

Union United Methodist Church

Sermon Outline: **Jesus is the Christ, Listen to Him!**

February 19th, 2023. Pastor Michael Larbi

Readings: **Exodus 24:12-18; Matthew 17:1-9**

1. Introduction: The Transfiguration of Jesus

"Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. 2There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. 3Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus.

5While he was still speaking, a bright cloud covered them, and a voice from the cloud said, "**This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!**"
Matthew 17:1-3, 5 NIV

Peter later testified to this:

"We did not follow cleverly devised stories when we told you about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in power, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. 17He received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." 18**We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain."** 2 Peter 1:16-18 NIV

2. Moses & Elijah - the Law and the Prophets

a. Divine Moral Law given to Israel (and us!) through Moses

- God wrote and gave Moses the law and commandments.

12The Lord said to Moses, "Come up to me on the mountain, and wait there; and **I will give you the tablets of stone, with the law and the commandment, which I have written for their instruction."**

Exodus 24:12 NRSV

- These laws and instructions include what is commonly known as the 10 commandments. The Law is the Divine moral code given to Israel as recorded in the Old Testament.

In proclaiming God's requirements to Israel, he gave Israel the Shema, which is a prayer/affirmation proclaimed in synagogues to this day.

☰ Deuteronomy 6 ☆ AN

• שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה יְהוָה אֶלֶּהִינוּ 4
יְהוָה | אֶחָד:

Hear, O Israel! יהוה is our God, יהוה alone.

• וְאַהֲבַתְּ אֶת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ 5
בְּכָל-לִבְבְּךָ וּבְכָל-נַפְשְׁךָ
וּבְכָל-מְאֹדְךָ:

You shall love your God יהוה with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.

When asked what the greatest commandment is, Jesus said: "The first is, **'Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.'**

The second is this, **'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'** There is no other commandment greater than these."
Mark 12:29-31 NRSV

Note the phrase: "Hear, O Israel!" **SHEMA means "Hear" - similar to "Listen!"** In modern American lingo, we could say "Listen up!" Thus, the command to "Listen to him" at the transfiguration is significant

- **Jesus came to fulfil the Law, not abolish it**

As we covered last week, Jesus explained that he did not come to do away with the law given to Moses or what was spoken and taught by the prophets. Note that Jesus gave high importance to both the law and the prophets. Matthew records these words of Jesus for us:

"Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. 18For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished.

19Therefore, **whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven"** Matthew 5:17-38

b. **Elijah, representative of the Prophets -**

- **Called Israel to Repentance**

We see this prominently in 1 Kings 17 and 18, when he challenged the idol worship of Israel and its king, Ahab, and his wife Jezebel.

- **Demonstrated God's Existence, Power and Authority**

At mount Carmel, he prayed:

"Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known today that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant and have done all these things at your command. 37 Answer me, Lord, answer me, so these people will know that you, Lord, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again." Then the fire of the Lord fell ...

When all the people saw this, they fell prostrate and cried, "The Lord—he is God! The Lord—he is God!" 1 Kings 18:36-39 NIV

3. Jesus, the Christ ("Anointed") - anointed Prophet, Priest, King, ... our Savior

- **Like Moses (Prophet & Priest) but greater than Moses**

Moses, in his time, was Israel's

- Deliverer

Led Israel out of slavery in Egypt into freedom in the promised land

- Mediator & Intercessor

Mediated between Israel and God, and often interceded for the nation in prayer, especially when they had sinned.

- Shepherd

He led Israel as a shepherd leads sheep

- Teacher & Judge

He taught the laws and precepts of God and was a chief judge in Israel in his time

- Priest - "Moses and Aaron were among his priests" Psalm 99:6 NIV

- **Messiah Prophesied by Moses**

Yet, Moses prophesied about another prophet who would be like him:

"The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your fellow Israelites. You must listen to him. 16 For this is what

you asked of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said, "Let us not hear the voice of the Lord our God nor see this great fire anymore, or we will die." Deuteronomy 18:15-16 NIV

Note the phrase **"listen to him"** in this passage, the same phrase we see in the transfiguration account about Jesus.

Many rabbinical sources believe this to be a prophesy about the Messiah (the "Anointed One"), who is Jesus, according to the New Testament.

- **Jesus is the Son, not a Servant**

"Moses was faithful as a servant in all God's house,"[Numbers 12:7] bearing witness to what would be spoken by God in the future. **6But Christ is faithful as the Son over God's house.** And we are his house, if indeed we hold firmly to our confidence and the hope in which we glory." Hebrews 3:5-6 NIV

- **Like Elijah (Prophet & Priest) but greater than Elijah**

- **Prophet**

Divine standard bearer - calling Israel to repentance, challenging evil, demonstrating God's power with his anointing.

- Priest - offered sacrifices on mount Carmel.

- **Like David (King and Prophet), from the line of David, greater than David**

- Anointed King

- Teacher & Prophet

4. **"Listen to Him!" Why?**

Here are some reasons:

- **Our Savior and Deliverer**

- He is the way, the truth and the life - without him there is no salvation for anyone. **Jesus said, "I am the way and the truth and the life.**

- **No one comes to the Father except through me."** John 14:6 NIV

- **He is Lord - King of Kings, and Lord of Lords**

- This is the truth and reality for all eternity
9Therefore **God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, 10that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**" Philippians 2:9-11 NIV
- We must each make that our reality by choice
- As Lord, he must have a say in every aspect of our lives.

- **Our Faithful Priest and Intercessor – Hebrews 7**

- An eternal priest, in the order of Melchizedek
- Ever lives to make intercession for us (Hebrews 7:25)

- **His words are "spirit and life" – conduits of the Holy Spirit power and anointing, and conduits of divine eternal life (zoe)**

"It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. **The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.**" John 6:63 NRSV

- **Prophet**

- Prophets do two things:
 - forth tell (proclaim divine truths) and
 - foretell (accurately predict the future – tell us about the future)
- As prophet, Jesus knows and can foretell the future to us.

- **Judge of the living and the dead**

"In the presence of God and of **Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead**, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: 2Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction." 2 Timothy 4:1-2 NIV

- He watches over us, God's house
But Christ is faithful as the Son over God's house. And we are his house, if indeed we hold firmly to our confidence and the hope in which we glory." Hebrews 3:5-6 NIV

5. What are we to listen to? And how?

- His words
 - as relayed to us by witnesses to his ministry and
 - as revealed by the Holy Spirit to us through his servants (e.g., Paul)
- His teachings - in word and example
- Obey whatever he tells us - in his word and through His Holy Spirit
 At the wedding at Cana, when Jesus turned water into wine,

"His mother said to the servants, "**Do whatever he tells you.**"

John 2:5 NIV

If we want to see the miracles and power of God in our lives, we are to do whatever the Lord Jesus instructs us to.

- Build our lives on His words.
 4 "Therefore **everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.**²⁵The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.²⁶But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand.²⁷The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash." Matthew 7:24-27 NIV