

Bible Discussion 14: Wilderness and Gratitude

Text: Numbers 11:1-9; Numbers 12:1-3

Purpose: To be people who despite our circumstances are content, grateful and thankful for who God is and what He has done for us.

Opening Question: *What are some of the things you are thankful for this Christmas?*

Read and Discuss: Numbers 11:1-4

Israel has been dramatically freed from slavery. They are three days into their journey to The Promised Land and the people begin to express ingratitude. God's response to the murmuring was anger. God sent down fire to the people, but was limited to outskirts of the camp, an evidence of God's mercy. The people deserved wrath, but God remembered grace and withdrew the fire.

1. *Describe what it is like when others complain about the work and/or service you have done for them? (kids don't like what you give them, boss is unhappy with your hard work, spouse is slow to show gratitude, etc)*
2. *What are some of the things you are thankful for this week that God has done for you?*

Read and Discuss: Numbers 11:4-9

Within the camp were a group of disorderly people, called the "rabble". They were non-Israelites who had followed Israel from Egypt. They didn't know God and His provision. Their complaining about food spread throughout the camp and their complaining influenced and spread throughout the whole camp. They romanticized about their past and they thought their slavery in Egypt was a better season of life than the current season of freedom and God's daily provision.

3. *How does other people's complaining influence your thinking and your heart? How can you be a person that lives with gratitude and worship towards God without being enticed by others? (regularly speak of God's character to yourself, memorize scripture, get new friends, always thank God first when you pray, etc)*
4. *How is romanticizing about your past seasons of life dangerous to your worship?*

Read and Discuss: Numbers 12:1-3

Miriam and Aaron challenge the leadership role of Moses. The initial attack appears to be on Moses' wife, a Cushite woman, but that is not the real issue going on. The real issue concerned Moses' prophetic gift and special relationship with God. Because things were not going the way they thought they would, they questioned Moses' ability to hear God's directional voice. Although, Moses wasn't a perfect person or leader, the bible describes him as "meek", a humble person or submissive person.

5. *What are some of the characteristics about the leaders God has provided for you that you appreciate? (humble, thoughtful, passionate, personable, honest, etc.)*