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Numbers 10:11-19:22

More than thirteen months after they left Egypt, the Israelites were ready to leave Mount Sinai, full of faith and courage, but it did not last. The people complained and wanted to go back to Egypt. They repeatedly rebelled against God on the journey and rejected His Word. They also rebelled against Moses, the authority and shepherd God had placed over them. And they rejected the land of Canaan that God had promised them through His Word to Abraham.

After so many signs and wonders, how could the Israelites suffer so much doubt? Why do God's people wander away so quickly?

Are we like the Israelites? Do we not see extraordinary faithfulness and blessing in our lives and still fall quickly to grumbling and wandering? Can we learn anything about ourselves as we reflect on their responses?

Pre-Video Reading

Read [Numbers 10:11-19:22](#).

Watch the video

Pentateuch: Numbers 10:11-19:22



Application Questions

1. In Numbers 11, we find the nation of Israel complaining about their hardships and the tragic consequences that follow. Then they complained about their food, and God gave it in such an over-abundant amount that it would “come out of their noses” and become “loathsome” to them.

God provides for our needs, yet if we're not careful, we can grow weary of His provision and long for something different, perhaps more.

In what area of your life do you struggle with grumbling? How do you ensure that your spirit remains grateful for His provision?

2. The fear of the unknown will cause people to choose what is known and “comfortable”, even if it is oppression over freedom. The children of Israel, after hearing the spies’ report and seeing all that God had done with signs and miracles, were willing to go back to slavery ([Numbers 14:1-4](#)). But Caleb, according to God, “has had a different spirit and has followed Me fully” ([Numbers 14:24](#)).

How can we adopt Caleb's spirit and confidence in God (see [Numbers 13:30, 14:8](#))? If you examine your responses towards difficult circumstances, do you choose what is 'comfortable' or have a 'different spirit' like Caleb?

3. Numbers 16 outlines the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, Abiram, and 250 of their allies. The Bible says that these men "assembled against Moses and Aaron" to lodge a complaint and to make their grumblings known. Because of their pride and discontentment, God's wrath was upon them, and they were punished by death.

God blesses the humble and rejects the arrogant ([James 4:6](#); [Proverbs 3:34](#)). How can we keep ourselves humble?

Closing Reflection

A life of faith does not necessarily change our circumstances. God does not promise us that life will be a bed of roses just because of our faith in Him, but He commits Himself to walk us through it. God works for our holiness, not our happiness; He seeks to increase our convictions, not our comfort.

In John 6, Jesus said He is the true Bread of Life. Manna provided the physical and life-sustaining nourishment they needed, but Jesus provided the spiritual and eternal life we need. So when we find ourselves complaining, we need also to ask ourselves, "Am I satisfied with Christ?" Often, our complaints are evidence that we are not. The Bible teaches us that our joy is full in Christ. However, many times, we long for the things of the world and fall for Satan's lie that money, relationships, careers, becoming a parent, or having brand-name possessions will make us happy. Any time we begin to long for things of this world, then we've taken our eyes off Christ.

How do you perceive God's activity in your life? Are you aware of what God is doing in your situation? Are you praying to submit your will to God's leading or seeking to bend God's will to your desires? Where are your eyes focused – things of this world or on Christ and things that are spiritual?

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