

PSALM 2 AND - 2 PETER 1:16-21

ONE SUMMER A HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER INJURED HIS BACK AND HAD TO BEGIN THE SCHOOL YEAR WEARING A CAST ON THE UPPER PART OF HIS BODY.

FORTUNATELY THE MATERIAL WAS FAIRLY LIGHTWEIGHT SO HE COULD PERFORM HIS DUTIES, AND THE CAST WAS NOT REALLY VISIBLE BENEATH HIS SHIRT.

EARLY IN THE DAY THE TEACHER HAD A FRESHMAN CLASS WITH SEVERAL STUDENTS WITH A REPUTATION OF HAVING DISCIPLINE PROBLEMS.

SO BEFORE THE PERIOD BEGAN HE OPENED THE CLASSROOM WINDOWS TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE WINDY WEATHER.

THE ADVANTAGE OF THAT BECAME EVIDENT WHEN SEVERAL STUDENTS WERE NOT SETTLING DOWN AFTER THE TEACHER ASKED THEM TO.

SUDDENLY A STRONG BREEZE BLEW THE TEACHER'S TIE UP INTO HIS FACE, WHICH OF COURSE RESULTED IN MUCH LAUGHTER.

BUT THE CLASS IMMEDIATELY SETTLED DOWN AND GAVE THE TEACHER THEIR FULL ATTENTION AFTER HE TOOK A STAPLER AND STAPLED THE WAYWARD TIE TO HIS CHEST.

YOU SEE, BECAUSE THEY DID NOT HAVE ALL THE FACTS ABOUT THE TEACHER, AND IN PARTICULAR WERE UNAWARE HE WAS WEARING A CAST, THE CLASS MISUNDERSTOOD WHAT WAS REALLY GOING ON WITH THIS TEACHER.

SOMETHING SIMILAR IS TRUE REGARDING JESUS AND THOSE WHO OFTEN DREW INACCURATE CONCLUSIONS ABOUT HIM. AND EVEN HIS CLOSEST DISCIPLES WERE NO EXCEPTION.

FOR EXAMPLE, JESUS ASKED THE TWELVE WHAT OTHERS SAID ABOUT HIM, AND WHAT THEY THOUGHT AS WELL.

PETER, RESPONDED TO THE SECOND QUESTION SAYING: "YOU ARE THE MESSIAH, THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD."

THE PROBLEM WAS, WHILE THAT ANSWER WAS CORRECT, THE UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT THIS MEANT AMONG PETER AND THE REST OF THE DISCIPLES-WAS NOT CORRECT.

THIS BECAME VERY CLEAR, WHEN A LITTLE WHILE LATER JESUS SPOKE TO THE TWELVE ABOUT HOW HE MUST SUFFER AND DIE.

WELL, SUCH A NOTION WAS COMPLETELY UNACCEPTABLE AND PETER TOLD JESUS SO, WHICH WON HIM A REBUKE FROM THE SAVIOR.

UNDOUBTEDLY WHEN PETER CONFESSED JESUS TO BE THE CHRIST, AND THE SON OF GOD, HE AND THE OTHERS HAD IN MIND THAT JESUS WOULD BRING BACK THE REIGN OF DAVID.

PSALM TWO, IS ONE OF THE ROYAL PSALMS, NAMED SO BECAUSE THEY SPEAK ABOUT RULERS FROM DAVID'S LINE.

IN THIS PSALM WE HEAR HOW THE KING IS THE ADOPTIVE SON OF GOD, WHO REIGNS BY GOD'S POWER.

BUT JESUS IS GOD IN THE FLESH, HIS BELOVED SON, NOT SIMPLY A MAN.

FURTHERMORE, HE DID NOT COME TO RETURN ISRAEL TO THE GLORY DAYS OF THE PAST. HE CAME TO BRING IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD, NOT DAVID.

CONSEQUENTLY JESUS WAS MISUNDERSTOOD EVEN BY THOSE WHO LOVED AND FOLLOWED HIM.

THE TRANSFIGURATION OF JESUS REVEALS SOMETHING SIMILAR.

THAT DAY, JESUS TOOK HIS THREE CLOSEST FOLLOWERS UP THE MOUNTAIN WITH HIM.

