

Numbers 10-11

Good evening, church.

Glad you all could make it out tonight.

We will continue our study of the Book of Numbers this evening.

We will start in chapter 10.

At this point Israel has almost been at Mt. Sinai for a year.

God has spent this year giving Moses instructions and commandments concerning this new nation.

The nation of Israel has established worship at the tabernacle, they have received their new laws, and they have been arranged into individual tribes around the tabernacle.

Last time we were together, we ended with them celebrating the second Passover.

And they are about to set out, but there is one last preparation to be made before they began their march toward the promise land.

Let us read here in verse 1 of chapter 10.

Two Silver Trumpets

10:1 And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 2 "Make two silver trumpets for yourself; you shall make them of hammered work; you shall use them for calling the congregation and for directing the movement of the camps. 3 When they blow both of them, all the congregation shall gather before you at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. 4 But if they blow only one, then the leaders, the heads of the divisions of Israel, shall gather to you.

We see here two silver trumpets that were to be made.

Two is the number of witness in scripture.

Deut. 19:15 "One witness shall not rise against a man concerning any iniquity or any sin that he commits; by the mouth of two or three witnesses the matter shall be established.

Remember the disciples were sent out two by two.

And even in Revelation there are Two Mighty Witnesses for the Lord.

Now these two trumpets will be used to direct the nation of Israel through the wilderness.

Even though they were led by the cloud, God had them use these two instruments as a more precise means to direct the nation.

The Jewish Historian Josephus describes these two trumpets in detail; he describes it just like a common trumpet.

It would be about a foot and a half long with straight pipes, and a flared or belled opening at the end.

Antiquities 3.12.6

Now when both trumpets were blown the whole congregation was called before the tabernacle.

When only one trumpet was blown, it brought the leaders together.

Next we will see certain different sounds served different purposes.

It is unknown what these sounded like exactly.

5 When you sound the advance, the camps that lie on the east side shall then begin their journey. 6 When you sound the advance the second time, then the camps that lie on the south side shall begin their journey; they shall sound the call for them to begin their journeys. 7 And when the assembly is to be gathered together, you shall blow, but not sound the advance. 8 The sons of Aaron, the priests, shall blow the trumpets; and these shall be to you as an ordinance forever throughout your generations.

We see here the priests were the ones who blew the trumpet.

They must remain alert at all times, watching the cloud, to see when it was time.

Then they alerted this great multitude of pilgrims when to begin to set out.

Next, we see a particular sound then alerted them for battle.

9 "When you go to war in your land against the enemy who oppresses you, then you shall sound an alarm with the trumpets, and you will be remembered before the Lord your God, and you will be saved from your enemies.

It seems as though these trumpet blasts served as a prayer before the Lord as they went into battle.

Through this prayer, the soldiers would know the petition went up before God and they could move out boldly and confidently knowing their God would give them success in the battle.

We see this played out in one of the Battles of the of the civil war between Israel and Judah in...

2 Chron. 13:13-16 But Jeroboam caused an ambush to go around behind them; so they were in front of Judah, and the ambush was behind them. 14 And when Judah looked around, to their surprise the battle line was at both front and rear; and they cried out to the Lord, and the priests sounded the trumpets. 15 Then the men of Judah gave a shout; and as the men of Judah shouted,

it happened that God struck Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah.

We see the blasts of the trumpet were a reminder and a petition that embolden those in the heat of battle.

That sounds pretty nice, there has been times in my life, where things have gotten pretty desperate and a prayer trumpet would be a great thing to have.

When all the words have been used up, it would be nice to blow one of these, usually I just yell.

Today the church does however have a Witness praying for us in our desperate moments.

Rom 8:26 Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

And we do have a place to rely when the enemy is in front and in the rear.

So next, we see these trumpets also signaled special feasts and celebrations.

10 Also in the day of your gladness, in your appointed feasts, and at the beginning of your months, you shall blow the trumpets over your burnt offerings and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings; and they shall be a memorial for you before your God: I am the Lord your God."

These silver trumpets were a way God could move this great multitude of people as they marched through the wilderness.

Warren Wiersbe explains here "Like the Old Testament people of God, the children of God today are awaiting 'the sound of the trumpet' that signals our gathering together to Jesus as well as God's declaration of war against an evil world ready for judgment. Until that hour, we remain a pilgrim people in this wilderness world, following His directions and serving Him faithfully."

And I agree with him, we are waiting and longing for the trump of God to sound.

