

In the Wilderness

Numbers 11:1-35

- Israel is about two years out of Egypt and instead of an **11** day trip to get to their destination, it will take another thirty eight years before they enter into the promise land. All of this didn't happen just for Israel's sake, as they are not going to read what we are studying today, this is for you and I according to > **Rom 15:4, 1Cor 10:11**. So we should be paying close attention so that we can glean all of the lessons that the Lord is teaching through their journey.

V1-35

- **V1-3** God's Law has been announced and the Tabernacle constructed, and dedicated, Moses has consecrated the Priests, Levites, counted the soldiers, and organized the tribes, Israel was now a nation for action. **V1-3** this happens after a three day journey that the people began to complain the wording here is "**they became complainers**" initially they were excited about the trip but after only three days into the journey the people stopped being patient and started complaining.
- This isn't the first time they did this in **Ex 14:8-14** after the Lord delivers them with a strong hand out of Egypt Pharaoh decides he hasn't had enough after enduring ten plagues and sends his army after Israel cornering them up against the Red Sea. But instead of Israel standing there in assurance that the same God Who fought for them in Egypt will fight again for them at the Red Sea they immediately began to complain and blame Moses for bringing them out of Egypt.
- Of course the Lord fights for them destroys Egypt's army and afterward everyone breaks out in this magnificent song praising the Lord for the victory **Ex 15:1-18**, then right after in **Ex 15:19-27**, after Miriam Moses sister leads them in worship they get thirsty and again complain calling the place "Marah" bitter. God gives them not only water but takes them to Elim where there was wells and seventy palm trees allowing them to rest and enjoy His wonderful provision.
- Now here we are again, the Lord has provided these two years for all their needs, and the children of Israel are complaining once more, **V1** says the Lord heard it, as He always does. The Lord was angry at hearing millions of people Who He has been blessing, protecting, and leading, this shows how sinful man's heart truly is, as we are prone to forget God's blessings, ignore God's promises, and find fault with God's providence, instead we should be like > **Ps 107:8**.
- The complaining reached the heavens and God responded by consuming the rebels with fire, the people then cry out to Moses to intercede on their behalf asking him to pray to the Lord that He quench the fire and He graciously does. So bad was the fire that they named the place "**Taberah**" burning, its amazing how the people who complained the most about God and their spiritual leaders end up coming to those same leaders for help. Jesus does the same thing for man while on the cross in > **Lk 23:34**- asking the Father to forgive them for they know not what they do.

- **V4-5** this is the only place where the Hebrew word “asapsup” is used and it describes riffraff, or rabble, those who came with Israel out of Egypt but not for the right reasons. These people were only following because they thought this was the safest course to avoid more judgments from the Lord, but they didn’t have any faith in the Lord, and we see how they infected the others. In this second complaint we see how murmuring and complaining leads to misconception.
- These people painted a picture that they actually had it good in Egypt, remembering the fish, cucumbers, melons, spices, and all the while conveniently forgetting the bondage, cruelty, and idolatry, that came with these things. Its tragic when professing believers crave substitutes from the world instead of desiring the heavenly manna of the Word of God.
- I want you to notice that the trouble came from those who were at the outskirts of the camp, meaning they were the ones furthest away from the Ark, furthest from the presence of God, most prone to complain against God. Also from those who wanted the things that pointed to convenience and not worship, if I’m following only for what I can get that makes my life more convenient, more comfortable in this would then its not the LordI desire its something else.
- **V6-9** This is a complete lack of appreciation for the provisions of God, we had all that good food in Egypt, and so what if it was accompanied by sin, at least it taste good, now all we have is this empty Manna. You see if what you crave is not to be close to God then the things of God will seem empty and not enough, but if you want God’s presence then you’ll see God’s provision as everything that you need, and it will fill you up, and keep you from craving after fleshly things.
- **V10-15** complaining is infectious as people are crying in their tents instead of rejoicing, they don’t see hope they only feel discouragement. Now Moses starts to complain some asking the Lord “**did he ask for these people**”? What Moses said you can tell that he does understand that this problem is not his but its for the Lord to figure out, its impossible for him to solve. Moses looks around and he doesn’t see any animals to kill for meat, so he says this burden is too hard for him, in fact if he has to solve their problems, Moses says kill me now because it’s too much!
- **V16-17** nothing discourages God’s servants more than people criticizing them unjustly and complaining about what once was seen as a blessing but now it’s a burden. The Lord’s response was not to let Moses die or take the leadership of Israel away from him, instead He provides some help for him and give him some men who have the same Spirit that is upon him.
- **V18-20** although these were the tears of the ungrateful God still blesses them to give them as much meat as they can possibly eat for a whole month. Folks this is not good, yes they will get what they ask for but not with the results that they wanted, as they will have so much meat that they will get sick of it and the Lord will force them to consume more > **Ps 106:15**.
- **V21-23** Moses doesn’t understand how this is possible, where are you going to get so much meat from to feed 600,000 men, not including women and children? The Lord response is “when did My Arm become short” translation: have you ever seen Me not able to perform a promise? In the natural this is impossible but for God this is nothing.

- **V24-25** Moses goes and tells the people that their requests will be granted and while he does that the Lord reassures Moses by fulfilling the promise He made about the seventy men having the same Spirit as he. **V26-30** while all this is happening two men who weren't there at the Tabernacle begin to prophesy and Joshua wants to stop them but Moses says are you jealous for my sake, no you should want as many as possible to be doing the same.
- **V31-35** a wind comes up from the Lord sending quail to the Israelites and at first they are overjoyed, how sad it is when the people of God can't tell when something that is going to bring judgment on them, they think is a blessing for them. So all these birds lower themselves about two cubits off the ground or three feet so the men, women, and children can get to them, and for two day they are gathering as much meat as humanly possible about 10 homers-60 bushels.
- They were able to gather the meat but before they could really enjoy it a plague spreads through the camp, and the meat that they gathered with ungrateful tears now produces cries for help as Moses renames this place "**Kibroth Hattaavah**, or **graves of lust**", because it's here they buried the people who yielded to cravings of the flesh, and these graves will be a monument to the danger of praying "**Not Thy will, but my will be done**".