

BLAST – BibleLand: Adult Stuff, Too!

The Transfiguration

BibleLand rotation for 1/30, 2/6, and 2/13

Based on Mark 9:2-10 (but also in Matthew 17:1-9 and Luke 9:28-36)

The Transfiguration story is on tap for this round of BibleLand. It's an interesting little story that we hear every year in worship on the Sunday before Ash Wednesday (for 2011, that's March 6th, so remind your kids that they just learned about it!). Check it out in your Bibles, but here it is in a nutshell:

Jesus is crazy busy. He needs a break. So he goes up on top of a mountain to pray and rest, and he takes Peter, James, and John up with him. When they get up there, something...unusual...happens. All of a sudden Jesus starts shining with bright light, light whiter than any bleach could make your socks. The disciples also see Moses and Elijah appear with Jesus, chatting. The disciples, understandably, freak out, and Peter blurts something like, "Hey, I'll make some houses so we can all stay up here!" Then a bright cloud envelops all of them and a voice says, "This is my Son, my beloved. Listen to him!" Then everything goes back to normal, they all go back down the mountain, and Jesus says, "Yeah, don't mention this until after I'm raised from the dead." So much for taking a break.



In your face, trusted cleaning brand!

Your kids will be talking a lot about that shining light, and how it can shine through us and be reflected in us. How does God's light shine in you? They'll also be talking about how Peter interrupted what was happening. We all have impulse control sometimes, especially when we're trying not to soil our tunics as our friend and teacher is glowing, but we're encouraging the BibleLanders to not interrupt God when they pray, or when there's a chance to shine His love. In other words, try not to get in God's way when God is trying to get your attention, and also get to know your blind spots.

That's a big deal in this lesson, actually – getting our attention. God sort of ignores Peter's outburst, and sends a glowing cloud to surround everyone. A big voice booms out, "Hey – this is my Son. Pay attention and listen to him!" For the disciples this might not have made complete sense until after Jesus died and then was raised from the dead. But either way, God is still trying to get our attention, and He's pointing that big neon light right at the Son.

EAT AT JESUS'S

Another thing the kids will be talking about is that Peter wanted to build some dwellings, or memorials, and stay in that moment forever. We have moments like that.



When you encounter God, be dazzled!

But the Kingdom of God is not like an earthly kingdom, with borders and such; it's a kingdom on the move, present wherever God's love is being shared and God's will is being done. We can't get stuck in our mountaintop God moments – we have to come back down and (eventually) tell others about it. In the end, though, we'll never be the same – we'll be transformed because of our encounter with God's amazing power and love.

OK, just a couple more things: first, mountaintops are a big deal in the Bible. Think about the 10 commandments, the ark landing, Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, and so on. On this Transfiguration mountaintop, God makes a big announcement. Even better, Moses and Elijah show up, too! (Of course, how anybody *knew* it was Moses and Elijah I don't understand – it's not like they had a picture directory of the Old Testament. ☺) Moses and Elijah being there could mean many things, but a leading theory is that they represent the Law (Moses) and the Prophets (Elijah), the two main chunks of the Old Testament. In other words, even the pillars of the Jewish faith are on the scene to give Jesus his due and say that he is their fulfillment.

Second, remember that the disciples reacted with a mixture of awe and terror. Sometimes we lose that sense of awe-terror-reverence for God in this “nothing-impresses-us-anymore” world of ours. When we are open to seeing and hearing what God has in store, what God's trying to point us towards, and to being transformed by the experience, it's OK to be a little awe-struck, or even a little afraid. This is God we're talking about, here! But after the cloud and the voice and Moses and Elijah are all gone, Jesus (in Matthew's story) touches the disciples and says, “Get up and do not be afraid.” Jesus has our backs, y'all. Let's be transfigured by that awesome assurance.



Hopefully your transfiguration doesn't involve alien robots.

BLAST-OFFS: Conversation Starters for your family

1. Talk about a time when you were astounded and amazed by God.
2. Have you ever wanted a moment to last forever? What was it?
3. How might you interrupt God in your life? Or, what are your blind spots to God's love or wishes for you?
4. How is God trying to get your attention today?