

I witness

Matthew 17.1-9

Jesus takes Peter, James and John with him up a mountain where he is transformed into dazzling brightness in front of their eyes. God's voice is heard from heaven affirming Jesus, and the disciples are terrified, but Jesus tells them not to be afraid.

Now read **Matthew 17.1-9** see p.2 for text.

A note on the passage

This divine revelation shows the disciples who Jesus really is. The appearance of Moses and Elijah (who represent the law and the prophets) was considered to be a sign of heralding the Messiah. As at his baptism, God affirms his choice of Jesus, but adds the challenge to the disciples to 'listen to him.'



Can you think of a moment when you felt close to God? How might you share the power of such a moment with others?



BAKE



Make a mountain cake. Most recipe books will contain a basic sponge recipe, or you can find one here:

<https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/classic-victoria-sandwich-recipe>

If you have a variety of round cake tin sizes, bake it in those; otherwise, make a single cake and cut it into concentric circles once it has cooled. Using jam or butter cream (icing sugar mixed with butter) sandwich the cakes together to make a tapering tower. Then ice it to look like a mountain – you could colour the icing to make different effects such as snow, greenery, rock. Decorate the summit with sprinkles or similar (something edible that reflects God's glory in the story). As you eat the cake, challenge each other to say a word of praise to God before each mouthful – e.g. God is wonderful! Is there anyone you know who you could give a slice to?



Prayer Den

Do you have a special place to meet with God? If so, why do you like to be there? Try something new by building yourself a prayer den. Find a quiet corner of the house and use whatever you like to make it special – e.g. cushions, bunting, ornaments, candles, fragrance. Add a 'prayer wall' to pin/stick notes to (it could be a cut from cardboard). You could make a tent using a duvet cover over a clothes airer. Use this each day this week during your prayer time. What difference does have this special place make to your prayers? Can you invite someone else to join you?

Worship

Watch or listen to Matt Redman's song 'Facedown' (available on YouTube with lyrics: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4FTYmgnRyDA>) Use the song as an opportunity to worship at home; if you are able, you could kneel face down as you listen. What difference does this posture make to your worship/prayer? Try making some other 'moves' or postures as you listen again, allowing your body to express your love for God.



Read *AND* REFLECT

Read the passage from Matthew again, if you can in several different versions (search Bible Gateway). Then pause and imagine yourself in the scene. Are you one of the disciples or another onlooker? What do you actually see? Take your time to look closely. What impression does this have on you? And what do you hear? Is there anything you need to do after hearing this? Share your thoughts with God. Maybe write them down in a journal or poem, or draw what you saw and felt.



The Bible reading talks about Jesus' clothes being very white. Have a competition to see who can find the whitest thing. That is, go on a 'whiteness hunt' round your house and garden. Collect together as many white things as you can find then compare them for whiteness. Try and give a reason why your objects might be whiter than somebody else's. Talk together about the importance of Jesus wearing white. What images and associations does white have? Hold one of the white objects in your hand and use it to stimulate prayer.

Choose a version of the passage to read. The first is the ROOTS version for children, the second is the NRSV text which may be suitable for older children, young people and adults.

One day Jesus went out with just three of his disciples: Peter, James and John. He took them up a high mountain. At the top of the mountain, as they stood and watched, Jesus' appearance changed, right before their eyes. His face shone bright, as bright as the sun, and his clothes dazzled white.

Suddenly there were more people on the mountain. Moses and Elijah were standing there talking to Jesus. Peter turned to Jesus saying, 'This is good. Let me make three shelters, one for each of you.' Peter was still speaking when a bright cloud moved over them. From deep within the cloud a voice spoke. 'This is my Son, the Beloved. I am so pleased with him. Listen to him!' Peter, James and John immediately fell to the ground, terrified! Jesus came, touched them and said, 'Get up. Don't be afraid.' They got up, but when they looked around, they were surprised. Moses and Elijah had disappeared and Jesus was all alone.

So Jesus, Peter, James and John went down the mountain together. And as they did, Jesus said something strange. 'Tell



no one about what you saw. Absolutely no one. When the Son of Man is raised from the dead, then you can tell everyone.'

Matthew 17:1-9

Did you know?

- Moses and Elijah were important people from the Old Testament who loved God.
- Jesus calls himself the Son of Man. He was explaining that he was going to die and come back to life – only then could the disciples tell other people what they had seen.

Matthew 17.1-9 (NRSV)

Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. Then Peter said to Jesus, 'Lord, it is good for us to be here; if you wish, I will make three dwellings here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.' While he was still speaking, suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud a voice said, 'This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am

well pleased; listen to him!' When the disciples heard this, they fell to the ground and were overcome by fear. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, 'Get up and do not be afraid.' And when they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus himself alone.

As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus ordered them, 'Tell no one about the vision until after the Son of Man has been raised from the dead.'