

## Foundations of Faith (A Catechism for Today)

Sunday 10 – March 5

### Question 26: How did God respond to sin?

God responded to sin in judgment by condemning it and in grace by establishing a covenant with humanity, promising after the flood never again to destroy all life. Then God chose the people of Israel to become partners in a covenant promising to Abraham and Sarah, our forebears in faith, to be Israel's God. In return, they promised to be God's people, to love, worship and serve God alone.

Gen 6:5-8 The Lord saw that the wickedness of humankind was great in the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of their hearts was only evil continually...So the Lord said, "I will blot out from the earth the human beings I have created".

Gen 17:1-2 The Lord appeared to Abram, and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me and be blameless. And I will make my covenant between me and you."

Jer 11:4 Listen to my voice, and do all that I command you. So shall you be my people, and I will be your God.

Gen 12:1-3, 15:18-21, 17:3-27 The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father's family, and go to the land that I will show you. I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others. I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt. All the families on earth will be blessed through you."

So the LORD made a covenant with Abram that day and said, "I have given this land to your descendants, all the way from the border of Egypt to the great Euphrates River— the land now occupied by the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites, Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaites, Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites, and Jebusites."

At this, Abram fell face down on the ground. Then God said to him, "This is my covenant with you: I will make you the father of a multitude of nations! What's more, I am changing your name. It will no longer be Abram. Instead, you will be called Abraham, for you will be the father of many nations. I will make you extremely fruitful. Your descendants will become many nations, and kings will be among them! "I will confirm my covenant with you and your descendants after you, from generation to generation. This is the everlasting covenant: I will always be your God and the God of your descendants after you. And I will give the entire land of Canaan, where you now live as a foreigner, to you and your descendants. It will be their possession forever, and I will be their God." Then God said to Abraham, "Your responsibility is to obey the terms of the covenant. You and all your descendants have this continual responsibility. This is the covenant that you and your descendants must keep: Each male among you must be circumcised. You must cut off the flesh of your foreskin as a sign of the covenant between me and you. From generation to generation, every male child must be circumcised on the eighth day after his birth. This applies not only to members of your family but also to the servants born in your household and the foreign-born servants whom you have purchased. All must be circumcised. Your bodies will bear the mark of my everlasting covenant. Any male who fails to be circumcised will be cut off from the covenant family for breaking the covenant." Then God said to Abraham, "Regarding Sarai, your wife—her name will no longer be Sarai. From now on her name will be Sarah. And I will bless her and give you a son from her! Yes, I will bless her richly, and she will

become the mother of many nations. Kings of nations will be among her descendants.” Then Abraham bowed down to the ground, but he laughed to himself in disbelief. “How could I become a father at the age of 100?” he thought. “And how can Sarah have a baby when she is ninety years old?” So Abraham said to God, “May Ishmael live under your special blessing!” But God replied, “No—Sarah, your wife, will give birth to a son for you. You will name him Isaac, and I will confirm my covenant with him and his descendants as an everlasting covenant. As for Ishmael, I will bless him also, just as you have asked. I will make him extremely fruitful and multiply his descendants. He will become the father of twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation. But my covenant will be confirmed with Isaac, who will be born to you and Sarah about this time next year.” When God had finished speaking, he left Abraham. On that very day Abraham took his son, Ishmael, and every male in his household, including those born there and those he had bought. Then he circumcised them, cutting off their foreskins, just as God had told him. Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised, and Ishmael, his son, was thirteen. Both Abraham and his son, Ishmael, were circumcised on that same day, along with all the other men and boys of the household, whether they were born there or bought as servants. All were circumcised with him.

Lev 26:12 I will walk among you; I will be your God, and you will be my people.

Jer 30:22 You will be my people, and I will be your God.”

### **Question 27: How did God keep the covenant with Israel?**

When the people of Israel became slaves in Egypt God heard their cry and freed them. Through Moses, God led the people through the wilderness, fed and cared for them and gave them the gift of the law to guide them. At last, God brought Israel to the promised land and raised up judges, kings and priests to be leaders among them so that they would live as faithful people.

Ex 2:23-24 The Israelites groaned under their slavery, and cried out...God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Ex 3:8 “Indeed, I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land...”

Ps 105:40 They asked, and he brought quails, and gave them food from heaven in abundance. He opened the rock, and water gushed out; it flowed through the desert like a river.

