

Wednesday November 4th

Numbers 11 1-9

Key verses 11 4-6

4 The rabble with them began to crave other food, and again the Israelites started wailing and said, "If only we had meat to eat! 5 We remember the fish we ate in Egypt at no cost—also the cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions and garlic. 6 But now we have lost our appetite; we never see anything but this manna!"

When Hess phoned with the good news about Rachel's cancer becoming inactive, she said, "I've had a miracle!" In the case of Rachel it is not the first time either! Yet Rachel still won't give God the credit and turn to him as her Saviour.

The Israelites witnessed many miracles as they left Egypt about which they should have been in no doubt as to who was responsible. Now, every morning when they opened their tents, they were greeted by the sight of another miracle. Covering the ground was the white, fluffy manna. Food from heaven.

Yesterday we read, '...the Lord has promised good things to Israel (10v1). Moses was their leader, and God himself was their guide in a pillar of fire or cloud. Things were looking good so v1 of chapter 11 comes as a bit of a shock. Complaining about hardships and even in v4, 'wailing' because they had no meat!! (Having spent 10 days with my strict vegetarian brother in France last year I do have some sympathy!!)

The book of Numbers should better be named the book of Grumblers! Unbelievably the Israelites were moaning about their lack of a healthy varied diet remembering how much better off they were in Egypt when they had meat, fish, fruit and veg!! Jamie Oliver would probably commend their attitude but had they forgotten that their preferred diet came with oppression, slavery, beatings and hard labour? God had freed them, was with them and was taking them to a better place. No wonder God's anger was aroused! (v1)

Dissatisfaction comes when our attention shifts from what we have to what we don't have! What occupies our thinking most of the time? Are we grateful for what God has given us or are we thinking about what we would like to have? Particularly when things get tough we are quick to question whether God really loves us. We conveniently forget God's faithfulness in the past and the everyday miracles of grace. (Did you wake up breathing this morning? Acts 17 v25).

A good exercise for all of us would be to meditate and mentally list all our blessings and praise God for all he has done.

A good Psalm to base our grateful prayers on is Psalm 77 v11-12.