
Narrative Lectionary

Year 3 | The Year of Luke

Scripture Readings

February 28, 2021

*The Second Sunday
in Lent*

..... **About the text**

WHAT MAKES YOU BETTER than someone who fell off their roof and landed in a hedge? Or than that woman whose mugshot was plastered all over Facebook?

The lives of the unfortunate are a staple of on-line and print news. Local TV stations would have no newscast without them. Who died, who committed a crime, who was victimized—many want to know. We especially want to know who did something humiliating or just plain dumb.

We might be looking for affirmation that we'd not get caught like that (so far). Or, we might be looking for handy tips, a kind of "what *not* to do" or to be.

Jesus has a word for us, one that we've heard often. He reminds us: "There, but for the grace of God..."



Luke 13:1-9, 31-35

1 At that very time there were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. ² He asked them, "Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans?" ³ No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. ⁴ Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them—do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem?" ⁵ No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did."

6 Then he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. ⁷ So he said to the gardener, 'See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?' ⁸ He replied, 'Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. ⁹ If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.'"

31 At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to him, "Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you."

³² He said to them, "Go and tell that fox for me, 'Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and

1 About that time some people came up and told him about the Galileans Pilate had killed while they were at worship, mixing their blood with the blood of the sacrifices on the altar. ² Jesus responded, "Do you think those murdered Galileans were worse sinners than all other Galileans?" ³ Not at all. Unless you turn to God, you too will die. ⁴ And those eighteen in Jerusalem the other day, the ones crushed and killed when the Tower of Siloam collapsed and fell on them, do you think they were worse citizens than all other Jerusalemites?" ⁵ Not at all. Unless you turn to God, you too will die."

6 Then he told them a story: "A man had an apple tree planted in his front yard. He came to it expecting to find apples, but there weren't any. ⁷ He said to his gardener, 'What's going on here? For three years now I've come to this tree expecting apples and not one apple have I found. Chop it down! Why waste good ground with it any longer?'"

⁸ "The gardener said, 'Let's give it another year. I'll dig around it and fertilize, ⁹ and maybe it will produce next year; if it doesn't, then chop it down.'"

31 Just then some Pharisees came up and said, "Run for your life! Herod's on the hunt. He's out to kill you!"

32 Jesus said, "Tell that fox that I've no time for him right now. Today and

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tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work. ³³ Yet today, tomorrow, and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed outside of Jerusalem.' ³⁴ Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! ³⁵ See, your house is left to you. And I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when you say, 'Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

The Message

tomorrow I'm busy clearing out the demons and healing the sick; the third day I'm wrapping things up. ³³ Besides, it's not proper for a prophet to come to a bad end outside Jerusalem.

³⁴ Jerusalem, Jerusalem, killer of prophets, abuser of the messengers of God! · How often I've longed to gather your children, gather your children like a hen, · Her brood safe under her wings—but you refused and turned away!

³⁵ And now it's too late: You won't see me again until the day you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of God.'"

Psalm 122

A Song of Ascents. Of David.

1 I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the LORD!" · 2 Our feet are standing within your gates, O Jerusalem.

3 Jerusalem—built as a city that is bound firmly together. · 4 To it the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, · as was decreed for Israel, to give thanks to the name of the LORD. · 5 For there the thrones for judgment were set up, the thrones of the house of David.

6 Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: "May they prosper who love you. · 7 Peace be within your walls, and security within your towers."

8 For the sake of my relatives and friends I will say, "Peace be within you." · 9 For the sake of the house of the LORD our God, I will seek your good.

A PILGRIM SONG OF DAVID

1 When they said, "Let's go to the house of GOD," · my heart leaped for joy. · 2 And now we're here, O Jerusalem, inside Jerusalem's walls!

3 Jerusalem, well-built city, built as a place for worship! · 4 The city to which the tribes ascend, all GOD'S tribes go up to worship, · To give thanks to the name of GOD—this is what it means to be Israel. · 5 Thrones for righteous judgment are set there, famous David-thrones.

6 Pray for Jerusalem's peace! Prosperity to all you Jerusalem-lovers! · 7 Friendly insiders, get along! Hostile outsiders, keep your distance! · 8 For the sake of my family and friends, I say it again: live in peace! · 9 For the sake of the house of our God, GOD, I'll do my very best for you.

The Narrative Lectionary presents the story of God's work in humanity through a single Gospel each year. This is Year 3: The Year of Luke.