

BIBLE STUDY
March 18, 2019

The Third Sunday of Lent
Exodus 3: 1-8a, 13-15
1 Corinthians 10: 1-6, 10-12
Luke 13: 1-9

1. Exodus 3: 1-8a, 13-15

- **The Call of Moses**
 - The burning bush, on fire but not consumed
 - Holy Ground: take off your shoes
 - God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob: God manifests himself in human history
 - Moses hid his face: cannot see God and live-later Moses will see God-a sign of the close relationship between God and Moses
 - God sees and knows the suffering of his people
 - He intends to do something about it: set them free and bring them into a good and spacious land flowing with milk and honey
 - Commissioning of Moses: God will send him to Pharaoh to tell him to let my people go
 - Moses' objection: sign of a true prophet; He does not know God's name. What is God's name?
 - I AM is God's name
 - God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob: repetition and emphasis that God is a God of history/involved in our lives

2. Luke 13: 1-9

- Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with the blood of their sacrifices: although there is no known historical event that matches this, ancient historians (e.g. Josephus) attest that this is in character with Pilate
- A common OT theme (esp. from Deuteronomy) is that disasters are taken as a punishment for sin. Jesus asks if those who died were worse sinners than others. He says, "By no means!"
Just because Jesus' listeners did not die in the same way does not mean that they are any less guilty. We are all sinners in need of repentance.
- Jesus warns his listeners that they must repent now. They cannot take comfort in that their sins are any less public than those who died.
- The Tower in Siloam is a similar case. Were they guiltier? By no means! You need to repent NOW!
- You will perish as they did, i.e. unexpectedly—suddenly and without preparation
- **The Parable of the Fig Tree**

- Matthew 21: 18-19 and Mark 11: 12-14 are two stories about Jesus cursing a fig tree because it had no figs. Both are stories focusing on the miraculous nature of what Jesus did and his exhortation that faith can do all things.
- This is different. This is a story about an orchard owner who sees no figs on his tree. He complains to the gardener that the tree has not produced fruit for the three years that he has been checking it. He orders that it be cut down because it is just taking up space and valuable soil.
- The gardener asks the owner to let it remain. He will cultivate and fertilize it and see if it will bear fruit. If not, it can be cut down.
- The parable speaks of the patience of God with those who have not yet shown signs of repentance.
- It may be suggesting a reason for why the second coming of the Lord as Judge is delayed. The extended time is more time for sinners to convert.
- It is important to prepare for the end time because the time for repentance will not last forever. It is not indefinite.

3. 1 Corinthians 10: 1-12

- Paul makes a comparison between the Israelites in the desert/wilderness and us. He warns that even though they were rescued by God from slavery in Egypt and brought safely through the waters of the Red Sea; it did not mean that they were immune from falling into sin. They rebelled against God in the wilderness and were struck down by God.
- Paul uses the story of the Israelites in the desert as an allegory of Christian baptism. The cloud that enveloped Moses on Mt. Sinai and the water that sprang from the rock in the desert are signs of Baptism.
- There is a legend that the rock that Moses struck in order to provide water followed the Israelites in the desert and provided water throughout their journey. Paul identifies this rock as Christ who is our living water.
- Even though they drank of this water it did not prevent them from sinning. This allegory is to give us an example of what not to do. It is a warning to us that we should not get overconfident. Just because we are saved by Jesus' death and resurrection in baptism does not mean that we cannot sin.
- They became idolaters (the golden calf) and engaged in immorality. Many died in the desert especially from the serpents and a plague (Number 25) that fell on those who engaged with Moabite prostitutes and offered sacrifice to Baal.
- Do not test Christ=do not presume his mercy. Do not grumble/murmur=harden your heart against God.
- Upon whom the end of the ages has come: now is the time. The Lord will return soon. Be prepared and be ready.

- If you think you are standing secure, take care not to fall. Do not get presumptuous. Do not take God's mercy and goodness for granted.
- Verse 13: Immediate reassurance after a strong warning. All trials are within our human capacity to overcome. God will not let us be tested/tried beyond our strength. He will provide you with a way out. We will be able to overcome. God is faithful.