

Matthew 16:20-17:13

For discussion: May 23

The two passages we will discuss here fit together to teach us about the Son of Man's kingdom. It is easy to treat the chapter break as a separation between the events, but the events described fit directly together.

It certainly appears that Jesus' takes three disciples to see something of his glory, as indicated in 16:27,28.

The parallel passages for this section of Matthew are:

Mark 8:31-38, 9:2-13

Luke 9:22-25, 9:28-36

Getting Started

- Share a time when you were impacted by the teaching of God's word.
- Can you describe a time when you heard deeply discouraging news that ultimately turned out to be a great blessing for you?

Matthew 16:21-26

- This is the first time (at least in Matthew) that Jesus spoke so frankly of his coming torture and execution at the hands of the religious leaders. Think how discouraging this would be to the disciples?
- Why do you think Peter reacted as he did? Do you think Peter had an understandable expectation based on his proclamation in the previous passage?
- How does Jesus' explanation of the cost of discipleship help Peter and the others understand what is to follow?

Matthew 16:27 - 17:13

Although Matthew says *after* 6 days, Luke says *about* 8 days. This can be reasonably understood as Luke including the beginning and ending days, and Matthew just counting the intervening days. For instance, there are 6 verses between verse 1 and 8 (that is:2,3,4,5,6,7). However verses 1-8 span 8 verses.

Recall that the feast of tabernacles was a time when the Jews would remember the exodus and how the people lived in tents (tabernacles) as they wandered 40 years in the wilderness.

- Why Elijah and Moses?
- Why would Peter think to build tabernacles, as in the feast of tabernacles?
- Why were the disciples puzzled that Elijah had not come? Do you find it surprising that the old testament prophets referred to John the Baptist and Elijah?
- To whom is the message directed? What should **we** take from it?

The Overall Passage

- The disciples were allowed to see something of the kingdom of God, as well as the cost that Jesus would pay to bring it about on earth. Take a moment to thoughtfully consider: Peter's revelation of who Jesus was, Jesus explanation of the price he would pay, the disciples confusion about what the Messiah must suffer, the cost and reward to us, and the phenomenal glory shown in the transfiguration.

What are your thoughts and feelings as you contemplate this? How can we capture the awe of this event?