



**DAILY BREAD
LECTIONARY DEVOTIONS
LENT 3 —YEAR B**

INVOCATION

L: In the name of the Father
and of the Son +
and of the Holy Spirit.

G: Amen

PSALM OF THE DAY: PSALM 19

A: Lord, you have the words of everlasting life.

L: The heavens declare the glory of God;

G: the skies proclaim the work of his hands.

L: Their voice goes out into all the earth,

G: their words to the ends of the world.

L: The law of the LORD is perfect,

G: giving joy to the heart.

L: The commands of the LORD are radiant,

G: giving light to the eyes.

L: They are more precious than gold;

G: they are sweeter than honey.

L: By them is your servant taught;

G: in keeping them there is great reward.

L: May the words of my mouth and the meditation
of my heart

G: be pleasing in your sight, O LORD, my Redeemer.

A: Lord, you have the words of everlasting life.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

L: Almighty God, look with favor on your humble servants and stretch out the right hand of your power to defend us against all our enemies; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

READING & MEDITATION *see next page*

PRAYER

LORD'S PRAYER

**A: Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.**

VERSE OF THE DAY

A: Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. (John 3:14, 15)

BENEDICTION

L: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ
and the love of God
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with you all.

A: Amen

READING AND MEDITATION:

Third Sunday in Lent: Lent shows us that God is serious about *all* of his Word.

As you study this week, seek to find the connecting theme in all the lessons by using Luther's Four Big Barber Questions to ponder and discuss each individual reading:

1. *What is God saying to me in this lesson?*
2. *For what does this lesson lead me to give thanks?*
3. *What sins does this lesson lead me to confess?*
4. *For what does this lesson lead me to pray?*

THE GOSPEL: JOHN 2:13-22

People in Jesus' day seemed to assume that because they had the temple, the Word, the sacrifices, they had a license to do whatever they pleased, even in the temple. Not much has changed, has it? But Jesus would have none of it. He is serious about his Word and about this house and what went on there. For the temple and its sacrifices were supposed to mirror what Jesus himself was: God's dwelling place on earth! Let no one think now that Jesus has lost any of his zeal for the house of the church and his sanctuary in the gospel (cf. Luther's Large Catechism, Third Commandment) which bears him and reveals him before the world. So great was his love that he gave himself to be destroyed; so great was his love that he came back in three days; so great is his love that he continues dwelling in his sanctuary of Word and sacrament to this day, and through them dwelling in us as his temples. What would he drive out of you today? The Old Testament lesson tells us.

My takeaways:

FIRST LESSON: EXODUS 20:1-17

These are the commandments (not the suggestions or pious wishes!) of the *LORD our God*. As Luther reminds us, the word LORD really means Savior. As Savior he gives himself to us. But in doing so *he* remains God. We do not become God; he gives himself to us as Savior on *his* terms, not ours. So he saves us from our slavery in Egypt; he saves us from our running back again to slavery. But every time he saves us it is so that we can live in obedience, not in license. Notice that such obedience starts with love for God and shows itself in service to our neighbor. Love and service are never perfect, and therefore his work as Savior is our constant need. But love and service are never optional either. Thus he gave the law not because he needed our obedience, but because our neighbor needs our obedience to the law and we need his. God chooses to take it personally if we hurt the other, whom he loves as much as he loves us. That makes God, even in the law, always the one who loves us; it makes us always what we see so plainly in Lent, sinners. Jesus came to Lent to rescue us from slavery, and he brings back again not to license, but to obedience.

My takeaways:

SECOND LESSON: 1 CORINTHIANS 1:22-25

The Jews were not really satisfied with the mirror of the Savior that they had in the temple. They wanted the repetition of the spectacular miracles of the Exodus, even though they knew that those miracles did not create a saving relationship with God. That happened only through the promise of the Savior in the Word and in bloody sacrifices that pictured his work. The Greeks wanted another Socrates or another Aristotle, even though a thousand philosophers who followed them could bring no peace to the conscience or reason for life. The salvation desperately needed by both Jews and Greeks is to be found only in submission to God's solution to our need, in the temple and wisdom of God Incarnate. We see it and receive it in the weakness of the cross and the power of the Word.

My takeaways:

**SUPPLEMENTAL SECOND LESSON:
ROMANS 8:1-10**

There is a struggle of cosmic proportions going on in Lent, in the Word, in us. The law has the enormous power to kill, to enslave, to condemn and to curse. For its curses there is no cure. The flesh has no strength to free itself from condemnation nor even the desire to rid itself of the curse. That's how total our need is! Only the proclamation of *no condemnation!* because of the work of Christ can break the shackles and set us free. But if we insist on running back to slavery, slavery is what we will have. Now we have with freedom from condemnation the struggle against the flesh and its desire to reassert control. If we perceive no struggle, then either we are already in heaven, or we have given ourselves again to the control of the flesh. God is serious; we had better be!

My takeaways:

What major theme(s) connect(s) all the lessons?