

Sunday, September 3, 2023

Scripture Reading: Exodus 3:1-15

God's love never wears out. —Rick Warren

In his book, *Secrets in the Dark*, the late public theologian Frederick Buechner tells a story about a time when someone close to him was dying, and he felt as though he were walking in the wilderness.

The hospital trips were grueling. He watched a woman he once knew fade away.

He compared his life at this time to the Israelites wandering in the desert with Moses. They seemed to have nothing to keep them going because the Promised Land sounded so remote and improbable. The wilderness often feels like a place without God, and to be commanded to love God in the wilderness seems contradictory — as contradictory and insane as a burning bush that doesn't burn up or burn out, as the Moses in today's Bible reading discovered.

But in those moments in the wilderness, Buechner uncovered what it is to truly love God.

In the wilderness, where we feel farthest away from God and when all hope seems lost, sometimes we encounter a burning bush, an epiphanic moment in which we learn about the nature of God and our proper relation to God. We learn what it means to obey God, to trust God and to love God.

Buechner says: "I loved [God] because there was nothing else left. I loved him because he seemed to have made himself as helpless in his might as I was in my helplessness. ... For the first time in my life, there in that wilderness, I caught a glimpse of what it must be like to love God truly ... to love him no matter what."

Moses was in the desert because he had run away. He was a man on the lam. He had killed a man. And now, incognito, he had started a new life complete with wife, kids, house, dog and in-laws.

But he could not run away from God. Soon Moses was standing on holy ground — in front of a bush that would not burn. He was in the presence of God, and in those moments he had a crash course in everything he had forgotten, including the notion that there is one God and one God only, and God wanted Moses for his service, as God wants us for his purposes.

—Timothy Merrill

Prayer: Holy God, help me to recognize holy ground when I am standing smack in the middle of it. I fear I miss the signs of your presence. Today, I shall be alert and ready to serve. Amen.

Daily Bible Readings

Sunday: 1 Thessalonians 1-5

Monday: 2 Chronicles 7-9

Tuesday: 2 Chronicles 10-13

Wednesday: 2 Chronicles 14-16

Thursday: 2 Chronicles 17-19

Friday: 2 Chronicles 20-22

Saturday: Psalms 100-102

Verse to Remember

*Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth.
Worship the LORD with gladness;
come into his presence with singing.*

—Psalm 100:1-2

ARE THEY IN THE BIBLE?

Directions: Circle the names of 50 people who appear in the Bible. *Answers below.*

Aaron, Abram, Aesop, Ahab, Ahasuerus, Ambrose, Amenhotep, Antigone, Apollos, Arius, Arminius, Aslan, Ashurbanipal, Athanasius, Anthony, Attila, Augustine, Baal, Bacchus, Bathsheba, Belshazzar, Benjamin, Brutus, Bryon, Buffy, Cain, Caligula, Charlemagne, Constance, Constantine, Copernicus, Coriolanus, Cornelius, Cyrus, Danielle, Darius, Deborah, Delilah, Delia, Dharma, Elvis, Esther, Felix, Ferdinand, Festus, Gabriel, Gauss, Gomer, Gregory, Gutenberg, Hadrian, Hagar, Ham, Hammurabi, Helena, Heracles, Herod, Immanuel, Ishtar, Issachar, Jerome, Jezebel, Joan of Arc, Job, Jonah, Josephus, Joshua, Julius Caesar, Justin Martyr, Kal-El, King James, Lazarus, Leonardo, Levi, Lot, Luke, Luther, Martha, Maximus, Melchior, Melchizedek, Methuselah, Michael, Mohammed, Moroni, Nebuchadnezzar, Nero, Nestorius, Nicodemus, Nostradamus, Odin, Origen, Pan, Pelagius, Pharaoh, Pius, Pontius Pilate, Prometheus, Queen of Sheba, Sapphira, Sennacherib, Seti, Silas, Stephen, Suess, Shulgi, Tarkin, Terabithia, Thalia, Thomas, Tiberius, Titus, Tutankhamun, Uhura, Zeus, Zacchaeus, Zantex.



Aaron, Abram, Ahab, Ahasuerus, Apollos, Baal, Bathsheba, Belshazzar, Benjamin, Cain, Cornelius, Cyrus, Darius, Deborah, Delilah, Esther, Felix, Festus, Gabriel, Gomer, Hagar, Ham, Herod, Immanuel, Issachar, Jezebel, Job, Jonah, Joshua, Lazarus, Levi, Lot, Luke, Martha, Melchizedek, Methuselah, Michael, Nebuchadnezzar, Nicodemus, Pharaoh, Pontius Pilate, Queen of Sheba, Sapphira, Sennacherib, Silas, Stephen, Thomas, Tiberius, Titus, Zacchaeus.