

THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL COMPLAIN

God's mercy spares Israel again in spite of their rejection of God.



THE STORY: NUM. 10:11- 28 & 11:1-3

MONDAY

God warned the people by consuming the outlying parts of the camp

God warned the people by consuming the outlying parts of the camp – The cloud lifted from above the Tabernacle and Moses gave the command for Israel to move-out . Everyone who had grown comfortable in the shadow of Mt. Sinai had to pack their things and begin the journey again. Chapter eleven opens with Israel once again complaining in the presence of the Lord. The Lord's presence dwelt along side the Israelites in the pillar of cloud and fire. The people gave voice to their complaints without shame. They did not just grumble in their hearts, but they spoke out their complaints. We are not told why the Lord burned the outlying parts of the camp. It could be that this was where the complainers were, or perhaps it was simply a demonstration of the Lord's power to warn them against rebelling.

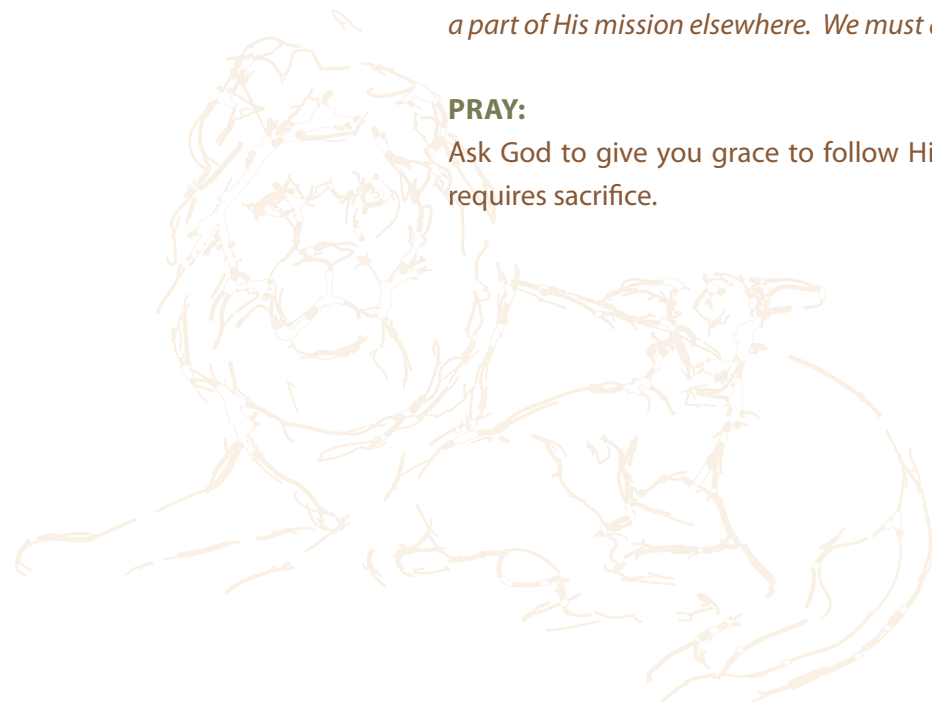
TALK ABOUT IT:

How was God's judgment an act of mercy? *(In response to their sinful complaining, God would have been perfectly just if he had set fire to the whole camp. Instead, God had mercy on them and simply set fire to the outside part of the camp.)*

Why do you think they complained? *(They had grown comfortable and probably did not like the hardships associated with packing and unpacking their things. We need to remember that like Israel, we are all on a mission. God may one day call us to move to be a part of His mission elsewhere. We must always be ready to go without complaining.)*

PRAY:

Ask God to give you grace to follow Him without complaining when His mission requires sacrifice.





The rabble tempted the Israelites to complain

The rabble tempted the Israelites to complain – Exodus 12:38 informs us that along with the people of Israel there were others, presumably Egyptians, who left Egypt to follow the God of the Hebrews. This could have been the rabble who craved the things of Egypt. Being along the Nile River, fish were plentiful and free to those who could catch them. Rather than remember the oppression of the Egyptians, they remembered the meat and this tempted the Israelites. They began to long for meat to eat instead of the manna. They did not ask God in faith. They complained and grumbled against God. Not only did they long for meat, but they despised the manna, or bread from heaven. One day Jesus, the bread of life, would also be rejected by men who follow their own desires over the plan of God.

