

# Our Sabbath Scripture Stories



F A M I L I E S   R E C L A I M I N G   S U N D A Y

Read aloud: Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14

2 Peter 1:16-19

Gospel: Matthew 17:1-9

Vincent, Mary Clare, and Lucy had stayed up a bit later last night. They wanted to finish watching the movie, “Spellbound,” the award winning film that showcases a group of 14-year-old kids hooked on spelling and the National Spelling Bee. These kids train as rigorously as any Olympic athlete in their quest for glory.

“I really liked the way the boy hesitated before each letter,” Mary Clare said. “I think that helps them be less nervous.”

“The part I thought was cool was how they would ask the judge for the prefixes, the roots of the words, and the country of origin!” Vincent said. “How do they know all that?”

“They study really, really hard!” Lucy told him with a somber tone to her voice.

Their conversation was interrupted by Dad calling them into the living room for the Sabbath Scripture reading. This morning’s passage was taken from Matthew Chapter 17, Verses 1 through 9. It told the wonderful story of Jesus and His Transfiguration.

When Dad had finished the reading, he looked across the pages at his family. The expression on Vincent’s face particularly caught his eye.

“What is it, Vincent?” Dad asked his son. “You look like you are very deep in thought!”

“I am, Dad!” Vincent told him. “I was just thinking about the word ‘transfiguration!’”

“Hmmm” Dad nodded. “Transfiguration ... what’s your question about it? Do you understand what it means?”

“Well, Dad,” Vincent began. “Mary Clare, Lucy, and I were watching the movie ‘Spellbound’ last night about National Spelling Bee kids. The kids in ‘Spellbound’ would always ask about the root of a word and about the prefixes.”

“Transfiguration is a very interesting word,” Dad told him. Then he got an idea.

He turned to Mary Clare and asked her, “Can you run into the den and get our dictionary? I think that it would be very revealing to dissect the word ‘transfiguration’ like the kids did for words in the movie!”

Mary Clare hurried back with the dictionary. Dad opened the book to the “t” section and started scanning the entries. Finally, he saw it.

“Ah-ha!” Dad said. “This is just what I thought! The dictionary says that the word ‘transfiguration’ means ‘a change in form or appearance.’ Who can tell me how that definition fits our Sabbath Scripture reading for this morning?”

Lucy was the first to answer. “Daddy, our reading told us that Jesus became as dazzling as the sun, and His clothes as radiant as light!”

“Perfect!” Dad told her. “Jesus changed ‘in form or appearance’ right before the eyes of Peter, James, and John, didn’t He!”

Hillary added, “So Jesus looked different! Is that right?”

Dad agreed, “He sure did! And, can you image what Peter, James, and John must have thought? Jesus was standing before them as dazzling as the sun and as bright as light!”

Mom then took the dictionary and looked quickly at a word entry. Then she added, “So, in keeping with your movie last night, and understanding prefixes, or the beginning or words, the word ‘transfiguration’ begins with the prefix ‘trans.’ It says here that this prefix means ‘to change; to go across, or beyond; into a different place, or different condition.’ ”

“Wow!” Vincent said. “Just think of it! ‘Transfiguration’ can be broken down into the meaning ‘trans’ or ‘change,’ and ‘figure,’ like in ‘your bodily appearance.’ In other words, the word means to ‘change your appearance’! That is so cool, because that is exactly what happened to Jesus!”



Dad chuckled. It was great for the kids to get this rich understanding.

Then he added, “And the Catholic Church has many, many more ‘trans’ words! Who can think of a word that begins with the prefix ‘trans’ that means to change the bread and wine of the altar into the Body and Blood of our Lord?”

Mary Clare was the first to jump in. “Transubstantiation!” she shouted. “I learned that word when I made my First Communion! That means to change the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ, yet the appearance stays the same!”

“Good job!” Dad smiled. Then his eyes began to twinkle.

“Okay, now I am thinking of a word that begins with ‘trans’ that means to ‘change our lives’! Any guesses?”

Mom was the one who answered. “That word is ‘transform’! We ‘change’ our ‘form’! We are called on as Christians to ‘transform’ or change our lives to be more Christ-like!”

Did Dad have another “trans” word? You could see him thinking.

“Okay, try this ‘trans’ word!” he told them. He started to smile. “What word am I thinking of to change location from home to Mass?”

Everyone looked at each other. This was a hard one.

Finally, Dad let them off the hook. Laughing, he said, “I am going to ‘transport’ you all to Mass. It means ‘to change from port to port’!”

Then, to make things even more fun, Dad added, “And I am going to use our van for ‘transportation’ so we can ‘transfix’ on the cross, ‘transfer’ the Church’s wisdom into our hearts, and ‘transmit’ God’s love to others!”

They all stood there in silence, not believing what they just heard!

Then, at last, Vincent shook his head and said, “Dad, I think I need a ‘translation’ for that one!”