

# Forty Days

## **AWAY FROM HOME**

### *Lent Two Video*

God sent us away from home,  
dressed with instruction  
clothed and turned toward a future  
that cannot be seen  
with frightening anticipation  
and the promise of blessing.

Just one step outside of Eden,  
the air was different, so was breathing  
and our legs and our stride  
and then came quickly the question:  
“From where will my help come?”

We depended on the One who would hold our feet steady,  
trying step through the terrain, sometimes climbing ever upward  
Did we stop to just gaze at sun or moon?  
Did we notice the stars or sand on shore?  
Not like we did before—  
now only points on the path, directional  
pointing clearly to something more—  
someone who made the universe  
and its sandy beaches  
and sky and moving earth beneath our feet.

Bombs dropped on my homeland many years ago.  
Their explosions like fireworks to my young ears,  
move across the ocean of my soul  
and meet me here, a place of new sights of sounds,  
new wounds and healing and still—  
“Where will my help come?”

Coming to trust again,  
prayers are simply the cries of a baby  
connected as in the womb

to the One whose arms are of embrace  
the love of a mother for her child  
to accept as a gift,  
we breathe in and work  
to make easy, what was once effortless

Jesus went up the hill and was changed  
To see the law and the prophets  
Moses and Elijah  
His face as the burning bush  
His feet as the hallowed ground  
The disciples saw him as the Son of Man  
The one who was fully who he was,  
and meant to be,  
One who completely trusted  
Beloved Son  
And they were to see themselves in him  
Loved daughters and sons.

And we make our way on this mountainside  
Ascending and descending with our belief  
Not to find ourselves, but to enter into the life of the beloved  
Our final resting place  
Where what was lost is found  
Another new way of walking, making way  
To the place of our new birth  
where the miles we have traversed  
will be mapped upon the heart  
of the One who calls us to remember,  
to believe we will one day feel at home again.

### **Questions for Reflection**

1. The edenic couple head to a future that they face with uncertainty. They could not depend on the same things outside of the garden that they did inside the garden. How does the uncertainty of the future affect your life? What ways does this shape your faith?

2. Even though we don't always see God's presence directly, in what ways is the presence of God still seen in the "the universe/and its sandy beaches/and sky and moving earth beneath our feet"?
3. In the verse, "Bombs dropped on my homeland many years ago" I am describing a personal childhood experience from the war torn country of Vietnam. How have difficult and traumatic experiences shaped your journey?
4. Sometimes it is difficult to pray because of our disconnection from God. How can we see our prayers as "simply the cries of a baby"? How can we come back to a simpler form of longing and dependence on the source of life?
5. In following Jesus through His journey we are also changed. How do we find our identities in the life of Jesus so we might be like the disciples who "were to see themselves in Him"?

## **Practices of Lent**

The verse, "Jesus went up the hill and was changed" is a reference to the mount of transfiguration where He was with Moses and Elijah, who represented the Law and the Prophets. On the mountain, the disciples saw Jesus as He truly was, the Son of Man. The eyes of the disciples were opened; this was a holy place. However, the "hill" is also a foreshowing of another hill, Golgotha, the hill of the Skull. It is interesting to note that most of the male disciples fled from the crucifixion. The women were left to be with Jesus in His pain and death. It seemed not to be a place of God's presence, but God's absence.

In our journeys, we often move up and down these different "hills." Some places are ones of triumph and others of great loss. Some times we feel God's immediate presence and other times we feel the painful absence. However, each place is a place of change and transformation. What the disciples did not often realize, was that the journey of their Master was also their own journey. To follow Jesus is not the same as following a cult leader whose ambition is for the sake of his or her own ego. Jesus's journey is our own journey, and we find ourselves through Jesus's story and identity.

Because Jesus was fully human, we might be able to recapture what it means to be fully human through a life of walking through places both triumphant and difficult. This is why He would often refer to Himself as the “Son of Man;” He was humanity reborn.

How might you journey with Jesus during this time of Lent? How might you track your story within Jesus’s story? Perhaps it can start by reflecting on some of your past experiences that have brought you to the place you are now. For some people, capturing this story through journaling or poetry can be healing experiences. For others, it might be sharing your story with a friend or listening to others tell their own stories. Whatever way you might do this, I hope you will see your life shaped by the love of the One who has lead you here.

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