Ex 12, 13:17,21-22, 16:4-5,13-35 While the Israelites were still in the land of Egypt, the LORD gave the following instructions to Moses and Aaron: “From now on, this month will be the first month of the year for you. Announce to the whole community of Israel that on the tenth day of this month each family must choose a lamb or a young goat for a sacrifice, one animal for each household. If a family is too small to eat a whole animal, let them share with another family in the neighborhood. Divide the animal according to the size of each family and how much they can eat. The animal you select must be a one-year-old male, either a sheep or a goat, with no defects. “Take special care of this chosen animal until the evening of the fourteenth day of this first month. Then the whole assembly of the community of Israel must slaughter their lamb or young goat at twilight. They are to take some of the blood and smear it on the sides and top of the doorframes of the houses where they eat the animal. That same night they must roast the meat over a fire and eat it along with bitter salad greens and bread made without yeast. Do not eat any of the meat raw or boiled in water. The whole animal—including the head, legs, and internal organs—must be roasted over a fire. Do not leave any of it until the next

morning. Burn whatever is not eaten before morning. “These are your instructions for eating this meal: Be fully dressed, wear your sandals, and carry your walking stick in your hand. Eat the meal with urgency, for this is the LORD’s Passover. On that night I will pass through the land of Egypt and strike down every firstborn son and firstborn male animal in the land of Egypt. I will execute judgment against all the gods of Egypt, for I am the LORD! But the blood on your doorposts will serve as a sign, marking the houses where you are staying. When I see the blood, I will pass over you. This plague of death will not touch you when I strike the land of Egypt. “This is a day to remember. Each year, from generation to generation, you must celebrate it as a special festival to the LORD. This is a law for all time. For seven days the bread you eat must be made without yeast. On the first day of the festival, remove every trace of yeast from your homes. Anyone who eats bread made with yeast during the seven days of the festival will be cut off from the community of Israel. On the first day of the festival and again on the seventh day, all the people must observe an official day for holy assembly. No work of any kind may be done on these days except in the preparation of food. “Celebrate this Festival of Unleavened Bread, for it will remind you that I brought your forces out of the land of Egypt on this very day. This festival will be a permanent law for you; celebrate this day from generation to generation. The bread you eat must be made without yeast from the evening of the fourteenth day of the first month until the evening of the twenty-first day of that month. During those seven days, there must be no trace of yeast in your homes. Anyone who eats anything made with yeast during this week will be cut off from the community of Israel. These regulations apply both to the foreigners living among you and to the native-born Israelites. During those days you must not eat anything made with yeast. Wherever you live, eat only bread made without yeast.” Then Moses called all the elders of Israel together and said to them, “Go, pick out a lamb or young goat for each of your families, and slaughter the Passover animal. Drain the blood into a basin. Then take a bundle of hyssop branches and dip it into the blood. Brush the hyssop across the top and sides of the doorframes of your houses. And no one may go out through the door until morning. For the LORD will pass through the land to strike down the Egyptians. But when he sees the blood on the top and sides of the doorframe, the LORD will pass over your home. He will not permit his death angel to enter your house and strike you down. “Remember, these instructions are a permanent law that you and your descendants must observe forever. When you enter the land the LORD has promised to give you, you will continue to observe this ceremony. Then your children will ask, ‘What does this ceremony mean?’ And you will reply, ‘It is the Passover sacrifice to the LORD, for he passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt. And though he struck the Egyptians, he spared our families.’” When Moses had finished speaking, all the people bowed down to the ground and worshiped. So the people of Israel did just as the LORD had commanded through Moses and Aaron. And that night at midnight, the LORD struck down all the firstborn sons in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn son of Pharaoh, who sat on his throne, to the firstborn son of the prisoner in the dungeon. Even the firstborn of their livestock were killed. Pharaoh and all his officials and all the people of Egypt woke up during the night, and loud wailing was heard throughout the land of Egypt. There was not a single house where someone had not died. Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron during the night. “Get out!” he ordered. “Leave my people—and take the rest of the Israelites with you! Go and worship the LORD as you have requested. Take your flocks and herds, as you said, and be gone. Go, but bless me as you leave.” All the Egyptians urged the people of Israel to get out of the land as quickly as possible, for they thought, “We will all die!” The Israelites took their bread dough before yeast was added. They wrapped their kneading boards in their cloaks and carried them on their shoulders. And the people of Israel did as Moses had instructed; they asked the Egyptians for clothing and articles of silver and gold. The LORD caused the Egyptians to look favorably on the Israelites, and they gave the Israelites whatever they asked for. So they stripped the Egyptians of their wealth! That night the people of Israel left Rameses and started for Succoth. There were about 600,000 men, plus all the women and children. A rabble of non-Israelites went with them, along with great flocks and herds of livestock. For bread they baked flat cakes from the dough without yeast they had brought from Egypt. It was made without yeast because the people were driven out of

Egypt in such a hurry that they had no time to prepare the bread or other food. The people of Israel had lived in Egypt for 430 years. In fact, it was on the last day of the 430th year that all the LORD's forces left the land. On this night the LORD kept his promise to bring his people out of the land of Egypt. So this night belongs to him, and it must be commemorated every year by all the Israelites, from generation to generation. Then the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "These are the instructions for the festival of Passover. No outsiders are allowed to eat the Passover meal. But any slave who has been purchased may eat it if he has been circumcised. Temporary residents and hired servants may not eat it. Each Passover lamb must be eaten in one house. Do not carry any of its meat outside, and do not break any of its bones. The whole community of Israel must celebrate this Passover festival. "If there are foreigners living among you who want to celebrate the LORD's Passover, let all their males be circumcised. Only then may they celebrate the Passover with you like any native-born Israelite. But no uncircumcised male may ever eat the Passover meal. This instruction applies to everyone, whether a native-born Israelite or a foreigner living among you." So all the people of Israel followed all the LORD's commands to Moses and Aaron. 5 On that very day the LORD brought the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt like an army.

