
Genesis 1-12

THE RECLAMATION OF ALL THINGS

PART THREE

Exodus 24:1–5 (ESV)

¹ Then he said to Moses, “**Come up to the LORD, you and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and worship from afar.**

² Moses alone shall come near to the LORD, but the others shall not come near, and the people shall not come up with him.”

³ Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD and all the rules. And all the people answered with one voice and said, “All the words that the LORD has spoken we will do.”

⁴ And Moses wrote down all the words of the LORD. He rose early in the morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel.

⁵ And he sent young men of the people of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the LORD.

Exodus 24:6–11 (ESV)

⁶ And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and half of the blood he threw against the altar.

⁷ Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it in the hearing of the people. And they said, “All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient.”

⁸ And Moses took the blood and threw it on the people and said, “Behold the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words.”

⁹ Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up,

¹⁰ and **they saw the God of Israel**. There was under his feet as it were a pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness.

¹¹ And he did not lay his hand on the chief men of the people of Israel; **they beheld God, and ate and drank.**

Luke 10:1 (ESV)

After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them on ahead of him, two by two, into every town and place where he himself was about to go.

Luke 10:17–20 (ESV)

¹⁷ The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!”

¹⁸ And he said to them, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.

¹⁹ Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you.

²⁰ Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.”

Matthew 16:13–20 (ESV)

¹³ Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?”

¹⁴ And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”

¹⁵ He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?”

¹⁶ Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

¹⁷ And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.

Matthew 16:13–20 (*ESV*)

18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

20 Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ.

When Jesus takes his disciples north of the Sea of Galilee (about twenty-five miles) to the region of Caesarea Philippi (so named because it was rebuilt by the tetrarch Herod Philip in honor of the emperor Tiberius; modern “Baniyas,” formerly “Paneas”), a beautiful area in the foothills of Mount Hermon, it is ostensibly in order to retreat from the press of the crowds. But there is also another special reason, for what transpires here is both a climax and a dramatic turning point in the Gospel (as it is also in Mark and Luke). It is unlikely that Jesus chooses Caesarea Philippi because of its pagan associations, including the shrine to Pan, in order to assert his own authority over the world’s religions (contra Bruner, following Barclay). He takes the disciples there merely as a place of retreat where he can be alone with them. The location of Caesarea Philippi may, however, have prompted some of the imagery used (e.g., “rock,” “building” of church, “gates of Hades”; see Immisch)

Hagner, D. A. (1998). *Matthew 14–28* (Vol. 33B, pp. 466–467). Dallas: Word, Incorporated.

a. The Setting (16:13a)

16:13a Jesus travels to Caesarea Philippi (Josephus, *Ant.* 15.363–64; J.W. 1.404–6; 2.168; 3.509–15), which was located near the source of the Jordan River about twenty-five miles north of the Sea of Galilee. It is unclear where this trip began (cf. the comments on 15:39; 16:5). Caesarea Philippi was a gentile town at the southern edge of Mount Hermon. Its Greek name honored the god Pan, and a cave there was turned into a shrine to this god. It is possible that certain geographical features of this city are alluded to in 16:17–19. On this point, see Burgess 1976; Immisch 1916; Kutsko, ABD 1:803; Nickelsburg 1981.

Turner, D. L. (2008). Matthew (p. 403). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

Banias is the contemporary name of the site and it preserves the original Paneas (also Panias). The letter “p” does not exist in Arabic; its substitute is “b.” We will address below the reason the location was initially named Paneas during the Second Temple period. Paneas was renamed Caesarea Philippi during the reign of Herod Philip the Tetrarch (4 BC–AD 34).

Phillips, E. A. (2016). Peter’s Declaration at Caesarea Philippi. In B. J. Beitzel & K. A. Lyle (Eds.), *Lexham Geographic Commentary on the Gospels* (Mt 16:13–Lk 9:20). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.



Matthew 17:1–3 *(ESV)*

¹ And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves.

² And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light.

³ And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him.

Matthew 26:63–65 (ESV)

⁶³ But Jesus remained silent. And the high priest said to him, “I adjure you by the living God, tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God.” ⁶⁴ Jesus said to him, “You have said so. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven.” ⁶⁵ Then the high priest tore his robes and said, “He has uttered blasphemy. What further witnesses do we need? You have now heard his blasphemy.”

Daniel 7:13–14 (ESV)

¹³ “I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him.

¹⁴ And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.

Psalm 104:1–4 (ESV)

¹ Bless the LORD, O my soul! O LORD my God, you are very great!

You are clothed with splendor and majesty,

² covering yourself with light as with a garment, stretching out the heavens like a tent.

³ He lays the beams of his chambers on the waters; he makes the clouds his chariot; he rides on the wings of the wind;

⁴ he makes his messengers winds, his ministers a flaming fire.

Matthew 27:45–50 (ESV)

⁴⁵ Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour.

⁴⁶ And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” that is, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

⁴⁷ And some of the bystanders, hearing it, said, “This man is calling Elijah.”

⁴⁸ And one of them at once ran and took a sponge, filled it with sour wine, and put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink.

⁴⁹ But the others said, “Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him.”

⁵⁰ And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit.

Matthew 27:45–54 (ESV)

⁵¹ And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split.

⁵² The tombs also were opened. And many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised,

⁵³ and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many.

⁵⁴ When the centurion and those who were with him, keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were filled with awe and said, “Truly this was the Son of God!”

Psalm 22:1 *(ESV)*

¹ My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning?

Psalm 22:12–18 *(ESV)*

¹² Many bulls encompass me; strong bulls of Bashan surround me;

¹³ they open wide their mouths at me, like a ravening and roaring lion.

¹⁴ I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted within my breast;

¹⁵ my strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to my jaws; you lay me in the dust of death.

¹⁶ For dogs encompass me; a company of evildoers encircles me; they have pierced my hands and feet—

¹⁷ I can count all my bones— they stare and gloat over me;

¹⁸ they divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.

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The implication is that Jesus, at the moment of agony and death, was surrounded by the “bulls of Bashan”—demonic *elohim* who had been the foes of *Yahweh* and his children for millennia.

Heiser, M. S. (2015). *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible* (First Edition, p. 291). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.