

WHEN HE TAKES US TO THE MOUNTAIN



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

“What are we doing here?” says Peter.

Suddenly Peter is stunned speechless by blinding light.

And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his garments became white as light. And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Eli'jah, talking with him.

Peter pulls himself together and regains his voice.

And Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is well that we are here; if you wish, I will make three booths here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Eli'jah."

He was still speaking, when lo, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him."

When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces, and were filled with awe. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Rise, and have no fear."

And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only.

Matthew 17



When they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only.

Jesus only.

Not Jesus plus Moses and Elijah.

Not Jesus plus Peter's proposed shrines.

Just Jesus.

While Peter was trying to figure out what it all meant, the words that came from the cloud came back to him.

"This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him."

"Listen to him!"

"Don't let anyone or anything distract you from his words."

Why the mountaintop vision?

These men were about to descend into a valley deeper and darker than they had ever known.

To make it through the coming darkness they would need to cling to the light they had just seen.

The vision had power to hold them steady.



The Valley of Pain.

As a foretaste of the darkness ahead, Jesus took these men down into a valley of pain.

And when they came to the crowd, a man came up to him and kneeling before him said, "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and he suffers terribly; for often he falls into the fire, and often into the water. And I brought him to your disciples, and they could not heal him." And Jesus answered, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you? Bring him here to me." And Jesus rebuked him, and the demon came out of him, and the boy was cured instantly.

Those disciples were called to proclaim the kingdom.

They were to manifest the kingdom by healing that boy.

But they were not up to it.

Are we?

Jesus did not coddle those men. He sighed with exasperation and said,

"O faithless and perverse generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you? Bring him here to me." And when the disciples asked why they could not heal the boy, he told them straight. Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?" He said to them, "Because of your little faith. For truly, I say to you, if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you."

Matthew 17

When Jesus takes us to the mountain.

When Jesus takes us to the mountain and opens our eyes to his glory, the light we receive is given to prepare us for an approaching darkness.

It is not a time to talk.

It is a time to listen.

"This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased;

listen to him."

To make it through the dark valley we are now approaching we need to clear away all distractions, all “secondary faiths” and focus on one thing only:

Jesus.



His words alone are the light that illumines the way.

His light alone will hold us through the darkness ahead.

Prayer- Sweet Lord, Beloved One of the Father how good you are to bring us to the mountain, to allow us to experience the glory and joy of your presence. This is a gift from you. Help us to cling to it, to keep our vision steady on you as the darkness approaches. May we continue to see you and trust you and to know that your words will light the way into any dark valley we must travel. Help us to continue to lift our eyes to you, only you for guidance, for answers, for meaning, for comfort. We expect to find the same joy in the valley as we have on the mountain top.

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THE LAMB
WHO WAS SLAIN
HAS BEGUN HIS REIGN