When Pharaoh finally let the people go, God did not lead them along the main road that runs through Philistine territory, even though that was the shortest route to the Promised Land. God said, "If the people are faced with a battle, they might change their minds and return to Egypt." The LORD went ahead of them. He guided them during the day with a pillar of cloud, and he provided light at night with a pillar of fire. This allowed them to travel by day or by night. And the LORD did not remove the pillar of cloud or pillar of fire from its place in front of the people.

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Look, I'm going to rain down food from heaven for you. Each day the people can go out and pick up as much food as they need for that day. I will test them in this to see whether or not they will follow my instructions. On the sixth day they will gather food, and when they prepare it, there will be twice as much as usual."

That evening vast numbers of quail flew in and covered the camp. And the next morning the area around the camp was wet with dew. When the dew evaporated, a flaky substance as fine as frost blanketed the ground. The Israelites were puzzled when they saw it. "What is it?" they asked each other. They had no idea what it was. And Moses told them, "It is the food the LORD has given you to eat. These are the LORD's instructions: Each household should gather as much as it needs. Pick up two quarts for each person in your tent." So the people of Israel did as they were told. Some gathered a lot, some only a little. But when they measured it out, everyone had just enough. Those who gathered a lot had nothing left over, and those who gathered only a little had enough. Each family had just what it needed. Then Moses told them, "Do not keep any of it until morning." But some of them didn't listen and kept some of it until morning. But by then it was full of maggots and had a terrible smell. Moses was very angry with them. After this the people gathered the food morning by morning, each family according to its need. And as the sun became hot, the flakes they had not picked up melted and disappeared. On the sixth day, they gathered twice as much as usual—four quarts for each person instead of two. Then all the leaders of the community came and asked Moses for an explanation. He told them, "This is what the LORD commanded: Tomorrow will be a day of complete rest, a holy Sabbath day set apart for the LORD. So bake or boil as much as you want today, and set aside what is left for tomorrow." So they put some aside until morning, just as Moses had commanded. And in the morning the leftover food was wholesome and good, without maggots or odor. Moses said, "Eat this food today, for today is a Sabbath day dedicated to the LORD. There will be no food on the ground today. You may gather the food for six days, but the seventh day is the Sabbath. There will be no food on the ground that day." Some of the people went out anyway on the seventh day, but they found no food. The LORD asked Moses, "How long will these people refuse to obey my commands and instructions? They must realize that the Sabbath is the LORD's gift to you.

That is why he gives you a two-day supply on the sixth day, so there will be enough for two days. On the Sabbath day you must each stay in your place. Do not go out to pick up food on the seventh day." So the people did not gather any food on the seventh day. The Israelites called the food manna. It was white like coriander seed, and it tasted like honey wafers. Then Moses said, "This is what the LORD has commanded: Fill a two-quart container with manna to preserve it for your descendants. Then later generations will be able to see the food I gave you in the wilderness when I set you free from Egypt." Moses said to Aaron, "Get a jar and fill it with two quarts of manna. Then put it in a sacred place before the LORD to preserve it for all future generations." Aaron did just as the LORD had commanded Moses. He eventually placed it in the Ark of the Covenant—in front of the stone tablets inscribed with the terms of the covenant. So the people of Israel ate manna for forty years until they arrived at the land where they would settle. They ate manna until they came to the border of the land of Canaan.

Num 9:1-23, 11:1-35 A year after Israel's departure from Egypt, the LORD spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai. In the first month of that year he said, "Tell the Israelites to celebrate the Passover at the prescribed time, at twilight on the fourteenth day of the first month. Be sure to follow all my decrees and regulations concerning this celebration." So Moses told the people to celebrate the Passover in the wilderness of Sinai as twilight fell on the fourteenth day of the month. And they celebrated the festival there, just as the LORD had commanded Moses. But some of the men had been ceremonially defiled by touching a dead body, so they could not celebrate the Passover that day. They came to Moses and Aaron that day and said, "We have become ceremonially unclean by touching a dead body. But why should we be prevented from presenting the LORD's offering at the proper time with the rest of the Israelites?" Moses answered, "Wait here until I have received instructions for you from the LORD." This was the LORD's reply to Moses. "Give the following instructions to the people of Israel: If any of the people now or in future generations are ceremonially unclean at Passover time because of touching a dead body, or if they are on a journey and cannot be present at the ceremony, they may still celebrate the LORD's Passover. They must offer the Passover sacrifice one month later, at twilight on the fourteenth day of the second month. They must eat the Passover lamb at that time with bitter salad greens and bread made without yeast. They must not leave any of the lamb until the next morning, and they must not break any of its bones. They must follow all the normal regulations concerning the Passover. "But those who neglect to celebrate the Passover at the regular time, even though they are ceremonially clean and not away on a trip, will be cut off from the community of Israel. If they fail to present the LORD's offering at the proper time, they will suffer the consequences of their guilt. And if foreigners living among you want to celebrate the Passover to the LORD, they must follow these same decrees and regulations. The same laws apply both to native-born Israelites and to the foreigners living among you." On the day the Tabernacle was set up, the cloud covered it. But from evening until morning the cloud over the Tabernacle looked like a pillar of fire. 16 This was the regular pattern—at night the cloud that covered the Tabernacle had the appearance of fire. Whenever the cloud lifted from over the sacred tent, the people of Israel would break camp and follow it. And wherever the cloud settled, the people of Israel would set up camp. In this way, they traveled and camped at the LORD's command wherever he told them to go. Then they remained in their camp as long as the cloud stayed over the Tabernacle. If the cloud remained over the Tabernacle for a long time, the Israelites stayed and performed their duty to the LORD. Sometimes the cloud would stay over the Tabernacle for only a few days, so the people would stay for only a few days, as the LORD commanded. Then at the LORD's command they would break camp and move on. Sometimes the cloud stayed only overnight and lifted the next morning. But day or night, when the cloud lifted, the people broke camp and moved on. Whether the cloud stayed above the Tabernacle for two days, a month, or a year, the people of Israel stayed in camp and did not move on. But as soon as it lifted, they broke camp and moved on. So they camped or traveled at the LORD's command, and they did whatever the LORD told them through Moses.

