

Complaining

“And when the people complained, it displeased the LORD: and 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.”

Number 11:1

Introduction:

1. There have never been a people even close to us in all the blessings we enjoy every day. If you consider our nation’s peace, prosperity, pleasure, and pampered lifestyle along with the incredible spiritual blessings both eternal and present, who in the world has had the Lord give them so much (Deuteronomy 4:7-8)?
2. Yet, there are some who complain, murmur, and whine all the time about things, who never have a conversation of joyful blessing and thanksgiving without complaining or being negative for something.
3. Yet, there are few that are as fully thankful as they should be for the great abundance of all things.
4. It is a characteristic of our carnal Christian age with only a godly form to be unthankful (II Timothy 3:2).
5. This is serious enough for God to judge the unthankful with sodomy and other perversions (Romans 1:21).
6. We are all being tried in various ways, as the Lord seeks to perfect us, in answer to our prayers. These trials are negative events, for it is by such we are perfected. We are to deal with them with joy, by the grace and strength of God (Romans 5:3-5; II Corinthians 12:9-10; Colossians 1:11; James 1:2-4).
7. I preached a very similar sermon to you eighteen months ago, but the Lord convicted me to preach it again.

I. The DEFINITION

- A. **Murmur.** 2.a. The expression of discontent or anger by inarticulate complaint; muttered or indistinct complaint, grumbling or repining.
- B. **Complain.** I. To give expression to sorrow or suffering. II. The expression of suffering passing into that of grievance and blame. 6. *Intr.* To give expression to feelings of ill-usage, dissatisfaction, or discontent; to murmur, grumble.
- C. Let us assist these definitions with these words, “Murmuring and complaining is a negative or fearful or critical outlook on life that is seldom thankful and joyful.”
- D. Why does anyone want to be negative? It makes us sick, and it makes them sick. If life is so bad, suicide would certainly help those of us who have to hear your complaining.

II. The COMMANDMENT

- A. Read the importance placed on this sin by the apostle Paul to Philippi (Phil 2:14-16).
- B. God’s will in Christ Jesus concerning you is thanksgiving in everything (I Thess 5:18).
- C. This is particularly true when His obvious blessings are upon a people (Deut 28:47-48).
- D. We are forbidden to murmur and complain by commandments for *thankfulness* (Eph 5:3-7,18-20; Phil 4:6; Ps 69:30-32) and *contentment* (Phil 4:11; I Tim 6:6-8; He 13:5-6).

III. The EXAMPLE

- A. Let us first see that the example of Israel was recorded for us (I Corinthians 10:6-12).
- B. Israel was burned for complaining, and then complained again for meat (Num 11:1-35).
 1. Complaining displeases the LORD. Saints should not want to displease Him (1).
 2. The LORD hears complaining. Others may not hear at home, but God does (1).
 3. Complaining kindles the anger of the LORD, which is our horrible folly (1).
 4. Though God hates cremation, He cremated the complaining rebels of Israel (1).
 5. Those who opened their mouths in complaint were consumed from the earth (1).
 6. Moses had to pray to keep the rest of the church from perishing by fire (2).
 7. They set a memorial by naming the place to remind them of their great folly (3).
 8. The carnal element that associated with them began lusting for new things (4).

9. This wicked influence caused Israel to weep again in further complaining (4).
 10. Their lusts were not content with manna – they want meat to eat as well (4).
 11. Their negative attitude caused them to pervert their situation in Egypt (5).
 12. They were so twisted in thinking that they describe free, all-you-can-eat fish (5).
 13. And they run wild in their imagination about all the variety they had there (5).
 14. Typical of melancholy depression, they describe a deathly soul condition (6).
 15. They complain that they have nothing at all to eat ... except for manna (6).
 16. But the manna was wonderful, free, constant, and proved God's faithfulness (6).
 17. Honey-flavored wafers with a nutty taste of fresh oil do not sound that bad (7-8).
 18. Manna fell during the night and only required taking it off your doorstep (9).
 19. God was very angry with the people again, and Moses was angry with him (10).
 20. God told Moses to get the people sanctified for flesh to eat from heaven (18).
 21. God shows His holy character and hatred of complaining by His speech (19-20).
 22. He calls their complaining and murmuring as despising the LORD (20).
 23. Moses does not believe God can provide meat for a month for 2.4 million (21).
 24. The LORD asks what has happened since Egypt to shorten His great hand (23).
 25. The LORD sent quail, stacked 3 feet high, in a circle with a 20-mile radius (31)!
 26. The greedy people gathered it for 36 hours, with the least 100 bushels (32)!
 27. Before they could chew their greedy and gluttonous feast, God killed them (33).
 28. They name another memorial to remind them of this costly complaining (34).
 29. The event is recorded elsewhere in Israel's history (Psalm 78:26-33; 106:13-15).
 30. Be fearful of receiving your lusts with a lean soul from the LORD (Ps 106:15).
- C. Israel, provoked by ten negative spies, murmured against the Lord, which is called the day of provocation (Num 13:25 – 14:38; Deu 1:27; Psalm 95:8; 106:24-26; Heb 3:8,15).
- D. Israel, provoked by Korah's rebellion, murmured against Moses (Num 16:11; 17:1-13).
- E. And our brother Jude prophesied of such fruitless trees in our midst (Jude 1:12-16).

IV. The CURE

- A. Trusting the sovereign Providence of God will lead to secure contentment (Rom 8:28).
- B. Thanksgiving for all things as a matter of habit and obedience will work (Ps 103:1-2).
- C. Setting affection on things above (where nothing changes) saves frustration (Pr 15:15).
- D. Consider what you should be, or what others are, suffering, to be thankful (Mal 1:1-5).
- E. If you have to complain for true spiritual pain, then go to the Lord and complain righteously (Psalm 77:1-20; 142:1-7), but don't bother us and drag us down with it.

Conclusion:

1. It is the duty of saints to warn the unruly (I Thess 5:14), so I exhort you to warn whiners from now on.
2. Let us correct one another in the fear of the LORD that we not complain, but be a very thankful people.
3. Let us be known as the most thankful and joyful people for everything in our lives on a consistent basis.
4. Let us teach our children to be thankful at all times and punish any grumbling or whining about things.