

Group Gathering Question:

God rained down manna/bread from heaven (Exodus 16:4). What is the strangest food you have ever eaten? What food could you eat every day?

Read this week's scripture and discuss:

1. When you are in a difficult place in life do you find yourself pining for the past? How is that helpful or unhelpful?
2. How did Moses respond to the Israelites' complaints and blame? How would you have responded in that situation? What can we learn from Moses' response?
3. God asked the people to trust him for manna and quail each day. How do we learn to trust? When someone says, "Trust me," what goes through your mind and why?
4. Why would God provide food that only lasts one day? What is similar to this theme that Jesus includes in the Lord's Prayer? What is the bread that lasts forever (see John 6:48-51)?
5. It's clear that the Israelites who went out to collect manna had made a mistake (Exodus 16:20). When you make mistakes how do you move forward (e.g. do you beat yourself down about it, act like it didn't happen, put the blame on someone else, apologize and move forward, etc.)?
6. Do you like being dependent? What does it mean to you to depend upon our Lord?

prayer requests

> Prayers of healing for Chrissy Koenig and Averie Wallgren.

Grumbling and complaining is a common theme from the time the people crossed the Red Sea to the long time when they wandered in the wilderness. But what is more interesting is what happens after the complaints. Moses goes to God for help – evening crying out to God for help. God does not leave the people. He provides in such a way that asks the people to trust him, to depend on him. God asks us to depend on him too and to trust him in time of need. It is a great learning experience for us as well.

1. In verse 3, the people say they wished they had died in Egypt, at least they would have had pots of meat to eat! But they can't go backwards to the past, and neither can we. We can learn from the past, but we can't back to it. We can process the past and learn from it, enjoy the present and be with people in the present, and move to the future with hope not dread.

2. Moses says in verse 8, "You are not grumbling against us, but against the Lord." Moses listens to God and depends on God. He continually goes back to God representing the people and like a prophet, represents God to the people. We can learn from Moses to pray, look to God, and share what God is teaching us with others.

3. We learn to trust by taking a step of faith. In a new relationship or in a new job, we take a step of faith to be more transparent and trust by trying something. When people say, "Trust me" we can be skeptical. When God says, "Trust me" we can do our best to trust.

4. God doesn't want the people to think they can do it for themselves or not remember him. They must trust God each day for meat and bread, for his provision. Even Jesus prayed, "Give us today our daily bread." Jesus is the bread of life, and the living water. Jesus is the one who is the way, the truth and the life. He doesn't just give us bread, he is the bread, he is the life.

5. The people were told to rest on the 7th day, and to collect enough on the 6th day for two days' supply. Many don't listen, go out to collect, and it was rotten and full of maggots. What do we do when one of our decisions is rotten? How can we move forward with God? Read 1 John 1:9 or Psalm 51 if it is helpful.

6. No, most of us don't like being dependent. Most of (especially fairly successful Americans) like being independent. God desires a relationship with us and to depend on him for guidance, for help, for provision, to be grateful and to move to the future with him.