Jesus will call His church home soon.

This was the last order of business before they could set out toward the promise land.

Now it is time...

Departure from Sinai

11 Now it came to pass on the twentieth day of the second month, in the second year, that the cloud was taken up from above the tabernacle of the Testimony.

12 And the children of Israel set out from the Wilderness of Sinai on their journeys; then the cloud settled down in the Wilderness of Paran.

Now after spending 11 months at Sinai, the cloud departs.

They have been being prepared for this moment since our study of Exodus 19 all the way through Leviticus to this point in Numbers.

They head off toward the wilderness of Paran which is several days journey from Sinai.

Now, I imagine the excitement and anticipation is great.

The people perhaps have butterflies as they wonder where God will take them first.

And here God first brings them to the largest and most barren part of the wilderness.

Why would God do this? Well, He must prepare this nation for the promise land.

And He will test them, and their dependence on Him.

He will check their motives and teach them obedience.

This first test will reveal a lot about this young nation, and we will see this first trial will be too great for some.

Listen church, when God is taken you into a new place, He will develop you first through the trials.

You will be tested and proven, this is a biblical principle.

Even the apostle Peter, who led early on in church History.

Jesus told him **Luke 22:31-32 ~~And the Lord said,~~ "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that**

he may sift you as wheat. 32 But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren."

The trials are preparation for whatever God has next in our lives.

It was true for Israel, and it is true for us.

We will notice in this second section of Numbers 11-26, the Nation of Israel will refuse to obey the commandments of the Lord.

In the first 10 chapters of Numbers, while they sat at Sinai, the narrative read the Lord commanded and the people obeyed.

These people had so much to gain by obedience, but their challenges in the wilderness during the testing of God will prove to be costly.

We read next still in the spirit of obedience here...

13 So they started out for the first time according to the command of the Lord by the hand of Moses.

14 The standard of the camp of the children of Judah set out first according to their armies; over their army was Nahshon the son of Amminadab. 15 Over the army of the tribe of the children of Issachar was Nethanel the son of Zuar. 16 And over the army of the tribe of the children of Zebulun was Eliab the son of Helon.

17 Then the tabernacle was taken down; and the sons of Gershon and the sons of Merari set out, carrying the tabernacle.

18 And the standard of the camp of Reuben set out according to their armies; over their army was Elizur the son of Shedeur. 19 Over the army of the tribe of the children of Simeon was Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai. 20 And over the army of the tribe of the children of Gad was Eliasaph the son of Deuel.

The tribes here move off in their assigned groups of three given in chapter 2.

Judah was at the front of the procession with his accompanying tribes.

Then the Gershonites and the Merarites went carrying the materials for the tabernacle.

They went before the holy things, so when the holy things arrived everything would be set up.

We read this next, as the Kohathites set out...

21 Then the Kohathites set out, carrying the holy things. (The tabernacle would be prepared for their arrival.)

Now this is the procession march as they journeyed through the wilderness

We see here the Kohathites and the holy things set out in the safety of the middle of the standards.

However, in verse 33, we will see the ark somehow out in front.

The next verse list the rest of the procession.

22 And the standard of the camp of the children of Ephraim set out according to their armies; over their army was Elishama the son of Ammihud. 23 Over the army of the tribe of the children of Manasseh was

Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur. 24 And over the army of the tribe of the children of Benjamin was Abidan the son of Gideoni.

25 Then the standard of the camp of the children of Dan (the rear guard of all the camps) set out according to their armies; over their army was Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai. 26 Over the army of the tribe of the children of Asher was Pagiel the son of Ocran. 27 And over the army of the tribe of the children of Naphtali was Ahira the son of Enan.

28 Thus was the order of march of the children of Israel, according to their armies, when they began their journey.

Now this order of procession was not an option for Israel, if the tribes in the rear ever got sick of eating the dust of the procession in front of them, and tried to move ahead.

They would have had serious consequences.

Remember obedience is key here.

Every tribe and person had their place, and the function and strength of this army came from their ability to follow orders from their Commander, Yahweh.

And so far so good, they are obeying the Lord...

Next, we read...

29 Now Moses said to Hobab the son of Reuel the Midianite, Moses' father-in-law, "We are setting out for the place of which the Lord said, 'I will give it to you.' Come with us, and we will treat you well; for the Lord has promised good things to Israel."