THERE, BY THE GRACE OF GOD, THEY BECAME WITNESSES TO AN AMAZING SIGHT.

THEY SAW JESUS AS THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD IN A WAY THAT THEY NEVER IMAGINED THEY WOULD.

TODAY, ON TRANSFIGURATION SUNDAY, WE IN THE CHURCH RECALL THAT SPECIAL EVENT IN THE DISCIPLES' AND JESUS' LIFE.

FOR THE SAVIOR, IT WAS A TURNING POINT IN THE FOCUS OF HIS MINISTRY-THE BEGINNING OF THE END OF THE MISSION OF HIS LIFE.

THE DAY JESUS TOOK PETER, JAMES, AND JOHN UP ON A MOUNTAIN TOP WAS INDEED SPECIAL FOR IT WAS THERE THEY WITNESSED A MIRACULOUS AND A PROPHETIC EVENT.

IT WAS A CRITICAL POINT IN JESUS' LIFE, A POINT IN TIME WHERE JESUS WAS CALLED TO SHIFT HIS MINISTRY FROM GALILEE AND HEAD TOWARD JERUSALEM.

THERE, AS WE KNOW, HIS DEATH AND RESURRECTION WOULD OCCUR.

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW DESCRIBES THE EXPERIENCE IN THIS WAY:

“AND JESUS WAS TRANSFIGURED BEFORE THEM. HIS FACE SHONE LIKE THE SUN AND HIS CLOTHES BECAME DAZZLING WHITE.”

THE GOSPEL CONTINUES ON TO DESCRIBE THE APPEARANCE OF MOSES AND ELIJAH WITH JESUS.

IT ALSO SPEAKS OF THE DISCIPLE PETER'S BABBLING ABOUT BUILDING BOOTHS FOR THEM-FOLLOWED BY GOD'S EXPLANATION OF WHO JESUS IS.

“THIS IS MY SON, THE BELOVED, WITH HIM I AM WELL PLEASED, LISTEN TO HIM.”

THAT DAY THE THREE DISCIPLES WITNESSED A MOMENTARY TRANSFORMATION OF THEIR FRIEND, FROM THE MAN JESUS - INTO SOMEONE WHO SHONE WITH THE GLORY OF ALMIGHTY GOD.

THEY COULD NOT GRASP, AT THAT TIME, THE MEANING OF WHAT HAPPENED, BUT IT REMAINED WITH THEM UNTIL THE HOLY SPIRIT HELPED THEM TO UNDERSTAND.

BUT TODAY THE TRANSFIGURATION DOESN'T SEEM ALL THAT IMPORTANT FOR THE DAILY LIVES OF CHRISTIANS.

AND YET, OUR REMEMBRANCE OF THE EVENT CAN BE BENEFICIAL IN OUR WALK WITH CHRIST.

IT HELPS TO REMEMBER THAT THIS IS THE LAST SUNDAY BETWEEN CHRISTMAS AND LENT.

THE SEASON OF EPIPHANY, BEGINS WITH OUR CELEBRATION OF THE LIGHT OF THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM AND THE COMING OF THE MAGI TO SEE JESUS.

THE SEASON ENDS WITH US LOOKING AT JESUS SHINING WITH THE LIGHT OF HIS DIVINE GLORY.

TODAY, WE LIKE THE THREE DISCIPLES WHO WERE WITH JESUS, ARE GIVEN A GLIMPSE OF HIS FUTURE GLORY.

THROUGH THE WORDS OF SCRIPTURE, WE SEE MORE CLEARLY, JESUS AS GOD INCARNATE, AND OUR RISEN LORD AND SAVIOR.

THUS THE TRANSFIGURATION CAN BE UNDERSTOOD SYMBOLICALLY AS A MOMENTARY PAUSE IN THE LIFE OF JESUS.

IT IS A MOMENT SET ASIDE TO PREPARE HIM, AND THOSE WITH HIM, FOR WHAT WILL COME.

REMEMBERING THE TRANSFIGURATION, CAN ALSO HELP US AS WE PREPARE TO WE PASS THROUGH THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH-ALSO CALLED THE SEASON OF LENT.

TODAY, WE LOOK PAST LENT TO OUR CELEBRATION OF EASTER SUNDAY.

