

Notes on the Greek New Testament
Day 25 – January 25th – Matthew 16:13-17:8

Works frequently referenced in these notes on Matthew

- Hagner, Donald A *Word Biblical Commentary Vols.33a & 33b: Matthew 1-13 & Matthew 14-28*, Word Books, Dallas, 1993 & 1995
- Morris, Leon *The Gospel According to Matthew*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1992

Verses 13-20

Cf. Mark 8:27-30; Luke 9:18-21 also John 6:67-71.
 "As it is in Mark and Luke, this passage in Matthew is clearly the climax of the first main part of the Gospel, devoted to the description of the Galilean ministry of Jesus (i.e., 4:17-16:20). It presents in a paradigmatic form an unequivocal and definitive confession of Jesus as the promised Messiah. This is the only adequate conclusion to the preceding, lengthy description of the deeds and words of Jesus. And without question, much in the preceding accounts has been anticipating this powerful confession. Thus we have repeatedly heard the question asked concerning the identity of the one who could speak and act in this unique way (cf. 8:27, 'What sort of man is this?'; 12:23, 'Can this be the Son of David?'). There have been intimations of his identity throughout, such as his authority (7:29; 9:8), his power to heal (cf. 15:31), and his uniqueness (9:33, 'Never was anything like this seen in Israel'). The demons know his identity as the 'Son of God' (8:29). And even the disciples in the excitement of the moment have already exclaimed 'Truly you are the Son of God' (14:33). But now in a private, peaceful, meditative setting, Jesus for the first time elicits from the disciples, represented by Peter, the reasoned and careful conclusion that he is indeed the Christ, the Messiah of promise."
 Hagner.

Verse 13

Ἐλθὼν δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἰς τὰ μέρη Καισαρείας τῆς Φιλίππου ἠρώτα τοὺς μαθητὰς αὐτοῦ λέγων· Τίνα λέγουσιν οἱ ἄνθρωποι εἶναι τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου;

μερος, ους n part

Cf. 2:22.

ἔρωταω ask, request, beg, urge

Many MSS add με before (and some after) λεγουσιν thus making it quite clear that Jesus is speaking about himself and not another.

εἶναι Verb, pres infin εἶμι

Verse 14

οἱ δὲ εἶπαν· Οἱ μὲν Ἰωάννην τὸν βαπτιστὴν, ἄλλοι δὲ Ἠλίαν, ἕτεροι δὲ Ἰερεμίαν ἢ ἓνα τῶν προφητῶν.

εἶπαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl λεγω

The aorist of λεγω has two forms, the more common being εἶπον (see v.16), the less common (as here) εἶπα.

βαπτιστης, ου m Baptist, baptiser

Cf. 14:2.

ἄλλος, η, ο another, other

Ἠλιας, ου m Elijah

Cf. Mal 3:1; 4:5-6.

ἕτερος, α, ον other, another, different

ἢ οἱ

εἰς, μια, ἐν gen ἑνος, μιας, ἑνος one

Verse 15

λέγει αὐτοῖς· Ὑμεῖς δὲ τίνα με λέγετε εἶναι;

Note the emphatic ὑμεῖς.

Verse 16

ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ Σίμων Πέτρος εἶπεν· Σὺ εἶ ὁ χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ζῶντος.

ἀποκριθεὶς Verb, aor pass dep ptc, m nom s ἀποκρῖνομαι answer, reply

ζῶω live, be alive

Cf. 2 Sam 7:14; Ps 2:6-8, 12.

"It may not be easy to understand precisely what Peter thought the Anointed One would be and do (even with his insight that he was God's Son), but he was certainly giving voice to an exalted view of Jesus. He could not have ascribed a higher place to him. His words bring out the essential being of our Lord in the most comprehensive expression in the Gospels."
 Leon Morris.

Verse 17

ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτῷ· Μακάριος εἶ, Σίμων Βαριωνᾶ, ὅτι σὰρξ καὶ αἷμα οὐκ ἀπεκάλυψέν σοι ἀλλ' ὁ πατήρ μου ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς·

μακάριος, α, ον blessed, fortunate

"a word that signifies godly felicity" Leon Morris.

Βαριωνᾶ and Βαριωνας, α m Bar-Jona
σαρξ, σαρκος f flesh, human nature
αἷμα, ατος f blood

Cf. Gal 1:16.

