

## **Glory Revealed**

February 15, 2026

### Exodus 24:12-18

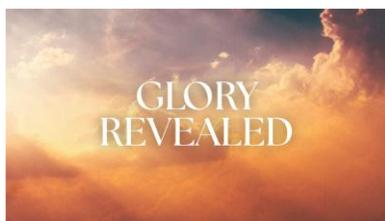
<sup>12</sup> The Lord said to Moses, “Come up to me on the mountain and wait there. I’ll give you the stone tablets with the instructions and the commandments that I’ve written in order to teach them.” <sup>13</sup> So Moses and his assistant Joshua got up, and Moses went up God’s mountain. <sup>14</sup> Moses had said to the elders, “Wait for us here until we come back to you. Aaron and Hur will be here with you. Whoever has a legal dispute may go to them.” <sup>15</sup> Then Moses went up the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain. <sup>16</sup> The Lord’s glorious presence settled on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days. On the seventh day the Lord called to Moses from the cloud. <sup>17</sup> To the Israelites, the Lord’s glorious presence looked like a blazing fire on top of the mountain. <sup>18</sup> Moses entered the cloud and went up the mountain. Moses stayed on the mountain for forty days and forty nights.

### Matthew 17:1-13

<sup>1</sup> Six days later Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, and brought them to the top of a very high mountain. <sup>2</sup> He was transformed in front of them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as light. <sup>3</sup> Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Jesus. <sup>4</sup> Peter reacted to all of this by saying to Jesus, “Lord, it’s good that we’re here. If you want, I’ll make three shrines: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.”

<sup>5</sup> While he was still speaking, look, a bright cloud overshadowed them. A voice from the cloud said, “This is my Son whom I dearly love. I am very pleased with him. Listen to him!” <sup>6</sup> Hearing this, the disciples fell on their faces, filled with awe. <sup>7</sup> But Jesus came and touched them. “Get up,” he said. “Don’t be afraid.” <sup>8</sup> When they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus.

<sup>9</sup>As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus commanded them, “Don’t tell anybody about the vision until the Human One is raised from the dead.”<sup>10</sup> The disciples asked, “Then why do the legal experts say that Elijah must first come?”<sup>11</sup> Jesus responded, “Elijah does come first and will restore all things.<sup>12</sup> In fact, I tell you that Elijah has already come, and they didn’t know him. But they did to him whatever they wanted. In the same way the Human One is also going to suffer at their hands.”<sup>13</sup> Then the disciples realized he was telling them about John the Baptist.



Welcome to Transfiguration Sunday! Today we read Matthew’s account of when Jesus was transfigured on the mountain top and we read the account of Moses going up the mountain to receive what we know as the Ten Commandments. Both the transfiguration and the giving of the commandments are ways that God’s glory is revealed to the world. As we prepare to allow God’s glory to be revealed to us as we worship this morning, let us pray...

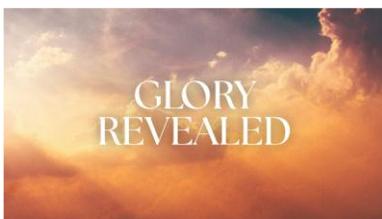
*Light of God, you shine upon us, and we worship you. The rising dawn of your mercy envelops us and awakens our hearts. The gentle glow of your forgiveness brings life to our spirit like flowers in spring. The radiance of your Word lights our path and leads our way... And Christ, the pillar of fire that goes before us, leads us always toward love and justice. By your grace, we listen, and by your love, we seek to follow. As we seek to hear and obey today, I ask that you, O God, would bless the words of my mouth and the meditation of all of our hearts. You are our rock and our redeemer, our Christ and our king. Amen.*



Can anyone tell me what the common theme is in these scenes?...

What other situations would you include in these pictures?... And, how many of you felt a negative or adverse reaction when you saw these pictures or thought of other situations where we are forced

to wait? Why the negative or adverse reactions? Because we do not like waiting. For many, we could even say that we hate to wait. While patience may be a virtue, it is not one that we cling to particularly well. Waiting is not generally something we choose to do. Usually, it is something that happens to us or that is forced upon us. In our journey of faith, unfortunately, at times God asks us or maybe even requires that we wait.



As we turn to our Exodus 24 text for today, there is a lot of waiting.

There is nothing rushed about this encounter with God. We see the same thing in our Matthew 17 text. Maybe there is something for us

to learn here. Chapter 24 begins with Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and the 70 elders of Israel drawing near to the mountain to worship God and to enter into a covenant relationship with God. Moses builds an altar and a sacred pillar with twelve stones. Moses read the covenant scroll and the people responded, *“Everything that the Lord has said we will do, and we will obey.”* They offered sacrifices to God to seal the covenant and then Moses sprinkled the people with the blood of the covenant as a sign of their commitment.

