



Matthew 17:1–9 (NRSV)

¹Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain, by themselves. ²And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white. ³Suddenly there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. ⁴Then Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here; if you wish, I will make three dwellings here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” ⁵While he was still speaking, suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud a voice said, “This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!” ⁶When the disciples heard this, they fell to the ground and were overcome by fear. ⁷But Jesus came and touched them, saying, “Get up and do not be afraid.” ⁸And when they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus himself alone. ⁹As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus ordered them, “Tell no one about the vision until after the Son of Man has been raised from the dead.”

Opening

- Pray:** Gracious God, we come to you as we are. Some of us feel steady, and some of us feel overwhelmed. Meet us on the mountain and on the way down. Quiet the extra noise, help us listen to Jesus, and give us courage for the next step. In Jesus’ name we pray, Amen.
- Share:** What is a small moment this week when you noticed your body reacting first, before you had time to think about it?

Dive Into the Text

- Jesus takes Peter, James, and John up the mountain (v. 1). What do you notice about Jesus choosing only these three?
- Jesus is transfigured, and his face shines like the sun (v. 2). What do you think the disciples are being shown in this moment?
- Moses and Elijah appear and speak with Jesus (v. 3). Why do you think Matthew includes them here? What do they represent?
- Peter offers to build three shelters (v. 4). What might Peter be trying to do with that suggestion?
- A bright cloud covers them and God speaks (v. 5). What stands out to you about what God says? Why “Listen to him”?
- The disciples fall facedown, terrified, and Jesus comes near, touches them, and says, “Get up. Do not be afraid” (vv. 6–7). What does that show you about Jesus?

“The Bright Field”

by R.S. Thomas

I have seen the sun break through
to illuminate a small field
for a while, and gone my way
and forgotten it. But that was the
pearl of great price, the one field that had
treasure in it. I realise now
that I must give all that I have
to possess it. Life is not hurrying

on to a receding future, nor hankering after
an imagined past. It is the turning
aside like Moses to the miracle
of the lit bush, to a brightness
that seemed as transitory as your youth
once, but is the eternity that awaits you.

Matthew 17 feels a lot like this poem. The light comes, it does not stay, and you cannot control it. You just stand there and let it happen. And then God speaks from the cloud, not with a long speech, but with one sentence: “Listen to him.”

That is a Lent invitation. Slow down enough to hear Jesus, and then keep following him when you come back down into ordinary life.

Go Deeper

1. Where do you feel “too much” these days, where life feels bright and overwhelming?
2. When you feel overwhelmed, what is your most common way of trying to manage the moment?
3. What is one voice that gets loud in you when you are stressed or tired? What would it look like to turn that voice down during Lent?
4. Jesus comes close and says, “Get up. Do not be afraid.” What is one small step you can take this week as you follow Jesus down the mountain into everyday life?

Close in Prayer

Close your time in prayer together.