ἀποκαλύπτω reveal, disclose

"It is important to realize that this knowledge is not due to human cleverness or even profound spiritual insight. Jesus says that it is the product of divine revelation (cf. 11:25-27)." Leon Morris.

Verse 18

καὶ γὰρ δέ σοι λέγω ὅτι σὺ εἶ Πέτρος, καὶ ἐπὶ ταύτῃ τῇ πέτρᾳ οἰκοδομήσω μου τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, καὶ πύλαι ᾄδου οὐ κατισχύσουσιν αὐτῆς·

καὶ γὰρ a compound word = καὶ ἐγώ
πετρα, ας f rock, solid rock
οἰκοδομεῶ build, build up
ἐκκλησία, ας f congregation, church

Davies-Allison comment that this verse is "among the most controversial in all of Scripture." What is 'this rock' on which Jesus builds his church? Morris comments, "the statement that the rock is Peter is true only as we keep in mind what the apostle has said; it is not Peter simply as Peter but Peter who has confessed Jesus as the Messiah who is the church's foundation on which the church is to be built." Hagner comments, "The point of the assertion is that Jesus, i.e., the risen Jesus, will build his new community in the first instance through the labour of the apostles (cf. Eph 2:20), and Peter has been designated as the leader of the apostles (cf. the early chapters of the book of Acts). The metaphorical use of 'build' (οἰκοδομησῶ) is appropriate to a community conceived of as a spiritual 'house' or 'temple' (cf. 'house of Israel' and note the description of the church as 'God's building' in 1 Cor 3:9; cf. Eph 2:19-21)."

πύλη, ης f gate, door
ᾄδης, ου m Hades, the world of the dead,
death

Cf. Isa 38:10 and the essentially synonymous 'gate of death' in Job 38:17; Pss 9:13; 107:18.

κατισχύω have strength, overcome,
prevail

"Jesus is ... saying that the gates of Hades are not strong enough to prevail against the church; that the church will never die. There may also be the thought that though Hades is strong and the dead do not come back from it, it is not strong enough to contain Jesus and it is not strong enough to contain the Christian dead. Whether we can understand all the detailed imagery or not, it is clear that Jesus is giving his followers the assurance that nothing in this world or the next can overthrow the church." Leon Morris.

Verse 19

δώσω σοι τὰς κλεῖδας τῆς βασιλείας τῶν οὐρανῶν, καὶ ὃ ἐὰν δήσης ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἔσται δεδεμένον ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, καὶ ὃ ἐὰν λύσης ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἔσται λελυμένον ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς.

δώσω Verb, fut act indic, 1 s διδομι
κλεις, ειδος f key

Cf. Rev 1:18. The Pharisees shut people out of the kingdom, cf. 23:13. "Peter, by contrast, was to open the way. We see him doing this in Acts 2 and 3 where his preaching brought many into the kingdom, and in Acts 10, where he opened the way for the Gentile Cornelius to come in. We should see another aspect of the use of the keys in Acts 8:20-23, where he is excluding an impenitent sinner." Leon Morris. See also 18:18 where the 'keys' are given to *all* the disciples.

ὃς ἐὰν whoever, whatever

Morris, noting the neuter 'whatever' rather than 'whoever', suggests that "while the keys point to admission and exclusion ... the right to 'bind' and 'loose' refers primarily to the regulation of conduct." So also Hagner who says it "refers to the allowing and disallowing of certain conduct, based on an interpretation of the commandments of the Torah, and thus it concerns the issue of whether or not one is in proper relationship to the will of God (contrast the reference to the Pharisees' misuse of their authority [note implied keys!] in 23:13). In Matthew, Jesus is the true interpreter of Torah. His disciples will pass on that interpretation and extend it."

δήσης Verb, aor act subj, 2 s δεῶ bind, tie
γῆ, γης f earth
ἔσται Verb, fut indic, 2 s εἶμι
δεδεμένον Verb, perf pass ptc, m acc s δεῶ
λύσης Verb, aor act subj, 2 s λυῶ loose,
untie, allow

Chamberlain remarks: "This is wrongly translated 'shall be bound' and 'shall be loosed,' seeming to make Jesus teach that the apostles' acts will determine the policies of heaven. They should be translated 'shall have been bound' and 'shall have been loosed.' This makes the apostles' acts a matter of inspiration or heavenly guidance."
Hagner, while noting the tenses, comments, "The judgment of Peter, and by implication that of the church, reflects what is in accord with what is settled in heaven as the fully determined will of God... Whether this is already decreed in the will of God or subsequently ratified as the will of God is not the issue here. Peter's authority, in short, is such that he speaks on behalf of heaven (i.e., God)."