It is with this context that we turn to our Old Testament passage for today. In verse 12 God says to Moses, *“Come up to me on the mountain and wait there. I’ll give you the stone tablets with the instructions and the commandments that I’ve written in order to teach them.”* There is that word again: “wait.” Come on over here... and wait.

***“Come up to me on the mountain and wait there. I’ll give you the stone tablets with the instructions and the commandments that I’ve written in order to teach them.”***

- Exodus 24:12

Do you think that it helped Moses knowing what he was waiting for? Sometimes that helps me when I am waiting. If God said, “Come over here and wait, I’m going to do this amazing thing for you,” I think I could wait for quite a while. Knowing that God is about to give him instructions and commandments to teach the people, Moses probably has a high degree of patience as he goes up the mountain.

Before heading up the mountain, though, Moses says to the people of God, “*Wait for us here until we come back to you.*” Has



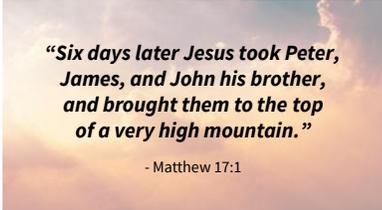
anyone said that to you? Or... just wait a minute, I’ll be right back. Or... hold on for a bit – I’ll get back to you soon. Well, as we read on, we see that Moses goes up the mountain – part way, most of the way, some of the way – and he waits for six days. On the seventh day, God calls to Moses from the cloud. Moses goes on up the mountain and enters the cloud that God has spoken from. Wait here. I’ll be back. Finally, on day seven, God called out to Moses.

Imagine for a moment what it would have been like to watch this from the desert floor. Your leader heads up the mountain that is covered in clouds. And you wait. You wait a day... Then a second day... And then you wait a third day... That slides into days four and five... How would you be doing on day six and seven?... Remember, you do not know if or when God has called or begun to speak to Moses. Our passage closes with this: “*Moses stayed on the mountain for forty days and forty nights.*” Maybe that week of waiting wasn’t so bad after all.

Chapters 25 through 31 are filled with God giving Moses instructions. Moses receives directions for building the tabernacle and all in it and instructions for making the priest’s clothing and for proper worship. Moses gets instructions on how to keep the Sabbath.

For forty days and forty nights Moses hears from God. These instructions will shape and form how the people are to worship the Lord their God. On about day 39, the people get tired of waiting. In chapter 42 they get Aaron to build them a golden calf to worship. Waiting is hard.

Please turn with me to Matthew 17. Our gospel lesson begins with these words: *“Six days later Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, and brought them to the top of a very high mountain.”* Six days later... Wonder what happened six days before? We should wonder. Six days ago Jesus had asked the disciples who they thought he was. It was Peter who declared that Jesus is *“the Christ, the Son of the living God.”* Gold star for Peter, right?



***“Six days later Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, and brought them to the top of a very high mountain.”***

- Matthew 17:1

But as Jesus then went on to explain that he would be killed and would rise on the third day, it was then that Peter said, ‘Not on my watch.’ It was then that Jesus turned to Peter and said, *“Get behind me, Satan...”* Peter has lived with that stinging comment for six days. Peter has lived with Jesus telling him that he is hindering the kingdom of God – for six days. For six whole days, Peter has probably been getting sideways glances from the other eleven disciples, who look at him and are grateful that it wasn’t them who opened their mouths. This must have been six hard, long days for Peter. But then Jesus calls out for him. By name, Jesus invites Peter, James, and John to tag along up the mountain.

Up the mountain they go – the inner circle or the remedial class, depending on where you are in the gospels. Once there, Jesus is transformed or transfigured before them. One moment it is just Jesus, their friend, and the next moment *“His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as light.”* Jesus’ divinity, his glory, is revealed before their eyes.



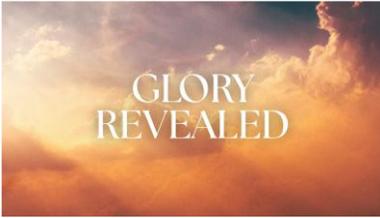
Words escape the disciples' minds as Moses and Elijah appear and begin to converse with Jesus. This 1560 painting by Titian depicts the scene as imagined by the artist. Peter is the first to speak. This should not be a surprise. He recognizes that it is good that they are there, witnessing the majesty and glory of God. Not waiting at all, Peter offers to build them each a shrine – one for Jesus and one each for Elijah and Moses. It seems almost mid-sentence that a bright cloud appears, and another voice begins to speak. God speaks from the cloud, declaring, *“This is my Son whom I dearly love. I am very pleased with him. Listen to him!”* This voice that clearly did not come from Jesus or Elijah or Moses leads Peter, James, and John to fall in worship of the Christ.