THIS REMINDS US THAT ALTHOUGH JESUS WALKED THE WAY OF THE CROSS, HIS DEATH WAS NOT THE END OF THE STORY.

INDEED FOR JESUS, AND THROUGH HIM FOR US, THE TRANSFIGURATION-COMING BEFORE LENT, OFFERS US A VISION OF OUR FINAL DESTINATION.

TODAY WE CATCH A GLIMPSE OF GLORY OF- THE EMPTY TOMB, AND THE PROMISE THAT BECAUSE JESUS LIVES, WE WILL LIVE ALSO.

THIS N.T. PASSAGE TELLS US THAT WE WHO TAKE REFUGE IN JESUS WILL BE BLESSED, JUST LIKE PSALM 2 PREDICTS.

AND THE EPISTLE USES THE METAPHOR OF A LAMP SHINING IN THE DARKNESS TO CALL US TO FAITH IN GOD'S WORD.

IN THE EARLY CHURCH, HOWEVER, THE EPISTLE READING FROM 2 PETER SUGGESTS THE TRANSFIGURATION OF JESUS WAS NOT ONLY UNDERSTOOD AS A PROMISE OF HIS RESURRECTION.

IT WAS, JUST AS IMPORTANTLY, A PROPHETIC VISION OF CHRIST'S SECOND COMING IN ALL POWER AND GLORY TO JUDGE THE LIVING AND THE DEAD.

THIS IS SIGNIFICANT BECAUSE IT CONCERNS ONE OF THE MAJOR STRUGGLES WITHIN THE CHURCHES TO WHOM THE LETTER WAS ORIGINALLY DIRECTED.

THE PROBLEM AT THAT TIME CONCERNED CHURCHES IN SEVERAL CITIES THAT HAD WITHIN THEM FALSE TEACHERS.

BECAUSE SO MUCH TIME HAD PASSED SINCE JESUS ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN, THESE OPPONENTS OF THE APOSTLES NO LONGER BELIEVED THAT JESUS WOULD PHYSICALLY RETURN TO JUDGE THE WORLD.

THESE FALSE TEACHERS INFLUENCED OTHERS WHO WERE WEAKER IN FAITH, OR NEW CHRISTIANS.

THEY SAID THAT THE APOSTLES' INSISTENCE THAT JESUS WOULD COME AGAIN WAS A FABRICATION- A MYTH.

THIS MORNING'S READING IS A PORTION OF PETER'S DEFENSE- OF THE TEACHINGS OF ALL OF CHRIST'S APOSTLES.

IT WAS ALSO A CALL FOR OTHERS TO NOT BE LEAD ASTRAY BY THE FALSE TEACHERS.

THE PASSAGE REMINDS READERS THAT PETER AND SOME OTHERS WITNESSED WITH THEIR OWN EYES JESUS' DIVINE GLORY.

THEY ALSO HEARD GOD'S PERSONAL AFFIRMATION OF CHRIST'S IDENTITY.

IN HIS LETTER, PETER SUGGESTS THE VOICE OF GOD WHO SPOKE TO THEM WAS NOT ONLY PREDICTING JESUS' RESURRECTION, BUT HIS EVENTUAL SECOND COMING AS WELL.

SO THOSE WHO CLAIMED THE TEACHINGS OF THE APOSTLES ABOUT THE RETURN OF CHRIST WAS A MYTH WERE NOT SPEAKING BY THE INSPIRATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

BUT THE MESSAGE AND TEACHINGS OF PETER AND OTHER APOSTLES WAS INSPIRED AND DIRECTED BY GOD, NOT THEIR OWN AGENDAS.

AT STAKE HERE, WAS NOT ONLY APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY WITHIN THE CHURCH, BUT JESUS' OWN PROMISE THAT HE WOULD RETURN.

THIS WAS MORE THAN JUST A THEOLOGICAL DISAGREEMENT AMONG BELIEVERS, IT WAS A STRUGGLE FOR THE FUTURE OF CHRISTIANITY.

THOSE WHO OPPOSED THE APOSTLES ALSO SUGGESTED THAT SINCE THEY WERE WRONG ABOUT THE SECOND COMING- THEY WERE WRONG ABOUT OTHER THINGS AS WELL.

