Matthew 11:14

Why did Jesus tell the 3 disciples not to share this story right away?

As this small group returned from the mountain, Jesus told the three not to tell anyone what they had witnessed until after He had risen from the dead. Some people had already tried to make Jesus King by force (John 6:15), and if news of this event had become commonly known, perhaps others would have attempted to make Jesus King.

The disciples never forgot this event...

And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1:14

For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to Him by the Majestic Glory, “This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased” — and we ourselves heard this utterance made from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.

2 Peter 1:17-18

Jesus chose Peter, James, and John as witnesses to this event. These three had been with Jesus in the home of Jairus (Luke 8:51), and they would go with Him into the Garden of Gethsemane before His crucifixion (Matthew 26:37).

G. Campbell Morgan stated that these three occasions all had to do with death. Jesus was teaching these three men that He was victor over death (He raised Jairus' daughter) and surrendered to death (in the Garden). The Transfiguration taught them that He was glorified in death.

Each of the three disciples would have a need for this important truth. James would be the first of the disciples to die (Acts 12:1–2). Apostle John would be the last of the disciples to die, but he would go through severe persecution on the Isle of Patmos (Revelation 1:9). Peter would experience many occasions of suffering and would, in the end, give his life for Christ (John 21:15–19; 2 Peter 1:12-14).

This event was an extraordinary affirmation of Jesus as more than a merely human Messiah.

- His changed appearance (transfiguration), in bright light and a bright cloud, shows that He is not just God's spokesman, but different in Himself from other prophets.
- He is linked with Moses and Elijah, two of the greatest of those through whom God saved and spoke to His people in the past (even though both of them, like Jesus, suffered rejection by God's people). Both were popularly expected to return to inaugurate the Messianic age, so that their appearance here proclaims Jesus as the Messiah.
- As at Jesus' baptism, God Himself affirms Jesus as His Son. If that is so, His disciples must listen to Him, however daunting they may have found His words in Matthew 16:21.

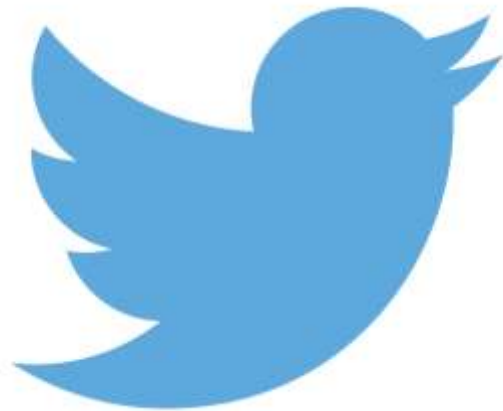
What is God saying to us today?

About Messiah Jesus...

“listen to Him!”

Matthew 17:5





**Whose
voice are
we
listening
to?**



**God the Father said of Jesus,
“listen to Him.”**

What did Jesus actually say?



“Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.”

Matthew 4:19

“Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.” Matthew 5:16

“But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.” Matthew 6:33

“So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

Matthew 6:34

“In everything, therefore, treat people the same way you want them to treat you, for this is the Law and the Prophets.” Matthew 7:12

“Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28

“ ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’” Matthew 22:37-39

“Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted.” Matthew 23:12

**God the Father said of Jesus,
“listen to Him.”**

How would life be different...

- If the people in our world listened to Jesus?**
- If the people in our churches listened to Jesus?**



μεταμορφώω *metamorphoo*

- And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. Romans 12:2
- But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit. 2 Corinthians 3:18

**Today, followers of Jesus have
been given two assignments...**

- 1. Know your answer to the question,
“Who do you say that I am?”**
- 2. “Listen to Him”**

