

On January 20th Amanda Gorman, a skinny black girl, descendent of slaves, stood before a nation to speak the words of a poet,
to capture our truth as a nation,
to tie it to our past and from it paint a future –
a vision of what we can be, formed from who we are, a vision of a new dawn that challenges us to take up the hard work of becoming.

Her words were forged in the deep tension of a nation divided – divided by what we thought we were promised, by the scope of opportunity which is wide for some and narrow for too many.

She took her stand before a nation filled with fear –
of what could be, of what would never be,
of what they had seen and what they had lost.

She spoke her words into an abyss where all speech was suspect, in a nation where even small acts of kindness and mercy were distorted by prejudice and fear.

She began by asking us “When day comes we ask ourselves, where can we find light in this never-ending shade?”

And as she spoke truth, she offered hope: a path forward into a new dawn, a path into the light of peace born out of the hard work of letting go and joining hands and building up.

And thousands upon thousands who heard her were struck dumb by her words, by the vision she laid out before us – the hope she offered, the truth she told.

She became a Messiah to some and a pariah to others,
and the hard work of building a lasting peace was often lost in the blinding glare of hero worship or hate.

January 20th dawned in a capital guarded by thousands of soldiers ready to step into the tension

and thousands of prayers that the struggle which caused their presence had been drained of its power
quiet would prevail.

A nation prayed that everything would return to normal and we could go about our business as usual.

The armed conflict which prompted all this may have been a rare, if not unique, chapter in our nation's history,

but in the spread of human history it is a story which repeats itself from generation to generation when the work of building peace by re-balancing the scales of justice proves hard and requires relinquishing our cherished dreams of self-importance and personal triumph....
day we figure out that we can't have it all our way
we are asked to trust that *together is not only better* but the only way into life.

So it was long ago. From the top of a high hill, through the eyes of Peter, James and John, Jesus asks all of us to trust in divine calculus as well
We watch as ***Jesus is revealed AS the future*** God has prepared.

Standing with the giants of the tradition, Moses and Elijah, Jesus is the beloved Son, and the time has come to listen once again
to the voice that comes out of the cloud,
the voice of the God we worship,
the voice which points us towards life.

This blinding vision on the top of a high hill unfolded in the midst of great tension. Just six days earlier, as Jesus' fame was growing, his power for healing drawing crowds, his teaching impressing even the learned ones...

....**Just six days earlier** when Jesus laid out the path of victory, a path that would go through - not around – the cross...

.**Just six days earlier** when Jesus drew the line in the sand and called Peter "Satan".

Just. Six. Days. Earlier.

The cost became clear and dreams needed to be adjusted, and the whole enterprise of following Jesus now included words like rejected and suffer and die.

Six days of silence between Jesus and those who followed. Days in which they had to go into their own prayer closets and consider the cost of following this Jesus, days in which each of them had **to balance the truth they knew about Jesus and the fear of what they would lose if they followed.**

So six days later, Jesus took Peter and James and John up a high hill and gave them a glimpse – a glimpse of the way it would be,

a glimpse of the new dawn which was breaking in the person of Jesus.

In the blinding light of God's presence, in the thundering words of Divine approval, in the wondrous terror of those moments, Jesus offered them a glimpse of the light of God's new creation – it was a gift of love, to strengthen them for the darkness of the days ahead

Jesus gives you a glimpse as well – a burst of light in that moment when
the power of love overcomes the weight of rejection,
where one person reaching out across the divide of race or
status results in barriers being dismantled and bridges built.

Jesus gives us a glimpse of God's kingdom when love heals old wounds
and forgiveness gives birth to new life.

You are given these bursts of light where you glimpse the Divine at work
a glimpse of the birth of a new creation
perhaps just when you were wondering if the sacrifice asked
was too high a price to pay,
whether we desired comfort more than God's will.

In **our** turbulent times,....We ***Stand with Peter, James and John*** and
listen closely and hold tightly to the vision of things to come.

Just as Jesus revealed God's glory in the moment of the
disciples' deep need, ***Jesus gives each of us just such a
glimpse to carry us through***

Amanda Gorman put it this way.

For there is always light,
if only we're brave enough to see it
If only we're brave enough to be it

Be God's light in your corner of the world. Amen