Soon the people began to complain about their hardship, and the LORD heard everything they said. Then the LORD's anger blazed against them, and he sent a fire to rage among them, and he destroyed some of the people in the outskirts of the camp. Then the people screamed to Moses for help, and when he prayed to the LORD, the fire stopped. After that, the area was known as Taberah (which means "the place of burning"), because fire from the LORD had burned among them there. Then the foreign rabble who were traveling with the Israelites began to crave the good things of Egypt. And the people of Israel also began to complain. "Oh, for some meat!" they exclaimed. "We remember the fish we used to eat for free in Egypt. And we had all the cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions, and garlic we wanted. But now our appetites are gone. All we ever see is this manna!" The manna looked like small coriander seeds, and it was pale yellow like gum resin. The people would go out and gather it from the ground. They made flour by grinding it with hand mills or pounding it in mortars. Then they boiled it in a pot and made it into flat cakes. These cakes tasted like pastries baked with olive oil. The manna came down on the camp with the dew during the night. Moses heard all the families standing in the doorways of their tents whining, and the LORD became extremely angry. Moses was also very aggravated. And Moses said to the LORD, "Why are you treating me, your servant, so harshly? Have mercy on me! What did I do to deserve the burden of all these people? Did I give birth to them? Did I bring them into the world? Why did you tell me to carry them in my arms like a mother carries a nursing baby? How can I carry them to the land you swore to give their ancestors? Where am I supposed to get meat for all these people? They keep whining to me, saying, 'Give us meat to eat!' I can't carry all these people by myself! The load is far too heavy! If this is how you intend to treat me, just go ahead and kill me. Do me a favor and spare me this misery!" Then the LORD said to Moses, "Gather before me seventy men who are recognized as elders and leaders of Israel. Bring them to the Tabernacle to stand there with you. I will come down and talk to you there. I will take some of the Spirit that is upon you, and I will put the Spirit upon them also. They will bear the burden of the people along with you, so you will not have to carry it alone. "And say to the people, 'Purify yourselves, for tomorrow you will have meat to eat. You were whining, and the LORD heard you when you cried, "Oh, for some meat! We were better off in Egypt!" Now the LORD will give you meat, and you will have to eat it. And it won't be for just a day or two, or for five or ten or even twenty. You will eat it for a whole month until you gag and are sick of it. For you have rejected the LORD, who is here among you, and you have whined to him, saying, "Why did we ever leave Egypt?"'" But Moses responded to the LORD, "There are 600,000 foot soldiers here with me, and yet you say, 'I will give them meat for a whole month!' Even if we butchered all our flocks and herds, would that satisfy them? Even if we caught all the fish in the sea, would that be enough?" Then the LORD said to Moses, "Has my arm lost its power? Now you will see whether or not my word comes true!" So Moses went out and reported the LORD's words to the people. He gathered the seventy elders and stationed them around the Tabernacle. And the LORD came down in the cloud and spoke to Moses. Then he gave the seventy elders the same Spirit that was upon Moses. And when the Spirit rested upon them, they prophesied. But this never happened again. Two men, Eldad and Medad, had stayed behind in the camp. They were listed among the elders, but they had not gone out to the Tabernacle. Yet the Spirit rested upon them as well, so they prophesied there in the camp. A young man ran and reported to Moses, "Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp!" Joshua son of Nun, who had been Moses' assistant since his youth, protested, "Moses, my master, make them stop!" But Moses replied, "Are you jealous for my sake? I wish that all the LORD's people were prophets and that the LORD would put his Spirit upon them all!" Then Moses returned to the camp with the elders of Israel. Now the LORD sent a wind that brought quail from the sea and let them fall all around the camp. For miles in every direction there were quail flying about three feet above the ground. So the people went out and caught quail all that day and throughout the night and all the next day, too. No one gathered less than fifty bushels! They spread the quail all around the camp to dry. But while they were gorging themselves on the meat—while it was still in their mouths—the anger of the LORD blazed against the people, and he struck them with a severe plague. So that place was called Kibroth-

hattaavah (which means “graves of gluttony”) because there they buried the people who had craved meat from Egypt. From Kibroth-hattaavah the Israelites traveled to Hazeroth, where they stayed for some time.