30 And he said to him, "I will not go, but I will depart to my own land and to my relatives."

31 So Moses said, "Please do not leave, inasmuch as you know how we are to camp in the wilderness, and you can be our eyes. 32 And it shall be, if you go with us — indeed it shall be — that whatever good the Lord will do to us, the same we will do to you."

Now Moses here is talking to his brother-in-law.

Some think that Jethro or **Reuel** Moses' father-in-law is dead at this point, and Hobab is now the head of the family.

Moses knows the Midianites are desert wonderers, and Hobab can help navigate through this unforgiving terrible desert.

Moses tries to sweeten the deal, "the Lord has promised good things to Israel."

Now many people chide Moses for not trusting God.

You see Moses already has the Lord to guide him, and direct him through the desert.

And they claim this is a lack of faith on Moses' part.

But as Warren Wiersbe says "Divine Providence does not minimize or destroy human ability or responsibility."

You see when God called me over to this ministry here in Victorville.

I knew God was with me, I knew He had plans for us here.

But He also gave me wisdom to ask for help.

I knew we would need Children's Ministry leaders and a worship leader to begin here.

So I asked after much prayer on the matter for human help.

And we brought with us the Lewis' and the Villalobos family.

It was not lack of faith on my part; I believe the Lord was guiding us in asking them.

And Hobab would be a great help to this wondering nation.

Yet he refused at first, he rather stay where it was comfortable and safe.

Hobab did not want to step out into the unknown.

Hobab lacked faith, until Moses once again pleads

"Please do not leave, inasmuch as you know how we are to camp in the wilderness, and you can be our eyes. 32 And it shall be, if you go with us — indeed it

shall be — that whatever good the Lord will do to us, the same we will do to you."

God will bless Hobab... and it seems this last plea worked, because we see his decedents are in Israel later on.

Judges 1:16 Now the children of the Kenite, Moses' father-in-law, went up from the City of Palms with the children of Judah into the Wilderness of Judah, which lies in the South near Arad; and they went and dwelt among the people.

And they received all that Moses described, as his brother-in-law decides to take this great step of faith with him.

I imagine there were many times Hobab wondered if he made the right decision, especially after he sees the kind of people these people were.

He had to ask himself often, "What did I agree too?"

Nonetheless, he will be rewarded in the end for his step of faith with this unknown people group.

And we read next...

33 So they departed from the mountain of the Lord on a journey of three days; and the ark of the covenant of the Lord went before them for the three days' journey, to search out a resting place for them. 34 And the cloud of the Lord was above them by day when they went out from the camp.

So we see the first stage of the journey was three days, and things seem to be going really well at first.

So much so Moses speaks this neat prayer and praise when they would leave and also when they would set up again.

35 So it was, whenever the ark set out, that Moses said:

"Rise up, O Lord! Let Your enemies be scattered, And let those who hate You flee before You."

36 And when it rested, he said:

"Return, O Lord, To the many thousands of Israel."

We can just hear Moses' faith and the excitement as everything God has commanded is put into motion.

There is nothing more rewarding for a leader to see the things he has instructed, were followed precisely and working as planned.

When everyone does what they are supposed to there is great joy and excitement in the work of God as everything is set into motion.

He promised his brother-in-law that God has promised good to the nation!

And I imagine as they looked out at this mighty army put into motion, the sight must have been overwhelming and awe-inspiring.

There is also very sobering thing that happens to a leader, especially a godly leader, when you move from prayer to action, and people began to follow you.

Moses must have looked out and thought “how wonderful it is they are obeying, look at how many there are, all in order, and all doing what I explained was God’s will.”

And as that thought sinks in, this multitude of possible millions here, is trusting Moses to hear from God.

And at that kind of thought, Moses in his prayer here, puts responsibility back on God.

This is too much for a man, God has to be in this or they are in trouble.

Now, I know some of you perhaps will be called into ministry one day, or perhaps you are a spiritual leader of some sort already.

I will encourage you never to take claim to the people God has entrusted to you.

Some Sunday mornings, I will look out and see a full sanctuary, and it overwhelms me.

“Lord, I cannot lead this many people, Lord they are here to listen to me, Oh Lord what if I blow it?”

And God so graciously reminds me, they are not your people, they are not here for you, they are here for Me, and because of Me.”

And it just takes the weight and burden off of the leader, when you are constantly reminding yourself this is God’s work, not the work of any man.

To constantly pray “Lord if you are not in this, then we cannot go on.”