Verse 20

τότε διεστειλατο τοῖς μαθηταῖς ἵνα μηδενὶ εἴπωσιν ὅτι αὐτός ἐστιν ὁ χριστός.

τοτε then, at that time

διεστειλατο Verb, aor midd indic, 3 s

διαστελλομαι order, give strict orders

The only occurrence of this verb in Matthew.

μηδεις, μηδεμα, μηδεν no one, nothing
εἴπωσιν Verb, aor act subj, 3 pl λεγω

"To have proclaimed Jesus' messiahship would have been to invite misunderstanding." Leon Morris.

Verses 21-23

Cf. Mark 8:31-33; Luke 9:22. "This is the first of three predictions (all of which are found also in Mark and Luke) of the suffering and death of Jesus (cf. 17:22-23; 20:17-19; cf. 26:2)." Hagner.

Verse 21

Ἀπὸ τότε ἤρξατο ὁ Ἰησοῦς δεικνύειν τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ ὅτι δεῖ αὐτὸν εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα ἀπελθεῖν καὶ πολλὰ παθεῖν ἀπὸ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων καὶ ἀρχιερέων καὶ γραμματέων καὶ ἀποκτανθῆναι καὶ τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ ἐγερθῆναι.

τοτε see v.20

Ἀπὸ τότε signifies "that a major turning point in the narrative has been reached (cf. 4:17)." Hagner.

ἀρχω rule; midd begin

Implies sustained teaching, of which the following few words are only a summary.

The important witnesses κ^* and B^* (as well as sa^{mss} mae bo) add Χριστός. The addition is clearly caused by the preceding verse.

δεικνω show (more commonly in middle deponent δεικνυμι)

μαθητης, ου m see 15:32

δει impersonal verb it is necessary, must

Implies a divine necessity

παθεῖν Verb, aor act infin πασχω suffer

πρεσβυτερος, α, ον elder

ἀρχιερευς, εως m high priest, member of high priestly family

γραμματευς, εως m scribe

These groups together formed the Sanhedrin, the highest Jewish court. "The elders were those whose age, experience, and piety accorded to them the responsibilities of leadership. The chief priests were the intermediate hierarchy between the single high priest, the presiding officer of the Sanhedrin (see 26:62-68), and the priesthood generally (for the chief priests and the Sanhedrin, see 26:59). The scribes were the professional Torah scholars (cf. 2:4 and see *Comment* on 13:52). The three are mentioned together again only in 27:41 (though in a different order, i.e., 2, 3, 1), which records the partial fulfilment of the present prediction (cf. 26:57, where the scribes and elders are mentioned together with the high priest, Caiaphas). Most commonly linked in the passion narrative itself are the high priests [sic] and elders (cf. 26:3, 47; 27:1, 3, 12, 20; 28:11-12; outside the passion narrative, cf. 21:23). The chief priests and scribes are linked only in 2:4; in the third passion prediction, 20:18; and in 21:15." Hagner.

ἀποκτανθηναι Verb, aor pass infin ἀποκτεινω
kill, put to death

τριτος, η, ον third

ἐγειρω raise

The Father is most commonly viewed as the active party in the resurrection.

Verse 22

καὶ προσλαβόμενος αὐτὸν ὁ Πέτρος ἤρξατο ἐπιτιμᾶν αὐτῷ λέγων, Ἰλεως σοι, κύριε· οὐ μὴ ἔσται σοι τοῦτο.

προσλαβόμενος Verb, aor midd dep ptc, m
nom s προσλαμβανομαι take aside

ἐπιτιμαω command, rebuke

Perhaps it was precisely because Jesus had spoken of Peter as having a position of leadership among the twelve that he felt it right to take Jesus on one side to speak with him. "Jesus' statement was fully incomprehensible to Peter. In no way did the messianic identity of Jesus fit the programme now laid out by Jesus. To Peter and the other disciples what Jesus now began to say to them seemed flatly contradictory of their confession of him as Messiah (cf. 1 Cor 1:23) and his unqualified acceptance of that confession." Hagner.

ἰλεως, ων merciful, ἰλεως σοι May God be merciful to you! or God forbid!

