

Bible Reading Together during this Covid-19 Shutdown

December 20-26: Read Deuteronomy 4 & 8 & Gospel of Mark 9

Deuteronomy 4

Forty years of wandering in the wilderness was coming to an end and they could see the Promised Land before them, beyond the Jordan River. For the last time, the old man Moses taught them about God and God's will for them all. His sermon begins in chapter 1, but few key chapters are 4, 8 & 28.

Further Study & Discussion

- Moses compares his God to the deities of other nations (vv.7-8). Talk about the uniqueness of the God of the Bible to the other religions around us (Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism). And if you don't know much about other religions, might this be a good time to read up a little bit on what others believe?
- Moses commands the people, "make them known to your children and your children's children," the many experiences they've had with God in their wilderness journey (v.9). In what ways has your parents, if they are Christians, shared their faith experiences with you? Also, if have children, how have you shared your faith experiences with them?
- Moses blamed the people for his failure to enter the promised land (v.21). While his failings were wrong responses to the grumblings of the people he was leading, it was HIS failings. And so him blaming others for God's disappointment toward him was wrong-headed. Think about a time when you tried to blame others, and how would you do it differently?

Deuteronomy 8

My Bible subheading for this chapter reads, "a warning not to forget God in prosperity."

Further Study & Discussion

- The blessings of God are numerous. In obedience to God, God promises protection from any and all harm, and provisions for our daily needs. And more than that, he will multiply to fullness. But when life is good, we have a tendency to forget God. "Take care that you do not forget the Lord your God" (v.11). Count the many blessings in your life and take time to thank God.
- The chapter begins with the forty years of wandering, and Moses recounts the difficulties they faced together. But in the midst of the difficulty, Moses points out God's grace. Daily manna, durable clothes and shoes, protection. Remember one really difficult event in your life and recount the ways in which God's grace was revealed.

Mark 9

This chapter opens with the transfiguration where the disciples of the inner circle (Peter, James and John) got a glimpse of the glorified Jesus. This, by the way, convicts them more because they had experienced the risen Lord and yet they didn't believe.

Further Study & Discussion

- The disciples without Jesus weren't able to address the need of the father and his sick son (v.17f). Why couldn't they do anything? Who is Jesus referring to when he said, "You faithless generation" (v.19)?

- Verse 33 begins a discussion among the disciples as to which one is the greatest. Jesus tells them to reconsider the meaning of what is truly great. Applying that to our lives, are we seeking to be great from the world's perspective or God's perspective? How can we be both?