

Week #: 13 Text: _____ Title: Follow the Rabbi #2/3
Songs: Holy Spirit
Here I Am to Worship
Audio: Ray Vander Laan – Follow the Rabbi teaching
Can be found online at: <https://oneinjesus.info/2008/10/ray-vander-laans-follow-the-rabbi-lectures/>

Western Thinking:

Westerner wants to know about God.

To a Westerner, does it make sense means it logically meets your expectations or experience; you understand it.

A Westerner is accepting of something intellectually.

A Westerner asks:

What is the meaning of life?

Who am I?

To a Westerner, emotion is suspect (fickle) because it can let you down.

Eastern Thinking:

Easterner wants to know God.

To an Easterner, does it make sense means it is who you are – it is your essence.

An Easterner is accepting of something because it is life.

An Easterner asks:

What is the purpose of life?

What am I doing? Is it God honoring?

To an Easterner, emotion is an expression of the fire in your chest.

Firepot:

- They would often burn dried out manure as fuel.
- By adding salt to the fire, it would burn hotter and longer because of the chemical properties of salt.
- When the salt's usefulness had passed, they would dig it out of the fire and throw it away.



Matthew 5:13 (CJB) “You are salt for the Land. But if salt becomes tasteless, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything except being thrown out for people to trample on.”

- We are called to be salt – to be thrown into the manure of the world, and yet to keep our saltiness about us. If we lose that property (our mission), we are worthless to God.

Feet for the Path:

- Goats have feet made for the path. They live their whole lives on the cliffs without falling

Psalms 18:33 “He makes me swift, sure-footed as a deer, and enables me to stand on my high places.”

- God isn’t going to make our path easy, but He will give you the feet to handle your path.
- David didn’t ask for an easy path, he asked for the right kind of feet so he could handle any path given to him.

In the Desert

- The Jews are desert people. They are scared of water.
- More than half of the pictures in the Bible are desert.
- Milk and Honey:
 - The land of honey is where the farmers live, where the olive trees grow. It is called this because the bees live here, so there is honey.
 - Goats produce milk. So where the shepherds live is called the land of milk.
 - “Land of milk and honey” is referencing a place where shepherds and farmers can both exist next to each other.
- DBR
 - These three letters are the root consonants for many words, when you add other vowels to them.
 - Midbar: desert
 - Debir: holy of holies
 - Debar: a sheep fold
 - So to a Jew, the midbar (desert) is a place where the sheep are brought, and the holy of holies (debir) is the place where God brings His flock.
 - Midbar: literally translated is – “the place of words”
 - If you want to hear God speak, you have to go to the desert.

- The desert is a place where you cannot survive without the direct intervention of God. So when you are in the desert you know that you depend on God totally. God has to provide everything to sustain you: water, food, shade, etc.
- When you go to the land of honey, be careful, because we will find things to sustain us of our own strength. We do not have to rely on God.
- When things are going well, why do you need God?
- You hear God when you are in the desert because there is nowhere else to turn.
- Wadi:
 - By far the most dangerous thing in the desert is floods.
 - A wadi is a dry river bed, or canyon, that only floods when it rains up in the mountains. You cannot get out fast enough to save your life if you are down in the wadi.
 - Often in the bottom of a wadi, you will find pools of water. The risk is that during flood season, going to that water could kill you.
 - The silt left in the wadi is thick and sticky clay brought down from the mountains.
- Psalms 23 refers to still water. Still water is water that came there other than by a flood. It is water that is in a safe place, not in a wadi. The word “still” comes from the word “shalom”, or “peace”.
- Sheep don’t know the difference between water from a spring and water from a flood. They have to be led to safe water.
- Where the water dries up, a fine, limestone sand is left.
 - The foolish man built his house on the sand – in the wadi. The sand isn’t the issue, it’s because it is in the wadi, where the flood would wash everything away.



- Arara Tree:
 - Looks great on the outside, but inside is nothing but death.



Jeremiah 17:5-8 ⁵ Here is what Adonai says: “A curse on the person who trusts in humans, who relies on merely human strength, whose heart turns away from Adonai. ⁶ He will be like a tamarisk in the ‘Aravah — when relief comes, it is unaffected; for it lives in the sun-baked desert, in salty, uninhabited land. ⁷ Blessed is the man who trusts in Adonai; Adonai will be his security. ⁸ He will be like a tree planted near water; it spreads out its roots by the river; it does not notice when heat comes; and its foliage is luxuriant; it is not anxious in a year of drought but keeps on yielding fruit.

- Hyssop:
 - Was used to make soap like lye, which was used to tan leather.
 - David asks God to wash him with hyssop after he sinned with Bathsheba.
 - Hyssop was used with Jesus on the cross

- Broom Tree:
 - Called Rotem in Hebrew
 - It’s the only shade tree that exists with any regularity in the desert.
 - It’s just enough shade to cover your head.



- God never promises to lower the temperature in your desert, or bring a cool breeze and make it comfortable. He promises instead to provide enough shade to survive.

- Honey:
 - Honey is a metaphor for the sweetness of God.
- Rock:
 - Rock is a common metaphor in their culture.
 - Life is a pathway, and when you walk on that path there are rocks. Some are small and annoying, while others are major obstacles.
 - God is in the tough times on life's pathway.
 - There is enough of God in every rock that you hit to take one more step.
 - There is no rock without enough honey to take another step.
- The desert is about hearing God because there's nowhere else to turn. We need to live in the desert. We need to be totally dependent upon God.

Matthew 5:5-12 ⁵ Seeing the crowds, Yeshua walked up the hill. After he sat down, his talmidim came to him, ² and he began to speak. This is what he taught them: ³ "How blessed are the poor in spirit! for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs. ⁴ "How blessed are those who mourn! for they will be comforted. ⁵ "How blessed are the meek! for they will inherit the Land! ⁶ "How blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness! for they will be filled. ⁷ "How blessed are those who show mercy! for they will be shown mercy. ⁸ "How blessed are the pure in heart! for they will see God. ⁹ "How blessed are those who make peace! for they will be called sons of God. ¹⁰ "How blessed are those who are persecuted because they pursue righteousness! for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs. ¹¹ "How blessed you are when people insult you and persecute you and tell all kinds of vicious lies about you because you follow me! ¹² Rejoice, be glad, because your reward in heaven is great — they persecuted the prophets before you in the same way.

- In those times of being poor, and persecuted, and in mourning we are blessed because it is in these times that we find God. In all the pain, we look God right in the eye – we learn more about God in those times, and that is the blessing that comes from the pain. In your hunger, you turn to God to provide food, and you see God in a way you never saw Him when you had plenty.
- Jesus went to the desert because He wanted to see God. Satan came to him and tempted him to make stones into bread, but Jesus refused because He wanted to depend on God. He wanted to see God face to face.
- When we stand in the desert of life, don't try to turn it into a pleasure land like Hawaii. Stand there asking yourself where in the desert will you stand face to face with God? Where will He be revealed in a new way to you?