THE LETTER WAS SENT TO THE AFFECTED CHURCHES IN ORDER TO STATE A CASE FOR WHY THE APOSTLES' TEACHINGS OUGHT TO BE BELIEVED AND FOLLOWED

HE INSISTED THAT THE FALSE TEACHERS WHO TOLD OTHERS TO NOT BELIEVE THE PROMISE JESUS WILL RETURN WERE WRONG.

PETER WAS SAYING HERE THAT HE AND HIS COLLEAGUES WERE NOT PROCLAIMING THE RETURN OF CHRIST BECAUSE IT WAS WHAT THEY WANTED TO BELIEVE.

THE MESSAGE THEY DELIVERED WAS NOT A MATTER OF THEIR OWN INTERPRETATION, BUT GOD'S OWN PROMISE.

PETER'S RECOLLECTION OF JESUS' TRANSFIGURATION SUGGESTED THAT THE WHOLE WORLD ONE DAY WOULD SEE JESUS SHINE IN GLORY, LIKE HE DID ON THAT DAY.

THE CHRISTIAN RESPONSE TO THIS TRUTH IS-- FOR US TO LIVE IN ANTICIPATION OF CHRIST'S SECOND COMING AND NOT IN DOUBT OR DENIAL.

THE POINT IS NOT FOR US TO LIVE IN FEAR-BUT IN THE LIGHT OF CHRIST WHO REMAINS WITHIN US.

TODAY PETER'S WORDS CONCERNING THE PROPHECY OF SCRIPTURE REGARDING THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST IS SOMETHING WE ALSO NEED TO HEAR.

HIS WORDS REMIND CHRISTIANS THAT CHRIST'S RETURN IS GOD'S PLAN NOT WISHFUL THINKING.

SCRIPTURE CALLS US TO BE ALWAYS READY FOR THAT RETURN, BUT ALSO TO BE READY FOR GOD'S SPIRIT TO TEACH, AND DIRECT US WHILE WE WAIT FOR JESUS' RETURN.

FURTHERMORE, PETER REMINDS US THAT NOT EVERYONE WHO INVOKES THE NAME OF JESUS REALLY LOVES HIM OR TRIES TO FOLLOW HIM.

THIS IS TRUE FOR RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL, AND OTHER LEADERS, TEACHERS, AS WELL AS ORDINARY PEOPLE.

SO, WE NEED TO LISTEN TO OTHERS, BUT ALSO STUDY THE BIBLE OURSELVES, AND PRAY FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT TO HELP US IN OUR EVERYDAY LIVES, DECISIONS, AND CHOICES.

MAY WE HEAR AND FOLLOW THIS CALL TO ACTIVE FAITH AND LEARNING AS WE PREPARE TO EMBARK ON OUR LENTEN JOURNEY. AMEN

SERMON SUMMARY- 2 PETER 1:16-21

TODAY, ON TRANSFIGURATION SUNDAY, WE IN THE CHURCH RECALL THAT SPECIAL EVENT IN THE DISCIPLES' AND JESUS' LIFE. FOR THE SAVIOR, IT WAS A TURNING POINT IN THE FOCUS OF HIS MINISTRY-THE BEGINNING OF THE END OF THE MISSION OF HIS LIFE.

THE DAY JESUS TOOK PETER, JAMES, AND JOHN UP ON A MOUNTAIN TOP WAS INDEED SPECIAL FOR IT WAS THERE THEY WITNESSED A MIRACULOUS AND A PROPHETIC EVENT.

IT WAS A CRITICAL POINT IN JESUS' LIFE, A POINT IN TIME WHERE JESUS WAS CALLED TO SHIFT HIS MINISTRY FROM GALILEE AND HEAD TOWARD JERUSALEM. THERE, AS WE KNOW, HIS DEATH AND RESURRECTION WOULD OCCUR.

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW DESCRIBES THE EXPERIENCE IN THIS WAY: "AND JESUS WAS TRANSFIGURED BEFORE THEM. HIS FACE SHONE LIKE THE SUN AND HIS CLOTHES BECAME DAZZLING WHITE."

