

**On Mount Sinai: God Is with His People – Exodus 19:3-9, 16-20; 20:1-17**

Each day this week at Vacation Bible School we took an expedition to the summit of a mountain somewhere in the Bible. God's rock-solid Word was at the center of each and every day's mountaintop experience, and through that Word, we learned that God's message of salvation through Jesus, our Savior and Lord, is one to shout from the mountaintops and take to the ends of the earth.

The first mountain we climbed was Mount Sinai. God had miraculously brought his nearly two million people out of slavery in Egypt. So with a great display of power, God came down on that mountain to be with his people. Like parents who make rules to keep their kids from getting separated from them, God gave his people rules called the Ten Commandments that would keep them with him and with each other. These rules told his people and tell us how to love God and how to love others. Sadly, none of them could keep God's holy Law, and none of us can either. We disobey God's holy will. We run away from him to go our own way, and that separates us from God. For that reason, then, God sent his own Son, Jesus, to earth. In our place, Jesus kept all God's rules and paid the debt we owe for our sins. Because of Jesus, God is with us now and forever!

*Hear now a reading from Exodus 19 and 20.*

**On Mount Carmel: God Shows He Is the One True God – 1 Kings 18:17-39**

The second mountain we climbed was Mount Carmel. On this mountain, God had a showdown with Baal, a false fertility god, whom God's people were worshiping. The challenge—whoever sent fire from heaven and burned up a sacrifice was the one true God. The odds were against God's prophet Elijah – 450 Baal prophets to 1 prophet of the true God. Of course, God sent fire from heaven. Baal did nothing.

Times aren't all that different, are they? Our world is filled with countless attractive distractions for kids and adults that can pull us away from worship of the one true God. Schedules are loaded to bursting with the competition of work, school, sports, lessons, and a zillion other activities. Depending on those "gods" is really nothing more than shifting sand! God alone provides the rock-solid foundation for life by his presence in our lives every day. In his holy Word, God comes to us and demonstrates why he is the only God to love and worship. We are his number one love. When we make other people or things number one in our lives, we sin against him. In his Word, God shows us our sin. We confess our sin, and God forgives us for the sake of our Savior Jesus. By his Holy Spirit, he turns our hearts back to him, our one true God. Even more than that, God gives us eternal life through faith in our Savior Jesus. You won't find that in anyone or anything else!

*Hear now a reading from 1 Kings 18.*

**On the Mount of Transfiguration: Jesus Is God's Son – Luke 9:28-37**

On Day 3, we climbed a high mountain with Jesus and three of his disciples. At the summit, God revealed in breathtaking glory that Jesus really is God's own Son. Before their eyes, Jesus was transfigured and became dazzling white. The prophets we heard about earlier—Moses and Elijah—appeared with Jesus and talked with him. Then a voice spoke, saying, "*This is my Son, my chosen One; listen to him!*"

Today, Jesus, God's glorious Son, is still present with us and in us through his Word and Sacraments. In Holy Baptism, Jesus transforms sinful human beings into beloved children of God. In his Holy Supper, Jesus gives us the gift of himself for forgiveness, for the strengthening of our faith, and for the assurance of eternal life. Each day, then, becomes a mountaintop experience as we confess our sin and receive the forgiveness that the Son of God gives us. By the power of the Spirit, we grow in him, trusting in his Word and promises. As we go and tell others that Jesus is God's Son, we know that God will work saving faith in their hearts and lives.

*Hear now a reading from Luke 9.*

---

<sup>1</sup> Some of the thoughts and language for these introductions were received with thanks from the "Tell It on the Mountain" VBS Director's materials – © 2013 Concordia Publishing House. Used with permission.

### **On Golgotha: Jesus Saves Us All – Mark 15:20b-39; 16:1-7**

On Day 4, Jesus, God's own Son, climbed a low mount called Golgotha to save us. God sent Jesus from heaven to pay for our sins. He lived a life without sin for us. On the cross, God's own Son, our Savior, stepped up and took the punishment for our sin that we deserved. After that, he rose from the dead to show that he had won the victory! Yes! God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. This is the greatest news of all for us, because we finally see that Jesus is our Savior. That's good news for us to go and tell others. So let's shout that from the mountaintops—"Jesus is our Savior!"

*Hear now a reading from Mark 15 and 16.*

### **On a Mountain: Jesus Says, "Go to All!" – Matthew 28:16-20**

Our final climb up a mountain was with the eleven disciples. Jesus told them to meet him there in Galilee after his resurrection. On that mountain, Jesus appeared to them, but there wasn't anything spectacular or terrifying or breathtaking with his appearance. It was just Jesus. On other mountains there have been clouds, fire, voices, earthquakes, and the sound of trumpets. This time, it was just Jesus—risen and alive. It was Jesus, our Savior. In the end, just Jesus is enough.

The eleven disciples worshiped him. Then Jesus gave instructions to make sure his good news went to the ends of the earth. Jesus told them, "*Go, and make disciples of all nations.*" Not just to their friends and family but to all! Jesus promised to be with them always. A short time later on another mountain, Jesus ascended into heaven. Yet even though we can't see Jesus now, he is still with us and still sends us out to share his good news with all people. By his grace, God put faith in our hearts to trust in him. God speaks to us in his holy Word and comes to us in Holy Baptism and the Holy Supper. Now it's time for us to proclaim and share and tell what we know and believe: JESUS CHRIST IS LORD!

*Hear now a reading from Matthew 28*