

Devotion 13: When the Grumbling Begins

March 9, 2026

Scripture: Exodus 17:1–3

“All the congregation of the people of Israel moved on from the wilderness of Sin by stages, according to the commandment of the LORD, and camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. Therefore the people quarreled with Moses and said, ‘Give us water to drink.’ And Moses said to them, ‘Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the LORD?’ But the people thirsted there for water, and the people grumbled against Moses and said, ‘Why did you bring us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?’”

Devotion

Imagine you just experienced the most amazing thing in your life. The sea split open, you walked through on dry ground, and God rescued you from slavery. You’d think nothing could shake your trust after that, right? But almost immediately, the Israelites found themselves in the wilderness with no water—and the grumbling began. Before we judge them too quickly, think about your own life. Have you ever experienced something wonderful from God—an answered prayer, a moment of real joy—and then, the very next week, found yourself complaining about something else? That’s the human pattern. Grumbling comes naturally to every one of us. It’s our default setting when life gets hard. The Israelites weren’t bad people for being thirsty. Their need was real. But instead of bringing their need to God in trust, they turned on Moses and questioned whether God even cared. During Lent, we’re invited to honestly examine where grumbling has taken root in our own hearts—and to begin turning those complaints into conversations with a God who is always listening.

Discussion Questions

1. When was the last time you found yourself grumbling? What was it about?
2. Why do you think the Israelites forgot God’s rescue so quickly?
3. What is the difference between complaining to someone about God and bringing your struggles to God in prayer?

Closing Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father, we confess that grumbling comes easily to us. When life gets difficult, we often forget all the ways You have already rescued us. Open our eyes to see Your faithfulness, and turn our complaints into prayers. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

Family Action Item: As a family, each person shares one thing they’ve been grumbling about lately. Then pray about each one together, turning each grumble into a request to God.