

All this happened to them as a warning and it was written down to be a lesson for us who are living at the end of the age. The man who thinks he is safe must be careful that he does not fall.

■ **The word of the Lord.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Mt 4:17

Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!
Repent, says the Lord;
the kingdom of heaven is at hand.
Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!

GOSPEL

Lk 13:1-9

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

Unless you repent you will all perish as they did.

Some people arrived and told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with that of their sacrifices. At this he said to them, 'Do you suppose these Galileans who suffered like that were greater sinners than any other Galileans? They were not, I tell you. No; but unless you repent you will all perish as they did. Or those eighteen on whom the tower at Siloam fell and killed them? Do you suppose that they were more guilty than all the other people living in Jerusalem? They were not, I tell you. No; but unless you repent you will all perish as they did.'

He told this parable: 'A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard and he came looking for fruit on it but found none. He said to the man who looked after the vineyard, "Look here, for three years now I have been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and finding none. Cut it down: why should it be taking up the ground?" "Sir," the man replied "leave it one more year and give me time to dig round it and manure it: it may bear fruit next year; if not, then you can cut it down."'

■ **The Gospel of the Lord.**

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Breaking Open the Word



THE SAVING WORD

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT / C

20 MARCH 2022

CALL TO REPENT

For the people of Israel, the Exodus was understood to be the series of events that forged them as a people. When Moses is commissioned to go to the people and tell them what God is about to do for them, Moses asks for God's name. In reply, he is given the riddle of God's name in Hebrew that means 'I am who I am, I have been who I have been, I will be who I will be'. Moses and the people are invited to enter into a mystery. On the journey towards the land of promise, they will discover who God is, and who they are as God's people.

Paul uses the example of Israel's time in the desert to lead his wayward converts of Corinth to partake in the celebration of the Eucharist in a fitting manner. Some of them felt that they could eat meat that had already been sacrificed to idols, while others were scandalising their brothers and sisters by being drunk when the poor arrived for the Eucharist. They are forcefully reminded that even the people of Israel in the desert who ate the spiritual food and drink that God provided could be punished. In other words, there is no room for any complacency or arrogance that would justify us disregarding others.

In the Gospel too, Jesus challenges the complacency of his hearers. He makes use of contemporary events in Jerusalem to shock and unsettle. Ultimately, we are reminded of God's forbearance and mercy but are also called to make the most of the present opportunity to repent.

Christopher Monaghan CP

FIRST READING

Ex 3:1-8, 13-15

A reading from the book of Exodus

This is what you must say to the children of Israel: I Am has sent me to you.

Moses was looking after the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law, priest of Midian. He led his flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in the shape of a flame of fire, coming from the middle of a bush. Moses looked; there was the bush blazing but it was not being burnt up. 'I must go and look at this strange sight,' Moses said 'and see why the bush is not burnt.' Now the Lord saw him go forward to look, and God called to him from the middle of the bush. 'Moses, Moses!' he said. 'Here I am' he answered. 'Come no nearer' he said. 'Take off your shoes, for the place on which you stand is holy ground. I am the God of your father,' he said 'the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.' At this Moses covered his face, afraid to look at God.

And the Lord said, 'I have seen the miserable state of my people in Egypt. I have heard their appeal to be free of their slave-drivers. Yes, I am well aware of their sufferings. I mean to deliver them out of the hands of the Egyptians and bring them up out of that land to a land rich and broad, a land where milk and honey flow.'

Then Moses said to God, 'I am to go, then, to the sons of Israel and say to them, "The God of your fathers has sent me to you." But if they ask me what his name is, what am I to tell them?' And God said to Moses, 'I Am who I Am. This' he added 'is what you must say to the sons of Israel: "The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you." This is my name for all time; by this name I shall be invoked for all generations to come.'

■ **The word of the Lord.**

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 102:1-4, 6-8, 11. R. v. 8
R. The Lord is kind and merciful.

1. My soul, give thanks to the Lord, / all my being, bless his holy name. / My soul, give thanks to the Lord / and never forget all his blessings. **R.**



2. It is he who forgives all your guilt, / who heals every one of your ills, / who redeems your life from the grave, / who crowns you with love and compassion. **R.**
3. The Lord does deeds of justice, / gives judgement for all who are oppressed. / He made known his ways to Moses / and his deeds to Israel's sons. **R.**
4. The Lord is compassion and love, / slow to anger and rich in mercy. / For as the heavens are high above the earth / so strong is his love for those who fear him. **R.**

SECOND READING

1 Cor 10:1-6, 10-12

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians

All this that happened to the people of Moses in the desert was written for our benefit.

I want to remind you, brothers, how our fathers were all guided by a cloud above them and how they all passed through the sea. They were all baptised into Moses in this cloud and in this sea; all ate the same spiritual food and all drank the same spiritual drink, since they all drank from the spiritual rock that followed them as they went, and that rock was Christ. In spite of this, most of them failed to please God and their corpses littered the desert.

These things all happened as warnings for us, not to have the wicked lusts for forbidden things that they had. You must never complain: some of them did, and they were killed by the Destroyer.