ἔσται Verb, fut indic, 2 s εἰμι

Note the emphatic double negative – "this will never happen to you."

Verse 23

ὁ δὲ στραφεὶς εἶπεν τῷ Πέτρῳ· Ὑπάγε ὀπίσω μου, Σατανᾶ· σκάνδαλον εἶ ἐμοῦ, ὅτι οὐ φρονεῖς τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ ἀλλὰ τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων.

στραφεὶς Verb, aor pass ptc, m nom s
στρεφω intrans (mostly in pass) turn, turn around

ὑπάγω go, depart

ὀπίσω after, behind, follow, away from
Σατανας, α the Adversary, Satan

"We are to understand that Jesus' death was so central to God's plan that to try to avoid it was to do the work of none less than the evil one himself." Leon Morris. Hagner comments, "Peter was going *against* the will of God and had unwittingly taken a position identical with that of Satan, who early on in Matthew's narrative had attempted to sidetrack Jesus from his Father's will (see 4:1-11)."

σκάνδαλον, ου n that which causes sin/offence, obstacle

Morris suggests that it is best to understand this word here in its original sense of 'a trap'. Hagner, however, comments, "The command to get 'behind me' (ὀπίσω μου) refers to the clearing of Jesus' path by the removal of an obstacle (and perhaps hints at the proper place for a disciple following Jesus; cf. esp. v 24; and 4:19; 10:38)."

φρονεω think, have in mind

Cf. Col 3:2.

Verses 24-28

Cf. Mark 8:34-9:1; Luke 9:23-27.

Verse 24

Τότε ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ· Εἴ τις θέλει ὀπίσω μου ἐλθεῖν, ἀπαρνησάσθω ἑαυτὸν καὶ ἀράτω τὸν σταυρὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀκολουθεῖτω μοι.

θελω wish, will

ἐλθεῖν Verb, aor act infin ἐρχομαι

ἀπαρνησάσθω Verb, aor midd dep imperat, 3 s ἀπαρνεομαι disown, renounce claim to

ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον him/her/itself

ἀράτω Verb, aor act imperat, 3 s αἶρω take, take up

σταυρος, ου m cross

This demand is too often trivialised by being applied to the minor inconveniences of life. "Jesus is speaking about a death to a whole way of life; he was talking about the ultimate in self-sacrifice, a very death to selfishness and all forms of self-seeking." Morris.

ἀκολουθεω follow, accompany

Note the present tense suggesting ongoing practice.

Verse 25

ὃς γὰρ ἐὰν θέλῃ τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ σῶσαι ἀπολέσει αὐτήν· ὃς δ' ἂν ἀπολέσῃ τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ εὐρήσει αὐτήν.

ὃς ἐαν or ὃς ἂν whoever, whatever

ψυχη, ης f self, life, 'soul'

σωζω save, rescue

The sense here is 'preserve.'

ἀπολέσει Verb, fut act indic, 3 s ἀπολλυμι
destroy, kill, lose

ἕνεκα (ἕνεκεν and εἵνεκεν) prep with gen
because of, for the sake of

"He is not referring to someone who has such a poor self-esteem that his life crumbles. He is referring to the person who *loses his life for my sake*, the one who puts the service of God's Messiah before all else, who counts all well lost for Christ's sake and who consequently devotes all his time to serving Christ and other people for Christ's sake." Leon Morris.

Of εὐρήσει αὐτήν Hagner comments, "Although it is difficult to articulate the concept of 'finding one's life' it is not very different from experiencing the well-being meant by the word 'salvation' (cf. *shalom*). The dying to self may or may not involve a literal martyr's death, but the person who dies to self in discipleship to Jesus (cf. 5:11; 10:18, 39; 19:29) will discover life in this fundamental sense. In sharp contrast, those persons who try selfishly to guard their existence will not know the full commitment of discipleship and will tragically end up losing the very thing they tried to protect (cf. Luke 12:33; John 12:25; Rev 12:11)."

Verse 26

τί γὰρ ὠφεληθήσεται ἄνθρωπος ἐὰν τὸν κόσμον ὅλον κερδήσῃ τὴν δὲ ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ζημιωθῆ; ἢ τί δώσει ἄνθρωπος ἀντάλλαγμα τῆς ψυχῆς αὐτοῦ;

A second reason (note the repetition of γὰρ) is now introduced.