Deut 1:30-33 The LORD your God is going ahead of you. He will fight for you, just as you saw him do in Egypt. And you saw how the LORD your God cared for you all along the way as you traveled through the wilderness, just as a father cares for his child. Now he has brought you to this place.’ “But even after all he did, you refused to trust the LORD your God, who goes before you looking for the best places to camp, guiding you with a pillar of fire by night and a pillar of cloud by day.

1 Chron 16:8-36 Give thanks to the LORD and proclaim his greatness. Let the whole world know what he has done. Sing to him; yes, sing his praises. Tell everyone about his wonderful deeds. Exult in his holy name; rejoice, you who worship the LORD . Search for the LORD and for his strength; continually seek him. Remember the wonders he has performed, his miracles, and the rulings he has given, you children of his servant Israel, you descendants of Jacob, his chosen ones. He is the LORD our God. His justice is seen throughout the land. Remember his covenant forever— the commitment he made to a thousand generations. This is the covenant he made with Abraham and the oath he swore to Isaac. He confirmed it to Jacob as a decree, and to the people of Israel as a never-ending covenant: “I will give you the land of Canaan as your special possession.” He said this when you were few in number, a tiny group of strangers in Canaan. They wandered from nation to nation, from one kingdom to another. Yet he did not let anyone oppress them. He warned kings on their behalf: “Do not touch my chosen people, and do not hurt my prophets.” Let the whole earth sing to the LORD ! Each day proclaim the good news that he saves. Publish his glorious deeds among the nations. Tell everyone about the amazing things he does. Great is the LORD ! He is most worthy of praise! He is to be feared above all gods. The gods of other nations are mere idols, but the LORD made the heavens! Honor and majesty surround him; strength and joy fill his dwelling. O nations of the world, recognize the LORD, recognize that the LORD is glorious and strong. Give to the LORD the glory he deserves! Bring your offering and come into his presence. Worship the LORD in all his holy splendor. Let all the earth tremble before him. The world stands firm and cannot be shaken. Let the heavens be glad, and the earth rejoice! Tell all the nations, “The LORD reigns!” Let the sea and everything in it shout his praise! Let the fields and their crops burst out with joy! Let the trees of the forest sing for joy before the LORD, for he is coming to judge the earth. Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good! His faithful love endures forever. Cry out, “Save us, O God of our salvation! Gather and rescue us from among the nations, so we can thank your holy name and rejoice and praise you.” Praise the LORD, the God of Israel, who lives from everlasting to everlasting! And all the people shouted “Amen!” and praised the LORD .

Ps 107:1-9 Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good! His faithful love endures forever. Has the LORD redeemed you? Then speak out! Tell others he has redeemed you from your enemies. For he has gathered the exiles from many lands, from east and west, from north and south. Some wandered in the wilderness, lost and homeless. Hungry and thirsty, they nearly died. “ LORD, help!” they cried in their trouble, and he rescued them from their distress. He led them straight to safety, to a city where they could live. Let them praise the LORD for his great love and for the wonderful things he has done for them. For he satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things.

Isa 48:21 They were not thirsty when he led them through the desert. He divided the rock, and water gushed out for them to drink.

**Question 28: Did Israel keep its covenant with God?**

Israel often broke the covenant with God. No sooner had the people been liberated from Egypt, than they fashioned a golden calf and worshipped it. In the promised land they often abandoned the worship of God for other gods and were led astray into sin. They also failed to act justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with their God.

Ex 32:1-4 The people gathered around Aaron, and said to him, “Come, make gods for us ...” So all the people took off the gold rings from their ears, and brought them to Aaron. He took the gold from them, formed it in a mould, and cast an image of a calf; and they said, “These are your gods, O Israel who brought you up of the land of Egypt!”

Hos 11:1-2 When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son. The more I called them, the more they went from me; they kept sacrificing to the Baals, and offering incense to idols.

Deut 9:6-14, 32:10-43 You must recognize that the LORD your God is not giving you this good land because you are good, for you are not—you are a stubborn people. “Remember and never forget how angry you made the LORD your God out in the wilderness. From the day you left Egypt until now, you have been constantly rebelling against him. Even at Mount Sinai you made the LORD so angry he was ready to destroy you. This happened when I was on the mountain receiving the tablets of stone inscribed with the words of the covenant that the LORD had made with you. I was there for forty days and forty nights, and all that time I ate no food and drank no water. The LORD gave me the two tablets on which God had written with his own finger all the words he had spoken to you from the heart of the fire when you were assembled at the mountain. “At the end of the forty days and nights, the LORD handed me the two stone tablets inscribed with the words of the covenant. Then the LORD said to me, ‘Get up! Go down immediately, for the people you brought out of Egypt have corrupted themselves. How quickly they have turned away from the way I commanded them to live! They have melted gold and made an idol for themselves!’ “The LORD also said to me, ‘I have seen how stubborn and rebellious these people are. Leave me alone so I may destroy them and erase their name from under heaven. Then I will make a mighty nation of your descendants, a nation larger and more powerful than they are.’

