



CENTRAL TEXT

Deuteronomy 8:7-18

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Things had changed for the Israelites since the time of Jacob. Jacob and his sons practiced monotheism (one god) and yet, after God led them out of Egypt, they built a golden calf and worshiped it. What do you think happened? How do you think they would describe God?

When someone mentions the word “wilderness”, what do you see?

Brueggemann claims that God transforms wilderness into a place of wondrous suffering. What did God supply for the Hebrews in the wilderness? What has been your personal experience with wilderness in your life?

One of the lessons Israel learns in the wilderness is that they are not self-sufficient. Consider the metaphor of bread. When you bake bread it is about autonomy, self-reliance, and limitations. God-generated bread is about gratitude, reliance on God, and community. How does our sacrament of Holy Communion shape our understanding of the nature of God?

The Israelites were now about to enter into the Promised Land. Why are they called to remember the scarcity of the wilderness? How does that apply to our lives?

TAKEAWAY

Manna was something that had never been seen, could not be explained, and could not be possessed and yet, it fed them in the wilderness for forty years. The Hebrews were entering the land of milk and honey where they would never want for anything and yet, they are being warned to remember the scarcity of the wilderness. The land was a gift. Unfortunately, a gift kept long enough begins to feel like a possession or even an entitlement, separate from any memory of the giver. How do you see this continuing in our world today?

(Both of our pastors have books or studies that can help you grow. Please contact us if you need resources.)