

Cell notes, week beginning 15 August 2016

Moses: Leader on the edge of God's promise

Read: Numbers 20: 1-13

LAUNCH

What sort of things make each member of the group angry?
How does each react to those things?

DISCOVERY & UNDERSTANDING

It seems that God's punishment of Moses is really harsh when Moses has understandably 'snapped' under the pressure of leading two million ungrateful, rebellious, self-centred moaning people. Can we blame him? Would we do any better?

Look at the following scriptures:

Genesis 3:

Why does God treat the woman, the man and the serpent so severely?
Should any of them have escaped his punishment?

Genesis 17, v4, 8-11; then read Exodus 4: 24-26:

Why does God suddenly want to kill Moses when He's just called him to rescue the people of Israel?

Acts 5: 1-11

We'd be very pleased if someone sold their house and gave the church the proceeds! Why then do Ananias and Sapphira end up dead for doing the same, apparently selfless and generous thing?

These are all occasions where God acts swiftly to bring apparently harsh punishment, just as He does with Moses in Numbers 20: 12. Is there a theme that links these four incidents? Why do you think God acts the way He does? What does it say about God's priorities? What makes God angry?

Back in Exodus 2 (v11-12) Moses has committed murder. He has to go into hiding for 40 years, but while God is swift to punish him for not following to the letter his instruction in Numbers 20:12, He doesn't seem even to mention the murder. Why do you think the apparently minor sin is of greater importance to God than the one that seems to us to be much, much more serious?

Moses got really angry with the Israelites in Numbers 20; do you think, humanly speaking, he was justified in getting angry?

APPLICATION

Read Ephesians 4:26-27

- What does this passage tell us about anger?
- Does it suggest anger is a sin?
- When is it right for us to get angry?
- At what point does our anger lead us into sin? What sort of sin can anger lead to?
- We are told 'not to give the devil a foothold'. How do we do this when we disobey the instruction in v26?
- How can we avoid falling into sin when we get angry? Pray for anyone in the group who is facing a struggle with this.