

Wandering, Numbers 11:4-6, 10-15, 31-33; Acts 1:1-11

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Introduction: The closeness of our loved ones is something we treasure as we live in this world. God's closeness and presence among His people is something we see throughout Scripture, and something that continues to bring us comfort today.

- I. **Jesus _____ His apostles before leaving (Acts 1:8)**
 - A. They saw Him present among them as He spoke and sent them into all the world with His gospel message.
 - B. Before their very eyes, He ascended into heaven.
"...When He had said these things, as they were looking on, He was lifted up, and a cloud took Him out of their sight" (Acts 1:9).
 - C. Jesus' presence with His people was gone. Or was it?

- II. **The Lord _____ with Israel in their journey (Num. 11)**
 - A. On their way out of Egypt and to the Promised Land, God was visibly present with Israel.
 - B. He also continued to provide manna for them to eat.
 - C. Still, God's presence and what He offered wasn't enough: "Oh, that we had meat to eat!" (Numbers 11:4).

- III. **God's _____ remains with us through His Church**
 - A. In our sin, we often long for what the world has or does and we turn from God's presence and providence.
 - B. Even so, He is with us both in His invisible omnipresence and in His visible means of grace.
 - C. His promise is that no matter where we might be, He is present and working in His Word, at the font in Holy Baptism, and at His altar in Holy Communion!

Conclusion: Our Lord will not leave us or forsake us (Hebrews 13:5). Even though times of separation come, we have the promised connection with God and with one another through His gift of faith. Here we find strength as we move forward and look for Christ's return on the Last Day, when we, together with all believers, will be in His full presence for eternity!

Digging Deeper
May 11/12, 2013
Numbers 11:4-6, 10-15, 31-33; Acts 1:1-11

OPEN:

How long does it take you to get restless or anxious when feeling alone or when you are on a long trip? What do you do to keep yourself occupied?

DIG:

1. Review Acts 1:1-11

- a. In this portion of Scripture we find Jesus addressing His apostles before His ascension into heaven. How often do we think or talk about this event?
- b. Where does Jesus send His apostles and what are they equipped to be doing?
- c. Earlier in their time together, Jesus had promised them that a “helper” would come (**John 16:7-14; Acts 1:8a**). What is this promise talking about and when was the promise fulfilled?

2. Review Numbers 11

- a. In this portion of Scripture, Israel had been delivered from Egypt and had received the Law at Mount Sinai. Discuss/reflect on these events and examine how God’s presence was understood throughout this period of time.
- b. Following a month’s journey from Egypt, God’s providing hand was at work with the manna He provided Israel as their food supply ran low (**Exodus 16:1-36**). In looking at **Numbers 11:4-6**, how does Israel respond to the manna God has given them for over a year? Do you see anything like this in your own life?
- c. God responds by bringing large amounts of quail for Israel to eat—but it comes also with a plague (**Numbers 11:31-33**). What are your thoughts on this?

(Continued)

REFLECT:

1. Israel would continue through the wilderness for 40 years due to their fear and doubt regarding the Lord's will for them and the Promised Land. How does Jesus address the apostles' questions and the Father's will in **Acts 1:6-7**? What assurances did God bring them during their wandering? What waited for generation to come?
2. Though Jesus disappeared from the eyes of the apostles at His ascension, He promised that He would remain with them until the end of the age (**Matthew 28:20b**). How can He say these words and then leave? How does Jesus keep this promise?
3. In the moments following our Lord's ascension, the apostles are given an assurance from two angels. What do the angels tell them, and how do we understand these words today?