I will tell you this; never take claim to any ministry...

“These are my youth kids, these are my greeters, or these are my children ministry workers.”

Give them to God, and let God be responsible for them, because truth is, you will want them to be God’s when we see what happens next to Moses.

Man’s heart is so deceitfully wicked and fickle, you will get your heart broken in two if you take claim to those God has entrusted to you.

Because truth is they can turn at any moment, and it usually happens right after a mountain top experience with the Lord.

We go from this high here with Moses with and with the Children of Israel, up to this point they have obeyed and things just were going amazing...

And almost immediately they forget the promises of God.

Then we read the tragedy next...

The People Complain

11:1 Now when the people complained, it displeased the Lord; for the Lord heard it, and His anger was aroused. So the fire of the Lord burned among them, and consumed some in the outskirts of the camp. 2 Then the people cried out to Moses, and when Moses prayed to the Lord, the fire was quenched. 3 So he called the name of the place Taberah, because the fire of the Lord had burned among them.

History here repeats itself; remember three days after the great worship offered to God after the Red Sea incident, the people then complained about having no water to drink.

The people here face this hostile desert, and the promises of God become a fleeting thought.

The first trial, the first hardship, and the complainers chime in.

Notice the people complained, and the Lord heard it.

This shows you the depth of their faith; they are following a God they really do not believe in.

If they truly had faith, wouldn't they understand God even hears into the secret place?

God heard every word of their complaining.

There are still these complainers in among God's people today, and they do not know how damage they do, and they really show the depth of their faith.

As if God has just closed His ears for their divisive rant.

Understand this tonight, if you are one of those complaining Christians, please consider the damage you are doing to God's ministry.

You know there are those within the church, that it does not matter what decision the church leaders make, they are complaining.

And the complainers never keep it to themselves, they have this drive inside them to tell others how much they disapprove of the leaderships decisions.

And Moses almost immediately is met with opposition.

And God, right here on the outset of his testing period with Israel.

God starts out with a warning, consuming the outskirts of the camp.

Each time the discipline will increase as the people fail to learn from their mistakes.

Perhaps the complaining started from those positioned furthest from the tabernacle.

And in fear they cried out to Moses, and Moses once more intercedes for them, and God relents.

Remember in Exodus 32:11-14 after the Golden Calf incident Moses stopped the Lord from consuming them there as well.

And once more, he is able to withhold God's consuming fire.

And you would think the people would learn their lesson.

But remember they have been sitting at Sinai for almost a year.

They haven't had to travel, or exercise any kind of faith, they have been comfortable.

And now the reality of what taking the promise land will entail is before them.

It will be hard work and sacrifice, it will be monotonous at times, yet they are to focus on the promises of God to see them through it all.

But the hope of what is to come is not enough to carry them, the fleshly demands of their carnal nature overwhelm any sense of reason.

The fact too, that this was on the outskirts of the camp, means it might have to do with the mixed multitude who cause the problems next time as well.

Those who could not recite their pedigree, they were perhaps half Jewish and half Egyptian, or just tag 'alongs' from Egypt.

Maybe servants from other nations took advantage of leaving the bondage of Egypt while the Egyptians were burying their firstborn.

Whoever they were they were not completely Hebrew, and they did not belong.

And even after this warning from God, they start at it again.

4 Now the mixed multitude who were among them yielded to intense craving; so the children of Israel also wept again and said: "Who will give us meat to eat? 5 We remember the fish which we ate freely in Egypt, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic; 6 but now our whole being is dried up; there is nothing at all except this manna before our eyes!"

They are despising God's supernatural provision of food, and reminiscing on the garnishes of Egypt.

The mixed multitude started out with this complaining and it spread to the children of Israel.

And how foolish this is, they forget the crack of the whip on their backs, they forget the misery of their bondage.

And their fleshly cravings think of the flavors of their food.

Isn't this how Satan works?

He reminds you of the good times of your bondage, the fast life, the thrills, he tries to get you to remember the flavors of Egypt.

For some reason, the nights of clinging on to the porcelain goddess, or the toilet puking all night seems to be forgotten.

The heart break and confusion of one night stands, the misery of addiction, the consequences of following your sexual appetite.

Our brains are selective in what they remember, and for some reason when we look back, all the brick making slave labor of that reality is forgotten, and we remember the taste of onions and garlicks.

The mixed multitude is always a problem for the people of God.

People who are not all in, they are half way with the people of God, yet they keep a foot in Egypt.