ὠφελω gain, profit, benefit
ἐὰν if, even if, though
κοσμος, ου m world
ὅλος, η, ον whole, all, entire

"The reference to the possibility of gaining 'the whole world,' i.e., its wealth, is reminiscent of 4:8, where Satan offers Jesus 'all of the kingdoms of the world and their glory' if he will only worship him – i.e., if Jesus would look out for himself and avoid the path of obedience (suffering and death) God had marked out for him. It is hard to imagine a more powerful polemic against wealth that squeezes out discipleship (cf. 6:19-21)." Hagner.

κερδήσῃ Verb, aor act subj κερδαίνω gain, win
ζημιωθῆ Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s ζημιόω (only in pass) lose, suffer loss

Note, perhaps, the contrast with εὐρήσει in the previous verse.

ἢ οἱ
δώσει Verb, fut act indic, 3 s δίδωμι
ἀντάλλαγμα, τος n something offered in exchange

Found only here and in the Markan parallel.

Verse 27

μέλλει γὰρ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἔρχεσθαι ἐν τῇ δόξῃ τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ μετὰ τῶν ἀγγέλων αὐτοῦ, καὶ τότε ἀποδώσει ἕκαστῳ κατὰ τὴν πράξιν αὐτοῦ.

μελλω (before an infin) be going, intend, be destined

μελλω may be used "to denote an action that necessarily follows a divine decree, *is destined, must, will certainly.*" (BAGD)

δοξα, ης f glory

ἀγγέλων αὐτοῦ Hagner comments that, "The αὐτοῦ ... in the present reference to angels probably refers to the Son of Man (e.g., 13:41; 24:31, 2 Thess 1:7; so too perhaps 25:31; for OT background, cf. Zech 14:5)."

τοτε see v.20

ἀποδίδωμι give, give back, repay

ἐκαστος, η, ον each, every

πράξις, εως f what one does, deed, action

"These words, which are cited elsewhere in the NT (Rom 2:6; cf. allusions in 2 Cor 11:15; 2 Tim 4:14; 1 Peter 1:17; Rev 2:23; 18:6; 20:12-13; 22:12), are in nearly verbal agreement with Ps 61:13 (LXX) [Eng. 62:12], where only the number of the verb (second person) differs and the final phrase is *κατὰ τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ...* The identical words, however, are found also in Prov 24:12 (but where the verb is in the present tense, ἀποδίδωσιν... The concept is a common one in the OT (cf. Jer 17:10) and had by the NT era (as the above references show) become nearly proverbial in character... After his death and resurrection, Jesus will return in glorious manner as the apocalyptic Judge of humanity (cf. 7:22-23; 13:41-42; cf. 25:31-46). In light of this, one's decisions concerning one's ψυχή, 'very being,' become not only crucially important but also urgent." Hagner.

Verse 28

ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι εἰσὶν τινες τῶν ὧδε ἐστῶτων οἵτινες οὐ μὴ γεύσονται θανάτου ἕως ἂν ἴδωσιν τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐρχόμενον ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ αὐτοῦ.

ὧδε adv here, in this place

ἐστῶτων Verb, perf act ptc, gen pl ἵστημι stand

οἵτινες Pronoun, m nom pl ὅστις, ἥτις, ὅτι who, which, whoever, whichever

γεύσονται Verb, fut midd dep indic, 3 s γενομαι taste, experience

θάνατος, ου m death

ἕως until

ἴδωσιν Verb, aor act subj, 3 pl ὁραω see, observe, recognise

Cf. 10:23 and the notes on that verse.

Leon Morris comments, "Some interpreters have understood this to mean that the end of the age will come about during the lifetime of some of Jesus' hearers. But it seems unlikely that Jesus would mean this; he consistently refused to set dates, and in any case he said explicitly that he did not know when the end would come (24:36)." Morris then considers several alternative interpretations before concluding, "There is a good deal to be said for a reference to the events linked by the death and resurrection of Jesus and the coming of the Spirit that led to the preaching of the gospel and the growth of the church. That was the decisive coming, of permanent significance to the church."

Ridderbos reminds us that prophecy "often compresses the distinct phases of the future into a unity." He further points out that "whenever He (i.e. Jesus) told the disciples about His exaltation, He spoke *either* of His resurrection *or* of His coming reign." He holds that "coming in his kingdom" is a compressed way of referring to the whole exaltation and that it was not until after the resurrection that the disciples would see that there were two parts to this coming of the kingdom. They would see the early manifestation in the resurrection and what followed immediately, though the final fulfilment of the words is yet future. Some such understanding of Jesus' words is surely required."