He found them in a desert land, in an empty, howling wasteland. He surrounded them and watched over them; he guarded them as he would guard his own eyes. Like an eagle that rouses her chicks and hovers over her young, so he spread his wings to take them up and carried them safely on his pinions. The LORD alone guided them; they followed no foreign gods. He let them ride over the highlands and feast on the crops of the fields. He nourished them with honey from the rock and olive oil from the stony ground. He fed them yogurt from the herd and milk from the flock, together with the fat of lambs. He gave them choice rams from Bashan, and goats, together with the choicest wheat. You drank the finest wine, made from the juice of grapes. “But Israel soon became fat and unruly; the people grew heavy, plump, and stuffed! Then they abandoned the God who had made them; they made light of the Rock of their salvation. They stirred up his jealousy by worshiping foreign gods; they provoked his fury with detestable deeds. They offered sacrifices to demons, which are not God, to gods they had not known before, to new gods only recently arrived, to gods their ancestors had never feared. You neglected the Rock who had fathered you; you forgot the God who had given you birth. “The LORD saw this and drew back, provoked to anger by his own sons and daughters. He said, ‘I will abandon them; then see what becomes of them. For they are a twisted generation, children without integrity. They have roused my jealousy by worshiping things that are not God; they have provoked my anger with their useless idols. Now I will rouse their jealousy through people who are not even a people; I will provoke their anger through the foolish Gentiles. For my anger blazes forth like fire and burns to the depths of the grave. It devours the earth and all its crops and ignites the foundations of the mountains. I will heap disasters upon them and shoot them down with my arrows. I will weaken

them with famine, burning fever, and deadly disease. I will send the fangs of wild beasts and poisonous snakes that glide in the dust. Outside, the sword will bring death, and inside, terror will strike both young men and young women, both infants and the aged. I would have annihilated them, wiping out even the memory of them. But I feared the taunt of Israel's enemy, who might misunderstand and say, "Our own power has triumphed! The LORD had nothing to do with this!" "But Israel is a senseless nation; the people are foolish, without understanding. Oh, that they were wise and could understand this! Oh, that they might know their fate! How could one person chase a thousand of them, and two people put ten thousand to flight, unless their Rock had sold them, unless the LORD had given them up? But the rock of our enemies is not like our Rock, as even they recognize. Their vine grows from the vine of Sodom, from the vineyards of Gomorrah. Their grapes are poison, and their clusters are bitter. Their wine is the venom of serpents, the deadly poison of cobras. 3 "The LORD says, 'Am I not storing up these things, sealing them away in my treasury? I will take revenge; I will pay them back. In due time their feet will slip. Their day of disaster will arrive, and their destiny will overtake them.' "Indeed, the LORD will give justice to his people, and he will change his mind about his servants, when he sees their strength is gone and no one is left, slave or free. Then he will ask, 'Where are their gods, the rocks they fled to for refuge? Where now are those gods, who ate the fat of their sacrifices and drank the wine of their offerings? Let those gods arise and help you! Let them provide you with shelter! Look now; I myself am he! There is no other god but me! I am the one who kills and gives life; I am the one who wounds and heals; no one can be rescued from my powerful hand! Now I raise my hand to heaven and declare, "As surely as I live, when I sharpen my flashing sword and begin to carry out justice, I will take revenge on my enemies and repay those who reject me. I will make my arrows drunk with blood, and my sword will devour flesh—the blood of the slaughtered and the captives, and the heads of the enemy leaders.'" "Rejoice with him, you heavens, and let all of God's angels worship him. Rejoice with his people, you Gentiles, and let all the angels be strengthened in him. For he will avenge the blood of his children ; he will take revenge against his enemies. He will repay those who hate him and cleanse his people's land."

Ps 106:19-23 The people made a calf at Mount Sinai ; they bowed before an image made of gold. They traded their glorious God for a statue of a grass-eating bull. They forgot God, their savior, who had done such great things in Egypt— such wonderful things in the land of Ham, such awesome deeds at the Red Sea. So he declared he would destroy them. But Moses, his chosen one, stepped between the LORD and the people. He begged him to turn from his anger and not destroy them.