You know the Lukewarm church of today spends so much time and resources trying to attract the mixed multitude.

The church becomes like the world to attract those who really desire no change in their life.

They give the people leeks and onions, and pursue fleshly things to attract the carnal churchgoers.

They design a church to be entertaining, and they have performers and actors at center stage.

They do away with the Manna, God's Pure Word, because the people's appetite longs for flavorful fancies.

And the mixed multitude craves substitutes for God's Word.

And it leads to carnality, or being driven by the flesh.

So, Moses explains next how manna could be prepared in so many different ways.

It was enough, and this heaven food, was miraculously provided everyday.

Imagine this 6 days a week, the people of Israel woke up to a miracle, and even then, they start complaining.

7 Now the manna was like coriander seed, and its color like the color of bdellium. 8 The people went about and gathered it, ground it on millstones or beat it in the mortar, cooked it in pans, and made cakes of it; and its taste was like the taste of pastry prepared with oil. 9 And when the dew fell on the camp in the night, the manna fell on it.

So wonderful was this food, and so flexible in its use.

They could prepare this in so many different ways.

And it still was not enough of a variety for them.

The Word of God today is so nutritious and full of variety.

It pertains to every part of our lives, yet those who live one foot in the world and one foot in the church decry it is not enough.

They want banquets and frills. They want socials and shows. Bible study is just so boring for the mixed multitude in the church.

Oh, if they would just commit their whole heart to the Lord, they would find so much joy in Bible Study.

I remember before I fully surrendered my life to Jesus, the Bible was boring, hard to understand, and I will tell you almost immediately after I fully surrendered my life to Jesus, the Bible came alive for me.

It became my source of nutrition spiritually.

I loved to be in it, I could not wait to learn more of it, I wanted to only feast on it.

And you know after almost 13 years, I still wake up every morning anticipating to read it, it has become a habit that I have learned to never break.

Even now, I have 3 little monkeys almost 4 now jumping all over me, grabbing on to me, but they know every morning Daddy reads his bible.

And every now and again, one of them will want me to read it aloud to them. They cannot understand it, but one day I pray they too find the value of it.

Listen, if the Bible is a flavorless Brussel sprout to you, and you find yourself craving instead the Onions of the

News, or you want the flavors of your love novels, or the tastes of what is found on your TV, or you would rather feast on Facebook, you might be part of this mixed multitude.

Now the Wednesday Night crowd is usually represents those who are students of God's Word.

But maybe you are listening online, be challenged to study your Bible.

Turn off your TV for a week, and see how alive the Word of God becomes.

Stay off of social media, and let God renew your desire for His Manna.

Listen our reading plan we pass out every month, is called Our Daily Manna.

It is really not big of a commitment, so many say they don't have time for it.

But they have no problem looking at updated statuses on Facebook for 2 hours.

You can do the Daily Manna in under 20 minutes.

It is just a matter of what is important to you.

A mature Christian should be reading through the Bible at least once a year.

It is not a religious requirement, or law but it is for your health and maturity.

You have time, people are so busy with nothing these days.

I remember working with the young adult ministry and they were always so busy and exhausted.

Yet they did not work, they did nothing throughout the day, yet they were too busy for the things of God.

It is not a matter of not having time; it is a matter of where a person's heart is.

You know every year you read your Bible through, it will make more sense, it will come more alive, and it will never get old.

This year will be about my 10th time through, and I look forward to it still.

Crave the manna, not the leeks and onions of the world.

We teach the Word here, it will never change, as long as God has called me here. So just expect it, don't crave anything else if you call this your church home.

We will not focus on the stage production anytime soon.

And do not complain about the Manna, understand that complaining divisive people destroy Christian leaders and ministries every day.

If you have ever been a leader of any kind, perhaps you know the effects upon a leader that complainers can bring.

It effect the leader's health, their drive, their ability to succeed in their calling.

If you do not have you eyes on the Lord, it will bring you to the darkest depths. As it does Moses here...

10 Then Moses heard the people weeping throughout their families, everyone at the door of his tent; and the anger of the Lord was greatly aroused; Moses also was displeased. 11 So Moses said to the Lord, "Why have You afflicted Your servant? And why have I not found favor in Your sight, that You have laid the burden of all these people on me? 12 Did I conceive all these people? Did I beget them, that You should say to me, 'Carry them in your bosom, as a guardian carries a nursing child,' to the land which You swore to their fathers? 13 Where am I to get meat to give to all these people? For they weep all over me, saying, 'Give us meat, that we may eat.' 14 I am not able to bear all these people alone, because the burden is too heavy for me. 15 If You treat me like this, please kill me here and now — if I have found favor in Your sight — and do not let me see my wretchedness!"