Hagner, having outlined various approaches to this verse suggests that Jesus may have been referring to the "the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. From our perspective, because of the typological interconnection, the latter may be regarded as an anticipation of the final judgment. Given the unity of eschatology, the theological point remains justifiable; i.e., to see the destruction of Jerusalem was in a sense to see the coming of the Son of Man in his kingdom."

Verses 1-8

Cf. Mark 9:2-8; Luke 9:28-39. "All three synoptic Gospels preserve the sequence of (1) the confession at Caesarea Philippi, (2) the announcement of Jesus' suffering and death (together with the subsequent saying about true discipleship), and (3) the transfiguration. Matthew and Mark include immediately after the present pericope (4) a repetition of the prophecy about the passion of the Son of Man. The logic of this sequence is clear. Jesus elicits the confession concerning his messiahship but then proceeds to instruct the disciples in the unexpected way of this strange Messiah and those who would follow him. It is for the purpose of confirming the truth of Jesus' identity as Messiah, the Son of God – despite the shocking and apparently contradictory revelation of his imminent suffering and death – that the inner circle of disciples is allowed a glimpse of the true glory of Jesus in his transfiguration before their eyes." Hagner.

Verse 1

Καὶ μεθ' ἡμέρας ἕξ παραλαμβάνει ὁ Ἰησοῦς τὸν Πέτρον καὶ Ἰάκωβον καὶ Ἰωάννην τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἀναφέρει αὐτοὺς εἰς ὄρος ὑψηλὸν κατ' ἰδίαν.

ἕξ six

A deliberate and careful link with the preceding events. Hagner suggests that there may here be an allusion to Exod 24:12-18, "where Moses sees the glory of Yahweh on the mountain and on the seventh day hears the voice of God. Jesus took with him the inner circle of disciples, Peter, James and John (cf. Exod 24:1,9, where Moses takes three close co-workers with him, Aaron, Nadab and Abihu)."

παραλαβανω take, take along

ἀναφερω lead or take up

ὄρος, ος n mountain, hill

ὑψηλος, η, ον high

ἰδιος, α, ον one's own; κατ' ἰδιαν privately

Verse 2

καὶ μετεμορφώθη ἔμπροσθεν αὐτῶν, καὶ ἔλαμψεν τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ ὡς ὁ ἥλιος, τὰ δὲ ἱμάτια αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο λευκὰ ὡς τὸ φῶς.

μετεμορφωθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s

μεταμορφοομαι be changed in form, be transformed

ἐμπροσθεν before, in front

λαμπω shine, give light

προσωπον, ου n face, appearance

ἥλιος, ου m the sun

ἱματιον, ου n garment, clothing, robe

ἐγένετο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s γινομαι

λευκος, η, ον white, shining
 φως, φωτος n light

Cf. 13:43. "What is promised to the righteous in the new aeon ... happens already to Jesus in this world, not as one among many others, but as the bearer of a unique call." Behm. Cf. also Rom 12:2 and 2 Cor 3:18.

Verse 3

και ιδου ωφθη αυτοις Μωυσης και Ηλιας
 συλλαλουντες μετ' αυτοου.

ωφθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s οραω see,
 observe; pass. appear

Ηλιας, ου m Elijah

συλλαλεω speak with, talk with

"The two represent a way of saying that the whole of the Old Testament revelation found its fulfilment in Jesus." Morris. Hagner comments, "Both Moses and Elijah were associated with Mount Sinai, the mountain of revelation (for Elijah, 'Horeb, the mount of God' [1 Kings 19:8])."

Verse 4

αποκριθεις δε ο Πετρος ειπεν τω Ιησου·
 Κυριε, καλον εστιν ημας ωδε ειναι· ει θελεις,
 ποιησω ωδε τρεις σκηνας, σοι μίαν και
 Μωυσεϊ μίαν και Ηλια μίαν.

αποκριθεις Verb, aor pass dep ptc, m nom s
 αποκρινομαι answer, reply, say

On Peter's state of mind, cf. Mark 9:6.

