

**Third Sunday in Lent**  
**Cycle C RCL**  
**Revised**

**Exodus 3:1-15**

This passage comes mainly from the Elohist writer (E) who wrote in the northern kingdom of Israel in the 8<sup>th</sup> century BCE, though it does contain some material from the Yahwist (J), who wrote in the south during the previous century. One characteristic of E before Exodus 3:15 is that E does not use God's personal name "Yahweh" (translated "LORD" in most English versions). The reason for this reluctance to use the divine name is in order to save it for revelation in this passage where E relates it to the Hebrew verb *'ehyeh* ("I will be"). God is the one who *will be with* the people of Israel, as his very name suggests. The actual location of Mt. Horeb (E) or Sinai (J) is unknown, but tradition locates it at the tip of the Sinai Peninsula at *jebel musa*.

**Psalms 63:1-8**

*Laments* are designed to rouse God to action on behalf of the petitioner in a time of distress. Most often laments describe the psalmist's wretched situation and give a series of arguments as to why God ought to render help. The present psalm, however, devotes most of the poem to a recitation of God's presence and saving acts in the psalmist's life. Only in vs. 9 do we find the actual problem mentioned (wicked enemies). The translation "loving-kindness" for *xesed* in vs. 3 is misleading. The word *xesed* refers to the quality of faithfulness, in this case, God's faithfulness to the divine promises made to Israel.

**1 Corinthians 10:1-13**

Although God rescued the Israelites by mighty acts, the disobedience of some of the people led to disaster. The Christians in Corinth, Paul warns, must be on their guard lest their spiritual excesses make them guilty of both the idolatry and the sexual misconduct that doomed many of the Israelites on the way to Canaan. Paul's opponents in Corinth claimed for themselves a superior religious consciousness, but Paul countered that their superior consciousness was only the old immorality in disguise.

**Luke 13:1-9**

The material in this section is unique to Luke's Gospel and reflects the Gospel writer's interest in local history. Although the Jewish historian Josephus relates instances of Pilate's cruelty toward Jews and his disdain for Jewish religious practices, the slaughter of the Galileans is not specifically mentioned in his writings. Further, the disaster at the "tower of Siloam" is also unattested in other ancient sources. Indeed, we cannot even say with certainty where the tower of Siloam was except to suppose it formed part of the city's wall system near the Pool of Siloam at the southern end of the Ophel Ridge. Whatever their literary history, however, the author of the Third Gospel believes that these disasters point to the advent of the last age rather than to the special wickedness of those victimized by them.