TALK ABOUT IT:

How did the complaints of a few tempt the entire camp? *(When we hear the complaints of others, their complaints can remind us of our suffering and sour our faith. One reason complaining is such a serious sin is that it causes others to stumble.)*

How far did this complaining go? *(Moses heard the people of every family complaining. What started out as complaints among a few grew to affect the entire camp.)*

PRAY:

Ask God to help us not to complain about what we do not have, but to be grateful for what we do have. Ask God to help us remember that anything less than judgment is grace.



Where is Jesus?

The people of Israel complained within days after leaving the presence of the Lord on Mount Sinai. Once again, in response to their sin, the anger of the Lord burned. God sent fire to the outskirts of the camp, which threatened to burn the camp.

The people cried out to Moses, their mediator between man and God. Moses prayed to God and the fire died down. Again, God was reminded of the coming Christ who would one day stand in the gap for God's people. It was Jesus who, during His crucifixion, cried, "Forgive them for they know not what they do." Through His death we have forgiveness.

TALK ABOUT IT:

How was Israel's ultimate deliverance from the dominion of sin accomplished? *(God held back his wrath against Israel until Jesus came and poured out His wrath for Israel upon Jesus.)*

How does Moses represent Christ in this passage? *(Moses appealed to God as the mediator between God and man. Moses was a type of Christ in that his life foreshadowed Christ who would later be the perfect mediator.)*

PRAY:

Thank God for His mercy in placing our sins upon Christ, our rescuer from the dominion of darkness.



THE STORY: NUMBERS 11:18-35

THURSDAY

God provided both blessing and judgment.

God provided both blessing and judgment. – Even Moses complained to God in Numbers 11:11 and blamed God for the rebellion of the people. Moses resorted to asking God to kill him. In response, God had compassion on Moses and offered to pour out His Spirit on seventy elders. God promised to give them a portion of His Spirit. Rather than simply destroy all Israel for their sin, God, like a loving father, taught the Israelites a lesson for rejecting the Lord. In the end, only those “who had the craving” (verse 34) were killed by the plague. These were likely the rabble that started the complaining. Not all of Israel turned from the Lord, and the Lord spared a remnant of Israel. The rebellion of the people could not thwart God’s purpose to raise up a redeemer from among the descendants of Abraham.

TALK ABOUT IT:

Why didn't God just kill them all and be done with this ungrateful people? *(God was not surprised by their sin. He knew they were sinners in need of a Savior. Looking forward to the coming Savior, God could show Israel mercy.)*

What did God do to help Moses? *(God gave Moses seventy elders to serve along side of him.)*

PRAY:

Thank God for His continued demonstrations of mercy to Moses, to Israel, and to each of us.



On the road to Emmaus.

Connecting the passage to Christ: Here the prophet speaks of a greater, latter glory to enter the temple (some translations translate latter glory as present glory). Jesus is the latter glory that would be restored to the temple of God. Then the temple will not be one made of human hands, but will be Christ's body, the church. Revelation 20:21 tells us that heaven will not need the light of the sun, for the glory shining forth from the Lamb of God will give it light.

TALK ABOUT IT:

What do you think it will be like in Heaven to be in the midst of the blinding unapproachable light of God and not be afraid? *(Just allow your children to marvel at the thought. We receive our light from the sun but can not even look at it. The full light of the holiness of God would consume the sun and yet we will be able to look upon the face of God!)*

If we were to look upon the full glory of God now, we would die. How will we be able to look upon the full glory of God and not die? *(Our sinful bodies have not yet been redeemed. God is going to give us new glorified bodies. Our bodies of flesh are corrupted by our fall into sin. Our new bodies will not be marred by sin!)*

PRAY:

Thank God for saving us and thank him for the glorious hope of heaven where we will see God as He is and look upon Him face to face.