***“This is my Son whom I dearly love.  
I am very pleased with him.  
Listen to him!”***

- Matthew 17:5b

If you were Peter, or even James or John for that matter, would this magnificent scene and heavenly affirmation be worth waiting for? I think it was worth the wait for the disciples. They were filled with awe. That’s pretty special. Later, in the writing of his second letter, Peter remembers this day. In chapter 1 Peter recalls the majesty and the magnificent glory that he experienced on that mountain top. He remembers hearing the voice, repeating these words from God. Peter then encourages his readers to *“pay attention to it, just as you would a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.”* Pay attention, Peter says, until Jesus comes to reign and shine in your heart.

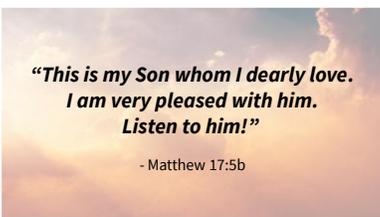
Almost as suddenly as it began, it is over. Jesus touches them and they rise. He offers words of encouragement. Next, Jesus and Peter, James, and John begin to descend the mountain. Jesus tells them not to tell anyone about this until he is raised from the dead. I think they appreciated the reprieve – time to ponder, to think, to make sense of what just happened.



Glory has just been revealed before their eyes. They will have to wait a bit to tell the story. Sometimes it is good to have to wait, to sit with something, to really wrap your head around the event and what it means to you.

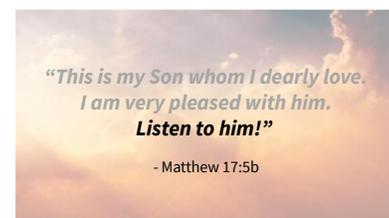
While still hiking down the mountain, with just Jesus by their side, these three disciples try to make sense of what they just witnessed. They are trying to reconcile it with what they know from their faith. Jesus tells them that, yes, the prophets were correct. Elijah did return to proceed the coming of the Messiah. The religious leaders of their day just did not recognize it. Peter, James, and John then realize that Jesus is talking about John the Baptist, the one who did come into the wilderness, calling people to change their hearts and lives.

We do the same, don't we? In those moments when we have felt like we were standing in the presence of the divine, when it has felt like God has drawn near, we want to make sense of it. If it was a good experience, we want to preserve the moment, to hold on to the memory, to keep that feeling. For Peter, James, and John, this was a pivotal moment in their faith. Seeing the transfigured Christ, hearing God speak, it was transformational for them too. Reading about the transfiguration, taking in the words of God, it can be transformational for us too. With that hope, let us return to the words that God spoke from the cloud.



God spoke, saying, declaring, *"This is my Son whom I dearly love. I am very pleased with him. Listen to him!"* These words claim a relationship, hold a declaration of love, and give us a simple instruction to follow.

It is not complicated. Too often we want something deep, something profound, something beyond this world. Instead, we get parental love and an invitation to pay attention to the object of that love. Our call to action comes in the third statement: *“Listen to him!”* It was the call to action that Peter, James, and John received. It is the call to action that all who profess faith in Jesus receive. While a simple instruction, the call to listen to Jesus goes far beyond simply hearing his words.



“Listen to him” means shaping our lives around Jesus’ words. “Listen to him” means taking them deep into our soul, allowing them to become who we are at our core. “Listen to him” means desiring for his words to take root and to grow our lives into a life worthy of the gospel. “Listen to him” means letting the picture that Jesus paints of the kingdom here on earth be the vision by which we lead our lives. When we “Listen to him” in all of these ways and more, then we too are declaring our love for the Messiah. Our declaration of love proclaims that Jesus is our Lord and Savior, our all in all, and that he is our beloved Lord. When we listen to Jesus’ words and live them out, then we too become God’s beloved. May it be so for you and for me. Alleluia and amen.

### **Grow, Pray, Study**

- 1) *Grow*. When has waiting led to a time of growth in your faith? How might your story of this waiting encourage others in their times of waiting?
- 2) *Pray*. What part of Jesus’ message is hardest for you to “listen to?” Spend some time in prayer this week, seeking encouragement, presence, and assurance.
- 3) *Study*. Read Exodus 32:1-4. What happened when the people had to wait too long? How can this story encourage you when the waiting gets harder and harder?