καλος, η, ον good, fine, precious
 ωδε adv here, in this place
 ειναι Verb, pres infin ειμι
 θελω wish, will

τρεις, τρια gen τριων dat τρισιν three
 σκηνη, ης f tent, temporary shelter

"Clearly Peter was envisaging a lengthy stay on the mountain for the heavenly visitors and wished to provide suitable lodging places." Morris. Hagner, however, suggests that the proposed little huts of branches were "not for providing the hospitality of overnight lodging or to prolong the experience (which after all was terrifying) but possibly as a kind of honorary gesture, a commemoration of this remarkable event, i.e., three shrines or holy places, similar to the OT tent shrine itself, which would symbolise the remarkable communion between heaven and earth represented by these three figures. (Cf. the 'tent of meeting,' where Yahweh spoke with Moses [Exod 33:7-11; Numb 12:5-9].) God in this instance, however, would speak to the disciples without a tent of meeting."

εις, μια, εν gen ενος, μιας, ενος one

Verse 5

ετι αυτοου λαλουντος ιδου νεφελη φωτεινη
 επεσκιασεν αυτοου, και ιδου φωνη εκ της
 νεφελης λεγουσα· Ουτος εστιν ο υιος μου ο
 αγαπητος, εν ω ευδοκησα· ακουετε αυτοου.

ετι still, yet

λαλεω speak, talk

νεφελη, ης f cloud

φωτεινος, η, ον full of light

επισκιαζω overshadow, fall upon

'covered them' would here be better than 'overshadowed them' since it was a bright cloud – NIV has 'enveloped them'.

"This cloud symbolises the shekinah glory, the very presence of God (cf. Exod 40:35; *Odes Sol* 35:1, where the same noun and verb *επισκιαζειν* ... [cf. Exod 19:18-19], are used to describe the presence of Yahweh in the tent-shrine). The future coming of the Son of Man will also be accompanied by clouds (cf. 16:27; 24:30; 26:64; for the expectation of a return of the Shekinah glory in the eschatological era, see 2 Macc 2:8; cf. Isa 4:5)." Hagner. Cf. also Rev 1:7.

αγαπητος, η, ον beloved

ευδοκew be pleased, take delight/pleasure
 in

Cf. 3:17. "At the very least it indicates warm approval and makes it clear that the Father is setting his seal of approval on the Son in his earthly mission." Morris. Hagner comments, "If the second clause contains an allusion to the suffering Servant of Isaiah (as argued there [3:17]), this now takes on enormously heightened significance, given the preceding announcement by Jesus of his suffering and death. Jesus is the Messiah in whom God delights (Isa 42:1) but also the suffering Servant upon whom 'the Lord has laid the iniquity of us all' (Isa 53:6). The divine voice thus identifies Jesus as the unique Son of God who possesses unique authority. Moses and Elijah are but his attendants."

On 'listen to him' cf. Deut 18:15

Verse 6

και ακουσαντες οι μαθηται επεσαν επι
 προσωπον αυτων και εφοβηθησαν σφοδρα.

μαθητης, ου m disciple

επεσαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl πιπτω fall,
 fall down

προσωπον, ου n see v.2

φοβεομαι fear, be afraid (of)

σφοδρα very much, very, greatly

Cf. 27:54.

Verse 7

καὶ προσῆλθεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ ἀνάμενος αὐτῶν
εἶπεν· Ἐγέρθητε καὶ μὴ φοβεῖσθε.

προσερχομαι come or go to
ἀνάμενος Verb, aor midd ptc, m nom s ἀπτω
midd. take hold of, touch
ἐγέρθητε Verb, aor pass imperat, 2 pl ἐγειρω
raise

Cf. Rev 1:17.

Verse 8

ἐπάραντες δὲ τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς αὐτῶν οὐδένα
εἶδον εἰ μὴ τὸν Ἰησοῦν μόνον.

ἐπάραντες Verb, aor act ptc, m nom pl
ἐπαιρω raise, lift up
οὐδεις, οὐδεμα, οὐδεν no one, nothing
εἶδον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3pl ὄραω see
v.3
μονος, η, ον i) adj only, alone; ii) adv μονον
only, alone

"The final verse serves not only to bring the account of the experience to an end but to emphasise the exclusive focus upon Jesus." Hagner.

Postscript

Having quoted G B Caird who wrote, "The whole history of Christian ethics could be written as a commentary on the transfiguration," Hagner concludes, "The present-day church needs once again to discover the absolute authority of the teaching of Jesus."