

Pericope Study for Sunday, February 26, 2017 – Transfiguration A
 Presented Tue 2/21/17 by Richard Burgess

Collect / Prayer of the Day

O God, in the transfiguration of your Son you confirmed the mysteries of the faith by the witness of Moses and Elijah, and in the voice from the bright cloud declaring Jesus your beloved Son, you foreshadowed our adoption as your children. Make us heirs with Christ of your glory, and bring us to enjoy its fullness, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. (ELW)

Possible Sermon Titles for Transfiguration A

As usual, use at your own risk.

Title	Ex	2 Pet	Mt
God Is a Devouring Fire	X		
In a Fog with God	X		
The Glory of the Lord	X		
Interpreted by Us but Moved by the Holy Spirit		X	
Lamps Shining in Dark Places		X	
Myths or Christ?		X	
We Have Received		X	
We Ourselves Heard		X	
It Is Good for Us to Be Here			X
Jesus Glows on the Mountain			X
Kal El Speaks			X
My Son, The Beloved			X
Now You See Them; Now You Don't; Always You See Jesus			X
What's Going On?			X

Exodus 24:12-18 (NRSV)

¹²The Lord said to Moses, "Come up to me on the mountain, and wait there; and I will give you the tablets of stone, with the law and the commandment, which I have written for their instruction." ¹³So Moses set out with his assistant Joshua, and Moses went up into the mountain of God. ¹⁴To the elders he had said, "Wait here for us, until we come to you again; for Aaron and Hur are with you; whoever has a dispute may go to them."

¹⁵Then Moses went up on the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain. ¹⁶The glory of the Lord settled on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days; on the seventh day he called to Moses out of the cloud. ¹⁷Now the appearance of the glory of the Lord was like a devouring fire on the top of the mountain in the sight of the people of Israel. ¹⁸Moses entered the cloud, and went up on the mountain. Moses was on the mountain for forty days and forty nights.

Notes, Observations, and Thought Questions:

24.12-18 "The separation between heaven and earth collapses in this passage and in others like it. God's voice and his handiwork enter the world of the ordinary." (Nelson, "Text Studies")

24.12 *the mountain* ie, Mt Sinai (see 24.16)

24.15b-18 "In the Old Testament, what God is in himself is called "holy"; what we see of God is called "glory." (Klein, "Old Testament Text Studies")

24.16 *for six days; on the seventh day he called to Moses out of the cloud* Cf creation & Sabbath on 7th day.

24.16, 17 *glory of the Lord . . . the appearance of the glory of the Lord*
What is the difference between the glory of the Lord and the appearance of it?

24.17 *like a devouring fire* What makes it seem not like a fire, but like a devouring fire?

24.15 *the cloud covered the mountain*
24.16 *the cloud covered (the mountain)*

24.18 *Moses entered the cloud and went up on the mountain*
What does it mean for something to be covered by a cloud? For someone to enter or be in a cloud? For something to happen on a mountain? What images or associations do clouds & mountains evoke in you?

24.18 *forty days and forty nights*, ie, a long time

2 Peter 1:16-21 (NRSV)

¹⁶For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we had been eyewitnesses of his majesty. ¹⁷For he received honor and glory from God the Father when that voice was conveyed to him by the Majestic Glory, saying, “This is my Son, my Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.” ¹⁸We ourselves heard this voice come from heaven, while we were with him on the holy mountain.

¹⁹So we have the prophetic message more fully confirmed. You will do well to be attentive to this as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. ²⁰First of all you must understand this, that no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation, ²¹because no prophecy ever came by human will, but men and women moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

Notes, Observations, and Thought Questions:

1.16 *cleverly devised myths* Myths can reveal powerful Truth. Here, the author seems to be pitting “myths” against historical facts. Given that, what is the “mythic” power vs the historical power of *the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*? What are the historical and mythic content of this week’s transfiguration theme?

1.17 *he received honor and glory from God . . .* Did Jesus undergo an ontological change at the Transfiguration?

1.18 *We ourselves . . .* ie, Peter, James, & John.

1.19 *a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns . . .* What are the “lamps” and “dark places” in our lives? When does the morning star rise in our hearts?

1.20-21 What do these verses say about our interpretation &/o proclamation of Scripture?

Matthew 17:1-9 (NRSV)

^{17.5}Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain, by themselves. ²And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white. ³Suddenly there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. ⁴Then 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." ⁵While 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!" ⁶When the disciples heard this, they fell to the ground and were overcome by fear. ⁷But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Get up and do not be afraid." ⁸And when they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus himself alone.

⁹As 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."

Notes, Observations, and Thought Questions:

17.1-9 What's going on here?

17.2 *transfigured* Greek: metamorphōthē "transformed", "metamorphed" How do your people use "transfigured" in their everyday conversations? ☺ I'm not entirely sure what this word means or that anyone else does either. Help me out here?

17.3 *Suddenly there appeared to them Moses and Elijah* Greek: *kai idou ōphthē autois Mōusēs kai Ēlias* "and behold was seen by them Moses & Elias". Were Moses & Elijah really there?

17.3 What is the significance of Moses & Elijah? Why not Abraham or David? Perhaps that Moses & Elijah didn't die or died mysterious deaths? Perhaps symbolizing the Law & Prophets? Anything else?

17.4 What is the significance of building three "dwellings" (*skēnas* = "tents"; KJV: "tabernacles")? Is there any Trinitarian significance to *three*?

17.5 *a bright cloud overshadowed them* Cf Ex 24.15-18.

17.6 *fell to the ground* In fear? To worship? Overwhelmed?

17.7 *Jesus came and touched them* Touch is powerful in grounding people, bringing them back to the here and now.

17.8 What happened to Moses & Elijah?

17.9 Why the secret? What is the value of knowing / finding out after the resurrection?