

GLORY BE

THE LESSON: ISAIAH 6

The renowned Anglican scholar J.I. Packer wrote, “Right from the start of the Bible story, through the wisdom of divine inspiration, the narrative is told in such a way as to impress upon us the twin truths that the God to whom we are being introduced is both personal and *majestic*”.

There are many aspects to our relationship with God and to the conversations we have with him. Sometimes we tend to focus on what we need or want from him, but we also need to take time to remember to whom it is we are talking, and to bask in his presence. When we say the *Gloria Patri* we are pausing to do just that.

In the service of Holy Communion we say (or sing) the *Gloria in Excelsis*, a hymn that is based on the song the angels sang when they announced the birth of Jesus to the shepherds: “*Glory be to God on high, and in earth peace, good will towards men.*” (Luke 2:14). The 622 service uses a much briefer form of praise, but its purpose is the same. When we offer glory to God, we are joining with the angels – and with believers across time and space – in recognizing his majesty and splendor.

Throughout scripture we have these awe-inspiring glimpses of God’s glory. One of these glimpses is found in the Old Testament book of the prophet Isaiah, and describes a vision he had of an encounter with our glorious Lord.

AT-HOME CHALLENGE

At home, find a quiet place and pick one of these biblical encounters to meditate on:

1 Kings 19:9-18: *The Lord passes by Elijah on the mountain*

Isaiah 6:1-8: *Isaiah’s vision*

Luke 2:8-20: *The angels’ announcement to the shepherds*

Matthew 17:1-8: *The transfiguration of Christ*

(The Isaiah passage was used in our lesson and is written on the back of today’s handout. If you don’t have easy access to a Bible, check out www.biblegateway.com)

Read through the passage, imagining it in detail. Then say, as if you were there saying it with the people in the narrative: *Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.*

- AND/OR -

Take some time to pray through this collect, pausing to reflect after each phrase.

O God, who on the holy mount didst reveal to chosen witnesses thy well-beloved Son wonderfully transfigured: Mercifully grant unto us such a vision of his divine majesty, that we, being purified and strengthened by thy grace, may be transformed into his likeness from glory to glory; through the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (COLLECT FOR THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD, BCP PAGE 289)

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ISAIAH 6: **HIGH AND LIFTED UP**

¹...I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. ²Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. ³And one called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!" ⁴And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke. ⁵And I said: "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!" ⁶Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a burning coal that he had taken with tongs from the altar. ⁷And he touched my mouth and said: "Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for." ⁸And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Then I said, "Here I am! Send me."