

RESTORE
PLAYING GOD
Thursday, May 7
Reading: Numbers 11

Numbers 11:11 *He asked the LORD, "Why have You brought this trouble on Your servant? What have I done to displease You that You put the burden of all these people on me? **12** Did I conceive all these people? Did I give them birth? Why do You tell me to carry them in my arms, as a nurse carries an infant, to the land You promised on oath to their ancestors? ... **14** I cannot carry all these people by myself; the burden is too heavy for me.*

It had been a little over a year since God had delivered the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. During that time, He had provided water in the wilderness and manna for food. He had led them by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire at night. He had given them His law and the Tabernacle in which to worship. And yet the people continued to complain. Numbers 11:10 depicts Moses walking through the camp and each family standing at the entrance of their tent wailing and complaining at him as he passed by.

Moses was at his wit's end! He complains to God and even asks that God take his life instead of treating him this way. Moses' problem seems to be that he was 'playing God.' He viewed the trouble and complaints of the Israelites as somehow his problem alone – his burden to bear. Earlier God had said, "I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself" (Exodus 19:4). But Moses now complains, "Why do You tell me to carry them in my arms? I cannot carry all these people by myself..." Moses seems to have forgotten that only a year earlier God had provided quail for all the people (Exodus 16). Couldn't God do it again? Was it Moses' job to provide for Israel? God is the One who gave birth to the nation. God was the One who would provide for them! Moses was implying that he was responsible for what only God could do. He was playing God!

We do the same thing! In Day 4 of his book *Restore*, Vince Antonucci talks about firing God. We try to control our lives and only come to God (like Moses) when we are overwhelmed or have had enough!

"Christians are people who have confessed to God, 'I'm incapable of taking care of my sin'...but then every day since then we have said, 'God, I'm capable of taking care of myself.' We give God control of our eternity, but we fire Him daily and take control of our here and now."¹

In Moses' case, God reminded Moses he did not have bear the load alone. He gave him 70 elders to help him with leadership. He also provided meat for all the people. And God reminded Moses, "Is the Lord's arm short? Now you will see whether or not what I say will come true for you" (11:23). For us, God's answer is the same. Do we think that we can do it better than God? Do we believe we can control ourselves, others, and our world? If we believe that, we are in for a lot of trouble!

Why do we feel the need to control everything?

What areas in your life have you refused to give control to the Lord?

What have been the results of 'playing God' in your life?

¹ Vince Antonucci. *Restore*, p. 43