THE GOSPEL CONTINUES ON TO DESCRIBE THE APPEARANCE OF MOSES AND ELIJAH WITH JESUS. IT ALSO SPEAKS OF THE DISCIPLE PETER'S WORDS ABOUT BUILDING BOOTHS FOR THEM-FOLLOWED BY GOD'S EXPLANATION OF WHO JESUS IS. "THIS IS MY SON, THE BELOVED, WITH HIM I AM WELL PLEASED, LISTEN TO HIM."

THAT DAY THE THREE DISCIPLES WITNESSED A MOMENTARY TRANSFORMATION OF THEIR FRIEND, FROM THE MAN JESUS -INTO SOMEONE WHO SHONE WITH THE GLORY OF ALMIGHTY GOD.

THEY COULD NOT GRASP, AT THAT TIME, THE MEANING OF WHAT HAPPENED, BUT IT REMAINED WITH THEM UNTIL THE HOLY SPIRIT HELPED THEM TO UNDERSTAND.

TODAY THE TRANSFIGURATION DOESN'T SEEM ALL THAT IMPORTANT FOR THE DAILY LIVES OF CHRISTIANS. AND YET, OUR REMEMBRANCE OF THE EVENT CAN BE BENEFICIAL IN OUR WALK WITH CHRIST.

IT HELPS TO REMEMBER THAT THIS IS THE LAST SUNDAY BETWEEN CHRISTMAS AND LENT. THE SEASON OF EPIPHANY, BEGINS WITH OUR CELEBRATION OF THE LIGHT OF THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM AND THE COMING OF THE MAGI TO SEE JESUS.

THE SEASON ENDS WITH US LOOKING AT JESUS SHINING WITH THE LIGHT OF HIS DIVINE GLORY. TODAY, WE LIKE THE THREE DISCIPLES WHO WERE WITH JESUS, ARE GIVEN A GLIMPSE OF HIS FUTURE GLORY. THROUGH THE WORDS OF SCRIPTURE, WE SEE MORE CLEARLY, JESUS AS GOD INCARNATE, AND OUR RISEN LORD AND SAVIOR.

THUS THE TRANSFIGURATION CAN BE UNDERSTOOD SYMBOLICALLY AS A MOMENTARY PAUSE IN THE LIFE OF JESUS. IT IS A MOMENT SET ASIDE TO PREPARE HIM, AND THOSE WITH HIM, FOR WHAT WILL COME.

REMEMBERING THE TRANSFIGURATION, CAN ALSO HELP US AS WE PREPARE TO PASS THROUGH THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH- ALSO CALLED THE SEASON OF LENT.

TODAY, WE LOOK PAST LENT TO OUR CELEBRATION OF EASTER SUNDAY. THIS REMINDS US THAT ALTHOUGH JESUS WALKED THE WAY OF THE CROSS, HIS DEATH WAS NOT THE END OF THE STORY.

INDEED FOR JESUS, AND THROUGH HIM FOR US, THE TRANSFIGURATION-COMING BEFORE LENT, OFFERS US A VISION OF OUR FINAL DESTINATION. TODAY WE CATCH A GLIMPSE OF GLORY OF- THE EMPTY TOMB, AND THE PROMISE THAT BECAUSE JESUS LIVES, WE WILL LIVE ALSO.

IN THE EARLY CHURCH THE EPISTLE READING FROM 2 PETER SUGGESTS THE TRANSFIGURATION OF JESUS WAS NOT ONLY UNDERSTOOD AS A PROMISE OF HIS RESURRECTION.

IT WAS, JUST AS IMPORTANTLY, A PROPHETIC VISION OF CHRIST'S SECOND COMING IN ALL POWER AND GLORY TO JUDGE THE LIVING AND THE DEAD.

PETER'S WORDS CONCERNING THE PROPHECY OF SCRIPTURE REGARDING THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST IS SOMETHING WE ALSO NEED TO HEAR. HIS WORDS REMIND CHRISTIANS THAT CHRIST'S RETURN IS GOD'S PLAN NOT WISHFUL THINKING.

SCRIPTURE CALLS US TO BE ALWAYS READY FOR THAT RETURN, BUT ALSO TO BE READY FOR GOD'S SPIRIT TO TEACH, AND DIRECT US WHILE WE WAIT FOR JESUS' RETURN.