

SEPTEMBER 22, 2021

AGAPE FROM AFAR

Adjusting to life amidst Coronavirus

A WORD
FROM
PASTOR
JILL

As a way to remain connected during this time apart, I will be putting together a weekly newsletter with a reflection based on the upcoming Sunday scripture passage. I hope that by taking a few moments to reflect on the Word of God and pray, we can feel grounded and connected to God and to one another during this uncertain time. *-Pastor Jill*



The passage for this Sunday is from Numbers 11: 4-6, 10-16, 24-29. In this story the Israelites are hungry! They have been eating manna for days, and all they want is some meat! They complain to Moses, and Moses brings the complaint to God. Recognizing Moses is overwhelmed, God spreads the Spirit from Moses among 70 of the elders. Two other men begin prophesying, and Joshua tries to stop them. But Moses encourages them to continue.

Reflect more on this passage on the following pages.



Read the passage:

Numbers 11: 4-6, 10-16, 24-29

The rabble among them had a strong craving; and the Israelites also wept again, and said, ‘If only we had meat to eat! We remember the fish we used to eat in Egypt for nothing, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic; but now our strength is dried up, and there is nothing at all but this manna to look at.’

Moses heard the people weeping throughout their families, all at the entrances of their tents. Then the Lord became very angry, and Moses was displeased. So Moses said to the Lord, ‘Why have you treated your servant so badly? Why have I not found favour in your sight, that you lay the burden of all this people on me? Did I conceive all this people? Did I give birth to them, that you should say to me, “Carry them in your bosom, as a nurse carries a sucking child”, to the land that you promised on oath to their ancestors? Where am I to get meat to give to all this people? For they come weeping to me and say, “Give us meat to eat!” I am not able to carry all this people alone, for they are too heavy for me. If this is the way you are going to treat me, put me to death at once—if I have found favour in your sight—and do not let me see my misery.’

So the Lord said to Moses, ‘Gather for me seventy of the elders of Israel, whom you know to be the elders of the people and officers over them; bring them to the tent of meeting, and have them take their place there with you.

So Moses went out and told the people the words of the Lord; and he gathered seventy elders of the people, and placed them all around the tent. Then the Lord came down in the cloud and spoke to him, and took some of the spirit that was on him and put it on the seventy elders; and when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied. But they did not do so again.

Two men remained in the camp, one named Eldad, and the other named Medad, and the spirit rested on them; they were among those registered, but they had not gone out to the tent, and so they prophesied in the camp. And a young man ran and told Moses, ‘Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp.’ And Joshua son of Nun, the assistant of Moses, one of his chosen men, said, ‘My lord Moses, stop them!’ But Moses said to him, ‘Are you jealous for my sake? Would that all the Lord’s people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit on them!’



Reflect:

1. While wandering in the wilderness, the Israelites want to return to Egypt where they (incorrectly) remember extravagant feasts. What current circumstances lead you to be nostalgic about the past?
2. The Israelites crave meat in this story. What are people craving in our community? How are you responding? How is God providing?
3. What admirable leadership qualities does Moses exhibit in this story?
4. What is this passage calling you to do today? This week?

Pray:

Gracious God, when we grumble about what we do not have, remind us of our blessings. Give us the strength of Moses to invite others to join us in ministry. Amen.