Isa 46:3-13 "Listen to me, descendants of Jacob, all you who remain in Israel. I have cared for you since you were born. Yes, I carried you before you were born. I will be your God throughout your lifetime— until your hair is white with age. I made you, and I will care for you. I will carry you along and save you. "To whom will you compare me? Who is my equal? Some people pour out their silver and gold and hire a craftsman to make a god from it. Then they bow down and worship it! They carry it around on their shoulders, and when they set it down, it stays there. It can't even move! And when someone prays to it, there is no answer. It can't rescue anyone from trouble. "Do not forget this! Keep it in mind! Remember this, you guilty ones. Remember the things I have done in the past. For I alone am God! I am God, and there is none like me. Only I can tell you the future before it even happens. Everything I plan will come to pass, for I do whatever I wish. I will call a swift bird of prey from the east— a leader from a distant land to come and do my bidding. I have said what I would do, and I will do it. "Listen to me, you stubborn people who are so far from doing right. For I am ready to set things right, not in the distant future, but right now! I am ready to save Jerusalem and show my glory to Israel.

Hos 13:1-6 When the tribe of Ephraim spoke, the people shook with fear, for that tribe was important in Israel. But the people of Ephraim sinned by worshipping Baal and thus sealed their destruction. Now

they continue to sin by making silver idols, images shaped skillfully with human hands. “Sacrifice to these,” they cry, “and kiss the calf idols!” Therefore, they will disappear like the morning mist, like dew in the morning sun, like chaff blown by the wind, like smoke from a chimney. “I have been the LORD your God ever since I brought you out of Egypt. You must acknowledge no God but me, for there is no other savior. I took care of you in the wilderness, in that dry and thirsty land. But when you had eaten and were satisfied, you became proud and forgot me.

Jer 2:1-8, 11, 31:31-33

1 The LORD gave me another message. He said, 2 “Go and shout this message to Jerusalem. This is what the LORD says: “I remember how eager you were to please me as a young bride long ago, how you loved me and followed me even through the barren wilderness. 3 In those days Israel was holy to the LORD, the first of his children. All who harmed his people were declared guilty, and disaster fell on them. I, the LORD, have spoken!” 4 Listen to the word of the LORD, people of Jacob—all you families of Israel! 5 This is what the LORD says: “What did your ancestors find wrong with me that led them to stray so far from me? They worshiped worthless idols, only to become worthless themselves. 6 They did not ask, ‘Where is the LORD who brought us safely out of Egypt and led us through the barren wilderness— a land of deserts and pits, a land of drought and death, where no one lives or even travels?’ 7 “And when I brought you into a fruitful land to enjoy its bounty and goodness, you defiled my land and corrupted the possession I had promised you. 8 The priests did not ask, ‘Where is the LORD?’ Those who taught my word ignored me, the rulers turned against me, and the prophets spoke in the name of Baal, wasting their time on worthless idols.

1 The LORD gave another message to Jeremiah. He said, 2 “Remind the people of Judah and Jerusalem about the terms of my covenant with them. 3 Say to them, ‘This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: Cursed is anyone who does not obey the terms of my covenant! 4 For I said to your ancestors when I brought them out of the iron-smelting furnace of Egypt, “If you obey me and do whatever I command you, then you will be my people, and I will be your God.” 5 I said this so I could keep my promise to your ancestors to give you a land flowing with milk and honey—the land you live in today.’” Then I replied, “Amen, LORD! May it be so.” 6 Then the LORD said, “Broadcast this message in the streets of Jerusalem. Go from town to town throughout the land and say, ‘Remember the ancient covenant, and do everything it requires. 7 For I solemnly warned your ancestors when I brought them out of Egypt, “Obey me!” I have repeated this warning over and over to this day, 8 but your ancestors did not listen or even pay attention. Instead, they stubbornly followed their own evil desires. And because they refused to obey, I brought upon them all the curses described in this covenant.’” 9 Again the LORD spoke to me and said, “I have discovered a conspiracy against me among the people of Judah and Jerusalem. 10 They have returned to the sins of their ancestors. They have refused to listen to me and are worshiping other gods. Israel and Judah have both broken the covenant I made with their ancestors. 11 Therefore, this is what the LORD says: I am going to bring calamity upon them, and they will not escape. Though they beg for mercy, I will not listen to their cries. 12 Then the people of Judah and Jerusalem will pray to their idols and burn incense before them. But the idols will not save them when disaster strikes! 13 Look now, people of Judah; you have as many gods as you have towns. You have as many altars of shame—altars for burning incense to your god Baal—as there are streets in Jerusalem. 14 “Pray no more for these people, Jeremiah. Do not weep or pray for them, for I will not listen to them when they cry out to me in distress. 15 “What right do my beloved people have to come to my Temple, when they have done so many immoral things? Can their vows and sacrifices prevent their destruction? They actually rejoice in doing evil! 16 I, the LORD, once called them a thriving olive tree, beautiful to see and full of good fruit. But now I have sent the fury of their enemies to burn them with fire, leaving them charred and broken. 17 “I, the LORD of Heaven’s Armies, who planted this olive tree, have ordered it destroyed. For the people of Israel and Judah have done evil, arousing my anger by burning incense to Baal.” 18

Then the LORD told me about the plots my enemies were making against me. 19 I was like a lamb being led to the slaughter. I had no idea that they were planning to kill me! “Let’s destroy this man and all his words,” they said. “Let’s cut him down, so his name will be forgotten forever.” 20 O LORD of Heaven’s Armies, you make righteous judgments, and you examine the deepest thoughts and secrets. Let me see your vengeance against them, for I have committed my cause to you. 21 This is what the LORD says about the men of Anathoth who wanted me dead. They had said, “We will kill you if you do not stop prophesying in the LORD’s name.” 22 So this is what the LORD of Heaven’s Armies says about them: “I will punish them! Their young men will die in battle, and their boys and girls will starve to death. 23 Not one of these plotters from Anathoth will survive, for I will bring disaster upon them when their time of punishment comes.”

