

THY WILL BE DONE Feb. 22, 2009

2 Kings 2:1-12

Mark 9:2-9

To share the mystery and power of Elijah's life the author of 2<sup>nd</sup> Kings brings us into a world of legend and miracle. Elijah is going to be taken up into heaven, without dying. Elijah knows his earthly life is ending and says repeatedly and plaintively to Elisha—Tarry here, I pray you. Watch with me—stay by my side. The end—well a new beginning is so near. Then Elijah takes his cloak and strikes the waters of the river Jordan, dividing the waters just like Moses divided the red sea and like God at creation had separated the waters from the waters.

Then the heavens opened and a chariot of fire separated Elijah and Elisha and in a whirlwind of the Spirit, Elijah, says the text, is taken up into heaven.

Then the mantle of Elijah falls upon Elisha and he strikes the water—it divides. The sons of the prophets shout out—the spirit of Elijah, the spirit of the Lord has fallen upon Elisha.

William Blake was an artist, printer, writer and poet. As a child he came home and told his parents that he had seen a vision of angels in a tree. His father beat him for lying. Blake kept on seeing and hearing and sharing. He wrote a poem titled Jerusalem.

Bring me my Bow of Burning Gold  
Bring me my arrows of Desire  
Bring me my spear: O Clouds unfold  
Bring me my Chariot of Fire

I will not cease from mental fight  
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand  
Till we have built Jerusalem  
In England's green and pleasant land.

This movement from vision to action is the same movement we experience as we go from transfiguration down off the mountain to confronting the problems of everyday. First though let us live into the transfiguration.

While Moses speaks to us of the law and the covenant, Elijah evokes the mystery and power of the Spirit. Their aura, their spiritual presence will surround Jesus in the vision of the transfiguration. They are blessing him and communing with him, confirming his identity as the Messiah, the beloved Son, the Christ of God—and perhaps too comforting him as he enters ever deeper into the wilderness of God.

Jesus has brought his closest disciples up the holy mountain. We enter this imaginal world in which a mountain brings someone closer to God. As Peter and James and John watch and wonder Jesus' form changes—he is transfigured, transformed. Pushing through his fear Peter offers to make temporary shelters for Jesus, Elijah and Moses. Here again fear walks with revelation. The Book of Hebrews says 'it is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God.' To love God is good, to fear God is better, to love God while fearing God is best of all. These moments of revelation in our lives are awesome, and awe inspiring and in some ways terrifying. It is looking into the depths of the Grand Canyon or watching millions of gallons of water come over Niagara Falls or just feeling the total glory, mystery and fleeting nature of life.

Into these moments of fear and fascination, comes this voice of God saying Beloved Son—this is my beloved son. So the question comes to us—have we heard the voice, experienced the power, sought and found the revelation that tells us that Jesus of Nazareth is Beloved Son—human face of God—window opening into the Divine—the door to eternity. We stammer back, Well, yes I think so. I believe someday with great faith and fervor and some days with a little fuzziness and frustration, but yes Lord I believe, help my unbelief.

Now we had experienced with the disciples this vision of transfiguration and the voice of proclamation. We have been to the mountaintop. Now we must come back down the mountain. Back to our village, back to work, back to the crowds with their questions and need for healing and hope and their battles with demons.

As I was thinking about this process of coming back from the mountaintop, a song kept going through my head.

For sure, there is something very strange in the neighborhoods in which we live. Remember in Ghostbusters, the guy who just comes into their office that converted fire house. The guy just needs a job and Bill Murray, Dr. Venckman, hands him a ray gun or something and says welcome to our world where we catch ghosts and ghouls and demons and devils. I am sure he thought something like 'This is outrageous, you guys must be nuts, wackos, weirdos, psychos.'

Wait a minute though. You know something of the challenge and charge that God in Christ lays upon us as we come down the mountain, back home, back to work. Love God, neighbor, self. Love your enemies. Heal the sick. Cast out the demons. Battle the principalities and powers. Trust and believe with all your heart that I am with you to the end of the age. Return no one evil for evil. Good news to the poor—recovery of sight to the blind—release to the captives. Do the will of God.

We pray every Sunday thy will be done. O god, I want to see a world where you will become our way. And God says, Son, you do your will. Take care of business. Especially those of your with little children, get guardians. Name em and talk to em. Take care of those precious little ones. And all of you, be generous with your accumulated resources. Find ways to live out the Gospel even after your earthly life. And of course you want to do the best you can controlling the end of your life—write those advanced directives and name your medical power of attorney. Don't just pray to me—do your part. We need each other—we work together—we are partners.

Don't just love in word alone but in deed and in truth—and that means do your will with faith and foresight, with grace and generosity. There is this glory in bosom of the Lord that transfigures you and me and gives us the call and the courage to march on into eternity singing and living Glory, Glory, Hallelujah.

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