*DAILY DEVOTIONAL*

March 27 – April 1

“The Life of Jesus: Transfiguration”

**Monday, March 27 Matthew 17:1-13**

*“This is my beloved Son”*

 The stunning revelation of Jesus as the Son of God on the mountain of transfiguration prompted an almost comical response from Peter about building three tabernacles. Peter is probably doing his best to get his mental and spiritual arms around the amazing revelation, so he stumbles around and suggests that he build memorials to the event. Then from out of the glorious cloud that envelopes them on the mountain, the voice of God the Father declares again his relationship to Jesus his Son and demands, “Listen to him!”

 Jesus is the unrivaled, authoritative revelation of God, and we should take heed to all that he says. This especially goes for Peter, whose enthusiasm consistently causes him to stumble. It’s as though the Father is saying, “Peter, if you really want to understand who Jesus is and what he has come to do, be quiet, stop trying to figure it out on your own, and listen to what he reveals to you.” Throughout the rest of his ministry, Jesus will lead Peter and the others to a clearer comprehension.

*I listen to you, Lord, that I may know you. Amen.*

**Tuesday, March 28 Deuteronomy 5:1-21**

*“Hear, O Israel”*

 It is possible for us today to hear the voice of God and still not to hear the voice of God. The exodus generation heard God’s voice clearly, but because of the hardness of their hearts, they rejected what they heard. Consequently, like the branches of a vine that refuses to bear fruit (John 15:6), they were cut off by the vinedresser and thrown into the fire. Those who abide in the vine bear the fruit of belief and love shown in obedience to the revealed will of God. This passage declares that if we reject the revelation of God, we reject God himself.

 But what does it mean to receive the revelation of God? It is surely more than receiving the document (the Bible) with a nice cover and putting it on the shelf. God’s goal in revealing his will to his people is to affect life. We are to hear the decrees and laws that we might learn them and do them. In Jesus’ words, those who love him will keep his commandments (John 14:15). These verses highlight the indispensable role of hearing the Word of God in order to learn God’s ways and, having learned God’s ways, to live according to them.

*May I not only hear your Word, Lord, but may I live according to it. Amen.*

**Wednesday, March 29 Mark 9:2-13**

*“Six days later . . .”*

 Six days after Jesus predicts that he will suffer many terrible things, be rejected by the leaders of the people and the teachers of religious law, and be killed, rising again three days later, God affirms his Son in the glory of the transfiguration with Peter, James and John as witnesses. All of the symbols of God’s glory are present – a high mountain, shining garments, Biblical patriarchs, a shadowing cloud, and a voice from heaven. As God had affirmed Jesus for his servant ministry at the time of his baptism, God now prepares him for his suffering.

 Because Jesus came to give his life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45), his power and love merge with his suffering. Bringing together the transfiguration and the crucifixion clarifies this truth. One sees in these two events Jesus humiliated and exalted, surrounded by saints and ringed by sinners, clothed with light and wrapped in darkness. The disciples experience Jesus glorified and crucified, and come to understand that following Jesus involves both hardship and everlasting glory.

*The only way to everlasting glory, Lord, is through the hardship of surrender. Amen.*

*DAILY DEVOTIONAL*

March 27 – April 1

“The Life of Jesus: Transfiguration”

**Thursday, March 30 2 Kings 2:1-12**

 *“A chariot of fire appeared”*

 The chapter begins by telling us that Elijah was about to be taken up to heaven in a storm. The “whirlwind” was the same phenomenon by which God made himself known to Job, the force and power of the wind being symbolic of the majestic and holy presence of the divine. The whole story is designed to build suspense. Elijah suddenly receives the revelation that he is to go as far as Bethel and urges Elisha to stay behind. Then, Elijah is called to Jericho and finally God tells him to go to the Jordan River, each time telling Elisha to remain. But Elisha is determined to follow his master.

 Elisha asks for a double portion of Elijah’s spirit. Elisha is not requesting twice the prophetic power of Elijah, but rather the right to the office of Elijah as prophet. Because God and not Elijah determines who is to be God’s prophet, Elijah tells Elisha that the sign that God has given him Elijah’s prophetic office will be seeing Elijah taken into heaven. Elisha sees the glorious chariot of God carrying Elijah away, and is confirmed as Israel’s next prophet.

*You reveal your glory here on earth, Lord, and your children are grateful. Amen.*

**Friday, March 31 Luke 9:28-36**

*“Moses and Elijah appeared”*

 Jesus decides to go to a mountain to pray and takes Peter, James, and John with him. During his time of prayer Jesus is transformed into a glorious figure. His glory recalls the description of Moses on the mountain in Exodus 34:29-34 and the taking into heaven of Elijah on a chariot of fire (see yesterday’s passage). The presence of Moses and Elijah represent two key periods in Israel’s history, one being the giving of the law and the other the office of the prophet. Jesus is the new and glorified prophet and law-giver of God.

 Through the transfiguration, Peter and James and John see Jesus in a new light. Did you ever look at someone you love and suddenly understand for the first time the wonder of that person? How did you miss it before? Just a few verses earlier, Peter had declared Jesus to be the Christ. But he and James and John are dazzled to see him in the company of the superstars of the Old Testament. They were convinced he was the promised Messiah, but it had not occurred to them that he was in the same league with Elijah and Moses. Indeed, Jesus surpassed them!

*May I always see you, Lord, in the light of your glory. Amen.*

**Saturday, April 1 2 Peter 1:16-21**

*“We saw . . . we heard . . .”*

 Peter is establishing his credentials and the trustworthiness of the prophecies of the Word of God in contrast to the “cunningly devised fables” being propagated by the false teachers whom he exposes and refutes in his letter. Of all the stories and personal accounts Peter could have shared from the life and ministry of Jesus in order to establish his relationship to Jesus Christ, it is interesting that Peter should share the account of the transfiguration of Jesus. It shows how deeply impacted he was by that spiritual experience.

 The confirmation to Peter concerning who Christ really is came when God spoke at the transfiguration, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” With conviction, Peter shares that account with his readers for now he is the one proclaiming the message that “Jesus is the true Son of God.” Further, his readers will do well to heed the words the Old Testament prophets whom God uses to reveal his truth to them. They can rely on the Word of God because the prophecies of Scripture have come from God.

*You have spoken to my heart, Lord, and I believe you are the Christ. Amen.*