

Beloved Sisters and Brethren some thoughts:

In the previous chapter God directed the nation in the preparation for war as they departed from Sinai where God had shown his great power.

The company that left Egypt were not only of Israel but also of the Egyptians who had been persuaded of His power against Pharaoh and his people to persuade him to free Israel so that they could return to their own Land and serve Him. This in normal times would be just eleven days journey - Deuteronomy. 1. In the previous chapter we looked at the preparation for that departure from Sinai. This is referred to in Hebrews 12:20-21 *(For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:)*

But coming to Numbers 11 we see the people immediately manifesting unrestrained and unchanging behaviour in complaining. This displeased Yahweh Who caused a fire to burn amongst them in the uttermost parts of the camp. Moses prayed and the fire was quenched.

Complaining is a part of human nature that must be resisted -see Jude -but it can be contagious.

Numbers 11:4 *And the mixt multitude* (a collection of people of including Egyptians) *that was among them fell a lusting: and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat?* Does this help us identify the complainers? So we must be careful about who we befriend-1 Corinthians 15:33.

Num 11:5 -6: *We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic: But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes.*

What blasphemy is this - despising the food that God has provided!
As the lord Jesus teaches to pray Matthew 6v11-

Does the reference to complainers relate to those escaped from slavery in Egypt? Looking back, it all looked rosier and it would have been true of the attachés. But it was one body. Those who attached themselves to Israel had seen the wonders in the judgments and been subject to them and were persuaded so they decided to leave Egypt with the Israelis; they had seen the sea divided and went through on dry land; thus all were baptised (1Cor 10).

It takes time to develop the fruits of the spirit.

But it is interesting that in referring back Paul says of them, 1Cor 10 as “our fathers” thus these things happened and are recorded for our admonition.

Also these complaints got Moses down vs11-15 and then he was told to appoint seventy elders to help share the burden. Earlier Ex 32 God had threatened to destroy Israel and raise up a nation of Moses seed But Moses knew that would not be right and was never in God’s plan. Moses showed his devotion for God’s people and His plan. His father-in-law had also given such advice to ease the burden but now the aides were to be endowed with spirit of wisdom.

But the people are promised the flesh they craved till they were sick of it V 18-20 and in that last verse their sin in their complaint is stated Num 11:19 -20: *Ye shall not eat one day, nor two days, nor five days, neither ten days, nor twenty days; But even a whole month, until it come out at your nostrils, and it be loathsome unto you: because that ye have despised the LORD which is among you, and have wept before him, saying, Why came we forth out of Egypt?*

The word for despised (*despised The Lord*) *maas* A primitive root; to spurn; also (intransitively) to disappear: - abhor, cast away (off), contemn, despise, disdain, (become) loathe (-some), melt away, refuse, reject, reprobate, X utterly, vile person

We see from this the depth of their sin, it goes right to the core and implies total rejection of Yahweh- of God himself The Israelites were brought out from slavery and others had decided to throw in their lot for the reasons earlier stated. But to follow after God requires deep rooted faith, it involves the whole heart and mind. And an appropriate response We have considered how this troop went back in their hearts to the land they had left and for Israel that meant slavery was better than serving God! We see the depths that some will fall to rather than endure hardship.

But their type is shown Hebrews 10:35-39: *Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.*

Even Moses had shown weakness) for a moment in not trusting the power of God and in view of all his experiences it is difficult to understand as we coldly read but he understood what a great task it was (we might think of Jesus feeding the multitudes when the disciples having told Him how much food they had said that it was insufficient by a long way but they were proven wrong and he asked later about how much was gathered up after. John 6:13 *Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.*

(We are so privileged in having both Testaments to study)

Numbers 11:21-25: And Moses said, The people, among whom I am, are six hundred thousand footmen; and thou hast said, I will give them flesh, that they may eat a whole month. Shall the flocks and the herds be slain for them, to suffice them? or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them, to suffice them? And the LORD said unto Moses, Is the LORD'S hand waxed short? thou shalt see now whether my word shall come to pass unto thee or not. And Moses went out, and told the people the words of the LORD, and gathered the seventy men of the elders of the people, and set them round about the tabernacle. And the LORD came down in a cloud, and spake unto him, and took of the spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the seventy elders: and it came to pass, that, when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, and did not cease.

v26 God required witnesses as Moses at that point showed weakness. He was but a man after all. We might think of the Lord Jesus at this point as He showed Himself firm and unwavering as the One Chosen-The Lamb of God.

Eldad (God has loved) and Medad (loving, affectionate) prophesied in the camp

But as a result of this episode no progress was made in the journey to the Promised Land it would seem, for they gathered the quails for a whole month!

This must make us think –are we doing anything to hinder our progress in our journey to The Promised Land? So we are told before attending the table

1Corinthians 11:28 -29: But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

V31-32 and the quails were sent to test the people and they failed for they were ceaseless in gathering them –greed prevailed , the window. They collected them all that day and the night

Common sense went out of the widow-they lived in a very hot place and they would soon be dangerous to eat. The record is that even before they swallowed the meat they suffered-The Lord smote them and they died(Those who go astray from the Truth are in a similar position and are in jeopardy)V34 And he called the name of that place Kibroth-hattaavah: because there they buried the people that lusted. Justice was done

But some remained –they had not lusted but were careful and saw sense as we are warned: Hebrews 12:15 *Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;*

It is clear that when divisions occur as they have in the past God will purify and keep The Truth.

Hebrews 12:28 -29 *Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire.*

Brother Ken