



## Life Guide

applying God's Word to life

### The Mount Prepares Us For Valleys February 14, 2021

<sup>2</sup> After six days Jesus took Peter, James and John with him and led them up a high mountain, where they were all alone. There he was transfigured before them. <sup>3</sup> His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them. <sup>4</sup> And there appeared before them Elijah and Moses, who were talking with Jesus.

<sup>5</sup> Peter said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah." <sup>6</sup> (He did not know what to say, they were so frightened.)

<sup>7</sup> Then a cloud appeared and covered them, and a voice came from the cloud: "This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!"

<sup>8</sup> Suddenly, when they looked around, they no longer saw anyone with them except Jesus.

<sup>9</sup> As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus gave them orders not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

1. Have these last days been a mountaintop experience for you or a dark valley? Give an example or two to explain your answer.

Mountain top experiences are good ones. Success at school, exciting romance, great friendships, fulfilling work, new baby, etc. Valleys are tough experiences. Underperformed at school, relationships deteriorating, bored or failing at work, loss something you love.

Everyone experiences both, and Jesus can encourage us through either type of experience.

2. What are some ways mountaintop experiences and valley experiences affect the way you think or feel about God?

When we have good days it's easier to see God's hand working in our life. Bad days make it harder for us to see how God can use those for his purpose.

We feel close to God on good days, and we may feel far from God on bad days.

3. Summarize what the disciples experienced when Jesus transfigured? (For more details read Mt 17:1-13 & Lk 9:28-36.)  
Jesus' face shined bright white and his clothes shined bright white, so bright it terrified the tired disciples.

- The disciples were very sleepy until they saw the glory (Lk. 9:32)
- Jesus was praying (Lk 9:29)
- His face changed (Lk. 9:29)
- His face shone like the sun (Mt. 17:2)
- His clothes were as bright as a flash of lightning. (Lk. 9:29)
- His clothes became as white as the light. (Mt. 17:2)
- His clothes were whiter than anyone could bleach them. (Mk. 9:3)

**Matthew 17:1-13** <sup>1</sup>After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. <sup>2</sup> There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. <sup>3</sup> Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus.

<sup>4</sup> Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah."

<sup>5</sup> While he was still speaking, a bright cloud covered them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!"

<sup>6</sup> When the disciples heard this, they fell facedown to the ground, terrified. <sup>7</sup> But Jesus came and touched them. "Get up," he said. "Don't be afraid." <sup>8</sup> When they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus.

<sup>9</sup> As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus instructed them, "Don't tell anyone what you have seen, until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead."

<sup>10</sup> The disciples asked him, “Why then do the teachers of the law say that Elijah must come first?”

<sup>11</sup> Jesus replied, “To be sure, Elijah comes and will restore all things. <sup>12</sup> But I tell you, Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him, but have done to him everything they wished. In the same way the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands.” <sup>13</sup> Then the disciples understood that he was talking to them about John the Baptist.

**Luke 9:28-36** <sup>28</sup> About eight days after Jesus said this, he took Peter, John and James with him and went up onto a mountain to pray. <sup>29</sup> As he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning. <sup>30</sup> Two men, Moses and Elijah, appeared in glorious splendor, talking with Jesus. <sup>31</sup> They spoke about his departure, which he was about to bring to fulfillment at Jerusalem. <sup>32</sup> Peter and his companions were very sleepy, but when they became fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men standing with him. <sup>33</sup> As the men were leaving Jesus, Peter said to him, “Master, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.” (He did not know what he was saying.) <sup>34</sup> While he was speaking, a cloud appeared and covered them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. <sup>35</sup> A voice came from the cloud, saying, “This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to him.” <sup>36</sup> When the voice had spoken, they found that Jesus was alone. The disciples kept this to themselves and did not tell anyone at that time what they had seen.

4. What events might the disciples associate with Moses and Elijah? Use your Bible history knowledge.

Highlights for Moses: (about 1500 B.C., cf. Exodus-Numbers)

Born in Egypt, while the Israelites were slaves  
Floated down the river in a basket.  
Raised in Pharaoh’s house by the princes who adopted him.  
Fled Egypt after he killed a man.  
Called to serve God at the burning bush in the desert  
Returned to Egypt as God’s messenger during the 10 plagues.  
Led the children of Israel out of Egypt and across the Red Sea.  
Led the children of Israel as they wandered in the desert.

Authored the first 5 books of the Bible, by inspiration from the Holy Spirit.

Highlights for Elijah: (About 900 B.C., cf. 1 Kings)

A foremost prophet when Israel had wicked kings.  
Born in Tishbe in Northeast Israel  
Defeated the prophets of Baal in a fiery showdown.  
Ran 100 miles to escape to Beersheba.  
Ravens brought him food in the Kidron Valley.  
Provided food for a widow in the gentile city of Zarephath.  
Raised the Widow of Zarephath’s son from the dead.  
Mentored a young prophet named Elisha.  
A fiery chariot took him directly to heaven without dying.

5. In what ways might the voice from the cloud change the disciples?

They could be encouraged.  
They may listen to Jesus more earnestly.  
They might reconsider their doubts about who Jesus was.  
They might be afraid of it.  
They might remember it when they see Jesus suffering.

6. The sermon compared Jesus’ identity revealed at transfiguration to the prince in Mark Twain’s story, *The Prince and the Pauper*. List some ways that knowing Jesus’ identity changes the way you perceive his story.

There are many correct answers. You might realize, for instance:  
He constantly exercised restraint to NOT show his full glory.  
He was always capable of doing miracles.  
He was never compelled to do something against his will.  
He gave up much more than meets the eye to redeem us.  
His promise to be with us is more powerful than it seems.

7. How would the disciples’ memory of Jesus’ transfiguration help them when they witnessed Jesus’ suffering and death?

They knew this was part of God’s plan from the Old Testament (from Moses and Elijah)  
They knew this was all under Jesus’ control, since he could use his glory to prevent it if he wanted to.  
They knew God was pleased with Jesus.

The learned to listen to him even as he was predicting unsavory futures.

8 How does remembering Jesus transfiguration prepare you for Lent?

We see just how much Jesus gave up when he suffered.

We better appreciate the depth of his love.

We learn that his death was expensive enough to pay for the sins of the world.

We learn to focus all our attention on Jesus and not on ourselves.

9. How does remembering Jesus transfiguration prepare you for the valleys you'll face in life?

Jesus is always with you with his immense power.

Jesus will bestow his glory onto you when he returns to take our bodies to heaven.

Jesus has given up so much to be with you, he will certainly continue to provide the help you need.

Jesus himself endured mountaintop moments and dark valleys, so he can relate to our experiences.

10. If a friend asks you what you got out of Bible study, what will you say?

Answers will vary. If discussion is slow to start, encourage them to re-read the Bible passage and pick out a favorite sentence.