31 “The day is coming,” says the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and Judah. 32 This covenant will not be like the one I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand and brought them out of the land of Egypt. They broke that covenant, though I loved them as a husband loves his wife,” says the LORD . 33 “But this is the new covenant I will make with the people of Israel after those days,” says the LORD . “I will put my instructions deep within them, and I will write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.

#### Mic 6:1-8

1 Listen to what the LORD is saying: “Stand up and state your case against me. Let the mountains and hills be called to witness your complaints. 2 And now, O mountains, listen to the LORD’s complaint! He has a case against his people. He will bring charges against Israel. 3 “O my people, what have I done to you? What have I done to make you tired of me? Answer me! 4 For I brought you out of Egypt and redeemed you from slavery. I sent Moses, Aaron, and Miriam to help you. 5 Don’t you remember, my people, how King Balak of Moab tried to have you cursed and how Balaam son of Beor blessed you instead? And remember your journey from Acacia Grove to Gilgal, when I, the LORD, did everything I could to teach you about my faithfulness.” 6 What can we bring to the LORD ? Should we bring him burnt offerings? Should we bow before God Most High with offerings of yearling calves? 7 Should we offer him thousands of rams and ten thousand rivers of olive oil? Should we sacrifice our firstborn children to pay for our sins? 8 No, O people, the LORD has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.

#### Acts 7:35-53

35 “So God sent back the same man his people had previously rejected when they demanded, ‘Who made you a ruler and judge over us?’ Through the angel who appeared to him in the burning bush, God sent Moses to be their ruler and savior. 36 And by means of many wonders and miraculous signs, he led them out of Egypt, through the Red Sea, and through the wilderness for forty years. 37 “Moses himself told the people of Israel, ‘God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from among your own people.’ 38 Moses was with our ancestors, the assembly of God’s people in the wilderness, when the angel spoke to him at Mount Sinai. And there Moses received life-giving words to pass on to us. 39 “But our ancestors refused to listen to Moses. They rejected him and wanted to return to Egypt. 40 They told Aaron, ‘Make us some gods who can lead us, for we don’t know what has become of this Moses, who brought us out of Egypt.’ 41 So they made an idol shaped like a calf, and they sacrificed to it and celebrated over this thing they had made. 42 Then God turned away from them and abandoned them to serve the stars of heaven as their gods! In the book of the prophets it is written, ‘Was it to me you were bringing sacrifices and offerings during those forty years in the wilderness, Israel? 43 No, you carried your pagan gods—the shrine of Molech, the star of your god Rephan, and the images you made to worship them. So I will send you into exile as far away as Babylon.’ 44 “Our ancestors carried

the Tabernacle with them through the wilderness. It was constructed according to the plan God had shown to Moses. 45 Years later, when Joshua led our ancestors in battle against the nations that God drove out of this land, the Tabernacle was taken with them into their new territory. And it stayed there until the time of King David. 46 “David found favor with God and asked for the privilege of building a permanent Temple for the God of Jacob. 47 But it was Solomon who actually built it. 48 However, the Most High doesn’t live in temples made by human hands. As the prophet says, 49 ‘Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. Could you build me a temple as good as that?’ asks the LORD . ‘Could you build me such a resting place? 50 Didn’t my hands make both heaven and earth?’ 51 “You stubborn people! You are heathen at heart and deaf to the truth. Must you forever resist the Holy Spirit? That’s what your ancestors did, and so do you! 52 Name one prophet your ancestors didn’t persecute! They even killed the ones who predicted the coming of the Righteous One—the Messiah whom you betrayed and murdered. 53 You deliberately disobeyed God’s law, even though you received it from the hands of angels.”

#### 1 Cor 10:1-7

1 I don’t want you to forget, dear brothers and sisters, about our ancestors in the wilderness long ago. All of them were guided by a cloud that moved ahead of them, and all of them walked through the sea on dry ground. 2 In the cloud and in the sea, all of them were baptized as followers of Moses. 3 All of them ate the same spiritual food, 4 and all of them drank the same spiritual water. For they drank from the spiritual rock that traveled with them, and that rock was Christ. 5 Yet God was not pleased with most of them, and their bodies were scattered in the wilderness. 6 These things happened as a warning to us, so that we would not crave evil things as they did, 7 or worship idols as some of them did. As the Scriptures say, “The people celebrated with feasting and drinking, and they indulged in pagan revelry.”