

Transfiguration Year C

St John the Divine

Exodus 34:29-35

Psalms 99

2 Corinthians 3:12-4.2

Luke 9:28-36

'This is my Son, the Beloved . . . Listen to him.'

Mount Tabor and the Church of the Transfiguration

Reflect on a visit there;

A high, cone shaped mountain

A steep, zig zag road to the top

Ruins, old stones and the church of the Transfiguration.

Far below, fish farms and farmland

It's easy to believe something other worldly happened here.

Biblical mountains are always places of revelation and encounter.

Inside the church:

A golden mosaic inside The Church of the Transfiguration instantly transports people into the gospel reading. A golden mosaic depicts Moses and Elijah, Peter, James and John – but it is Jesus who is at the centre, his face and clothing radiant, his arms outstretched.

²⁸ Jesus^{is} took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. ²⁹ And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white. ³⁰ Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him. ³¹ They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.

This is an otherworldly scene:

First, the sudden appearance of Moses the Law giver and Elijah the Prophet speaking to Jesus. Then, the change in Jesus' appearance – his glory signified by the purity of his clothes and his face shining like the sun. Something deeply significant is happening. Peter, James and John are standing on holy ground, witnesses to Jesus' true identity, holiness and glory.

Peter is the first to speak – the first responder to this extraordinary scene – and, characteristically perhaps – he doesn't quite 'get it'.

He could make three dwellings– one for Jesus, one for Moses and one for Elijah.

It's then, he's interrupted:

'A cloud came and overshadowed; and they were terrified as they entered the cloud. Then from the cloud came a voice that said, 'This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!' Luke 9:34

'This is my Son, my Chosen 'Listen to Him!' Luke 9:35

We know these words. Jesus heard them at his baptism. Now, as his crucifixion and death get ever nearer and his ministry and mission reach a climax, they are words of affirmation and love, audible to all: *'Listen to Him!'*

Listen to the one whose glory you see. Listen to the One beloved by the Holy One. Listen to the one attested to by the prophets. The Day of the Lord is at hand.

This is a moment of Revelation. Immediately before this event, Peter confessed that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah. Now, a radical transformation has taken place and the truth of Jesus' identity is displayed. Jesus is the very source of divine glory.

This is Jesus as Peter, James and John have never seen him before.

This is Jesus in Glory; the Chosen and Beloved Son; the one foreshadowed by the Law and the Prophets as Messiah; the Holy One of God. The Cross will soon come. Jesus' Mission will soon be completed but for this fleeting moment on a mountain, heaven has opened.

Who is Jesus? Allan's story

Rejected and abused, alcoholic and lonely – a man of the streets.

Then, a mountain top experience:

'Nobody ever loved me, until I met Jesus.'

The meeting changed his life.

The Jesus Allan met brought him love, forgiveness and peace.

God's glory transformed his life.

Who is Jesus?

Historical Jesus – a familiar but largely unknown person?

Christmas card Jesus – a sentimental attachment to an old story?

Jesus the teacher and healer?

Jesus the revolutionary and counter cultural leader?

Irrelevant Jesus?

Rejected Jesus - Jesus whose very name is used to blaspheme?

For Peter, James and John, Jesus was the Anointed One, the Messiah.

For Allan – Jesus was Holy God, the source of love and life.

Who is Jesus for you?

Meditation:

Imagine yourself climbing a high mountain:

Sit quietly and prayerfully at the top

Notice that Jesus is with you

Watch, and listen:

²⁸ Jesus^[a] took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. ²⁹ And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white. ³⁰ Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him. ³¹ They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.

Then, 'A cloud came and overshadowed (Peter and James and John); and they were terrified as they entered the cloud. Then from the cloud came a voice that said, 'This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!' Luke 9:34

May Jesus, the Beloved Son, shine in your life. May your eyes see his true identity and your ears hear his words of forgiveness, reconciliation and love.

He is the Chosen One, the Messiah, the Prince of Peace – and we have seen his glory.