



THINK ON THESE THINGS..... (our contributor this morning is Jacqui Knight)

Reading: Numbers 11:4 - 5

There were some foreigners travelling with the Israelites. They had a strong craving for meat, and even the Israelites themselves began to complain. "If only we could have some meat! In Egypt we used to eat all the fish we wanted, and it cost us nothing. Remember the cucumbers, the watermelons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic we had? "

Reflection:

I like cucumbers but it has always amused me that one of the things, according to this passage from Numbers, the Israelites missed from their time in Egypt were cucumbers. However I suppose if you are wandering in a wilderness with little water the thought of a crisp cucumber to bite into would have been welcoming. Of course they would not be thinking of bright green smooth super market cucumbers but the kind you may grow in your garden with tougher gnarled looking skins.

The Israelites were getting fed up. The journey from Egypt was taking far longer than they expected and they were feeling deprived of some of their favourite things. We could say we are on a journey at the moment; one that is likely to last much longer than we thought when we first heard about Covid-19 back in February, and we are missing things, yearning for something or someone we may have taken for granted. Most of us are not escaping from slavery. Although at first you might have enjoyed the freedom of not setting the alarm in order to get up early to travel to work, releasing you to spend more time with the family or cycling, gardening, DIY. You may be back at work or pursuing activities that are now allowed. But we know the journey is not over yet.

During the ups and downs of the Exodus God had to keep reminding the Israelites that He was there with them, for example the quails flew down to provide them with plenty of meat. We have to have faith to believe that God is with us. I am not with the Old Testament writers who saw every hitch and disaster as punishment from God. The tragedy in Beirut on the 4th August was caused by human failures. We have been told the Corona Virus was first contracted in a market in China but I do not know what human failures may be brought out if there is an investigation.

We pray for all those who have been affected by the explosion in Lebanon. As we pray for those affected by the virus we also pray that a vaccine and a cure will be discovered.

Breath-Prayer for today: God our shelter and strength help us not to be afraid as all around us appears to be in turmoil. As we seek refuge in you remind us of all you have done and all you can achieve. (Adapted from Psalm 46)

