

Life Lessons from the Desert

“Neither murmur ye, as some of them murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. (see John 10:10 & Rev. 9:11) Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition” (1 Cor. 10:10,11)

Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Sunday, March 24th

After 400 years of slavery, God leads Israel out of Egypt. (1446 BC)

Instead of taking them directly NE to Canaan, He leads them South East to Sinai (In Arabia!) It took 3 months to reach Mt. Sinai, where they spent 9 months learning about God. (Ex.19-Nu. 11)

After the rebellion of the golden calf, they spent their time building the Tabernacle.

After 9 months at Sinai, they had grown comfortable, but that was to change.

- The more comfortable we become, the more resistant we are to *change*! Micah 2:11
- Changes produce challenges, and challenges facilitate personal *growth*! Ps. 55:19
- Comfort leads to complacency, and complacency is the enemy of character growth. Heb. 12:11
- Each new challenge brings a new Opportunity for either Growth or ***Grumbling!***
We can either Trust and Obey God (Pr. 3:5-6) allowing Him to bring out the best in us, Or Trust ourselves & disobey, (Pr. 3:5,7) allowing Satan to bring out the worst in us.
 - **God uses challenges to change us!** Is. 48:10-11; Mal. 3:17; Job 23:10

After the Tabernacle was ready, God finally moved them toward the Promised Land!

1. Moving at God’s Command. Numbers 10

A. Follow the leader. Nu 10:11-36 vs 13: *“they took their journey according to the commandment of the LORD by the hand of Moses.”*

- 1) God’s looking for people, who will follow Him, to safely others! (Phil. 3:12, 17; Heb. 13:7,17)

B. Line up in order. Nu 10:14-28

- 1) **Everyone had an assigned place!** 1 Cor. 14:33 *“God is not the author of confusion, but of peace...”*

40 *“Let all things be done decently and in order.”*

- a) N.T. “Submit” (Hupotasso) literally means to Subordinate or line up in order!

Eph. 5:22; Heb. 13:17; James 4:7; 1 Peter 2:13

- b) We value their independence, but God designed his people to be interdependent!

See 1 Cor. 12:12-26; and Eph. 4:12-16; 1 Th. 5:14 *“warn them that are unruly”*

- 2) **A “Mixed Multitude” mingled among them.** Nu. 11:4 *“the mixed multitude among them”*

- a) Many Foreigners mingled among the Jews when they left Egypt. Ex. 12:38

- b) What might have motivated them?

C. Invite others to join you. Nu. 10:29-32 (God’s blessings are to be shared. Mt. 10:8)

2. Complaining about God’s Providence

A. History Repeats itself! (Marah in Ex. 15)

- 1) **3 days (vs 22) after crossing the Red Sea:** 24 *“The people murmured against Moses...”*

- 2) **3 days after leaving Sinai...** Nu. 11:1 *the people complained & it displeased the Lord*

- a) Once again they grumbled at the guidance (providence) of their God! (1 Cor. 10:10)

B. The heart is so seductive (Jer. 17:9) that it:

- 1) **Ignores God’s Promises & Warnings.** (Dt. 8:1)

- 2) **Forgets God’s Provisions** (Dt. 8:2-4;11-17)

- 3) **Finds fault with God’s Providence!** (Dt. 8:18-20) *This pattern was repeated for 40 years!*

C. Sin always has Consequences ...Nu 11:1 *"when the people complained, it displeased the Lord: the LORD heard it; and his anger was kindled; and the fire of the LORD burnt among them, and consumed them that were in the uttermost parts of the camp."* (See also Gal. 6:6,7; Heb. 10:26-38)

D. Repentance brings relief. Rev 2:5 *"Remember from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do thy first works; or else I will come unto thee and remove thy candlestick, ..except thou repent."*
Rev 3:19 *"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent."*
Num 11:2 *"and the people cried unto Moses; and when Moses prayed unto the LORD, the fire was quenched."*

But the lesson was short lived!

Conclusion:

Some Consequences of Complaining.

1) Complaining is Contagious! 11:4 *"the mixed multitude among them fell a lusting"*

a) They were like the tares of Mt. 13:24-43

(1) Satan is an infiltrator (Jude 4) and an imitator!

- False Prophets (Mt. 7:15; 2 Pt. 2:1,2)
- False leaders (Acts 20:28-30; 2 Cor. 11:13)
- False Gospel (Gal. 1:6-9)
- False Brethren (Gal. 2:4; 1 Jn. 2:19)

(2) Satan wants them back in "Egypt" where he is Lord! (2 Cor. 4:4)

b) They were like the Seed on stony places (Mt. 13:20,21) *"... yet had not root in themselves... for when tribulation ... ariseth... by and by they are offended."*

c) Their complaining affected / infected others! Nu. 11:5 *"and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat?"* (See Heb. 12:15)

2) Complaining is Corrupting Vs. 5-15

a) It Binds us! (to Satan through bitterness). 1 Cor. 10:10 *"destroyed of the destroyer..."*

b) It Blinds (deceives) us! (To Satan's purposes) Vs 5 *"We remember... Egypt!"*

Vs 6 *"but now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna."* (Flocks, herds?)

c) It begrudges God's blessings. (vs 7,8,10) Ps 78:22-25 *"man did eat angel's food..."*

d) It burdens others! 11:10,11,15 *"Moses also was displeased. Wherefore hast thou afflicted thy servant? ... that thou layest the burden of all this people upon me? I am not able to bear all this people alone, ... it is too heavy for me! 15 "if thou deal thus with me, kill me... and let me not see my wretchedness."*

Application:

Phil 2:5 *"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus... 12 ... Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. 13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure."*

(Eudoki'a: delightful purposes. Jer. 29:11) Vs 14 *"Do all things without murmurings and disputings! 15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; holding forth the Word of Life; That I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain."*

The vast majority of the Jews of Moses' day never enjoyed "God's good pleasure". (Ph.2:13)

Hebrews 3:10-13 *"Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways. So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest. Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil (hurtful) heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily... (Parakale'ō: call near, pray, intreat, encourage) lest any of you be hardened (sklēry'nō; stubborn) through the deceitfulness (apat'ē: delusion) of sin."*

(hamartia: offend, miss God's Mark)

Don't miss God's delightful purposes for you! (Matthew 4:19; John 4)