

Session Four-Promised Land

Review of the Core Stories: God's Call, Exodus, and Sinai Covenant:

1. How many Creation stories in Genesis?
2. God told the Israelites that they will be a priestly kingdom and a holy nation. What does the word "Holy" mean?
3. What is the timeline from the core stories for Adam and Eve, Abraham and Sarah, Moses, etc?
Hint: Look in your Lutheran Study Bible pg 30.
4. What are the three sections of the Ten Commandments?
5. What is the Greatest Commandment called?
6. What is the difference between the book of Leviticus and Numbers?

Key texts to read and study: Numbers 21:4-9; Deuteronomy 8:1-20; Joshua 6:1-25; 24:1-24

Key question: In Israel's ancient traditions of land-promised and possessed-what is revealed about the character of God and our sense of place?

The Hebrew scriptures stories and traditions of land speak to that longing for place. Activity is to write down on separate color sticky notes of "where I come from?", "Where I am now?" and "Where I hope to be?"

1. What do these choices tell us about the importance of our lives and in our faith journeys?
2. How do the "where I hope to be" influence the way we conduct our lives now?
3. Did your hope and expectations of a place you wanted to be turn out to be different once you got there?

Today's scripture lessons speak of the importance of place by focusing on stories of land. Spiritual journey and land are grounded in places we live and in the way we live there. These scripture passages blend traditions of land when it was largely a matter of promise: and traditions of land connected with their possession.

What themes do you see in these stories? :

1. Needs
2. Complaints
3. Intercession
4. God provides

Are these needs or wants that the Children of Israel were complaining about?

In the Numbers 21:4-9 story it describes a means of healing-Looking at an image of the very thing that caused the healing? What do you think of this story?

Small Group Discussion:

1. Compare Numbers 21:4-9 with John 3:11-21. See how Jesus used the story of “The Brazen serpent” in the core story to point to himself as the one who saves?
2. Compare Deuteronomy 8:3 with Matthew 4:4. See how Jesus quotes Deuteronomy in the temptation by the devil in the wilderness?
3. Joshua 6:1-25 has a lot of violence in it. Do you think God commanded all the violence or not? Who speaks for the innocents in Canaan? What would you ask God about in this story?
4. Discuss Rehab’s journey of faith using the questions of “Where She came from?” and “Where did she hope to be” and where she ends up in the story?
5. What do these stories teach us about the dangers of Idolatry?
6. The fall of Jericho was more like a worship procession than a typical war scene. Why?
7. Think about God’s promises for you in your baptism that will carry you through your journey with God.