Moses vents his frustrations in a long angry prayer before God.

Israel, the people are acting as little children, and Moses feels like a babysitter.

He explains he did not beget them, and they are God's people.

Moses explains if God expects him to bear all these people then he would like to resign, and die.

Understand Moses is writing this about himself here.

He is very vulnerable in his writing here to allow us to see his lack of faith, and his own complaining.

He was just a human, and the Bible continually points out the fact that there are no super humans, just ordinary men, that God chose to use for great purposes.

Now I know many pastors who have left the ministry, or have contemplated or are contemplating leaving the ministry because of the burden of the people.

I have watched my own father's health affected by the stress and demands of the ministry.

There are pastors with ulcers, who suffer from nervous breakdowns, and are chronically depressed.

Now if you think they just lack faith, and you have some spiritual antidote, or some cliché phrase to bestow upon them, well then you know more than the Word of God.

Over and over again, we see spiritual leaders have this great turmoil in their lives.

From Abraham, to Moses, to Elijah, even in the New Testament with Peter and Paul.

All great leaders of the faith have been through these moments.

These moments I believe God allows, so the Christian leader can never get to a place of pride or ownership over a work of God.

I try to plead with the young aspiring Christian leader, that if he can find anything else in this life that will make him happy, then go do that.

Ministry will demand every bit of you, and then it will at times even take your sanity.

And scripture backs this up clearly... I have been in or around ministry my whole life.

I knew when God called me, what it meant, that is perhaps one of the reasons I ran in the way of the prodigal for so many years.

But there is no greater enemy of the Christian leader than the complainer from within.

The majority of pastors I know in crisis mode, it is because of attacks from within the ministry, not from without.

My wife will attest, there is no greater turmoil in our lives than one from the fold that God has entrusted us to care for, turns on us.

That is why I told you Christian leaders here tonight to never take ownership of the people you serve over, the sheep will bite.

And it is usually the ones who sing your praises at first, you can bet it won't be long before they find something to criticize.

Think of the whirlwind Moses is on right now, He just went from watching his leadership muster up approximately 2 million people to march in ranks.

That is a high, but a godly worker will never get a chance to revel in control and power, God will humble them almost immediately, and the higher the Lord takes you, the deeper the depth of despair you will find.

Leadership comes at a cost with the Lord.

But God is not merciless, in fact He is full of mercy, and when Moses is at his weakest, God sends him helpers that he can appreciate and rejoice in.

I cannot tell you how many times in ministry, Jess and I were at the end of our ropes, and just at the right time, God sends someone, or 'someones' to come along side and help.

Many of you were those He sent to bring relief too many strained workers here.

The Seventy Elders

16 So the Lord said to Moses: "Gather to Me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom you know to be the elders of the people and officers over them; bring them to the tabernacle of meeting, that they may

stand there with you. 17 Then I will come down and talk with you there. I will take of the Spirit that is upon you and will put the same upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with you, that you may not bear it yourself alone.

God raises up for Moses 70 elders to assist with the burden of the people.

God will graciously fill them with His Spirit as well.

Now there is a lot of debate as to if this was truly, what God intended for Moses.

Some think Moses' lack of faith produced these men, who God never planned on having.

In fact, these 70 positions were kept all throughout Israel's history, and one day this board, the Sanhedrin, hung an innocent Carpenter on a cross after an unfair secretive trial.

But I don't think here in Exodus this organization started out negatively.

They bring much stability and support to Moses.

Moses will still be the central leader, but the elders will give the nation the spiritual support it needs.

You know the New Testament model is similar.

I will be honest; I and our whole pastoral staff would be less effective if we did not have such supportive elders in the ministry.

These are praying men, stable men, giving men, men who have been tested.

And the wisdom they bring to our Body here is such a strength to all that happens.

The elders are the support, when they are weak and unstable it affects the whole ministry.

If you do not know who are elders are, I would encourage you to go on our website and find out.

These men are the spiritual leaders with in the church.

And here these seventy will be a huge blessing to Moses, and will give him the strength to continue to lead...

Next God will deal with the complaint.

18 Then you shall say to the people, 'Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow, and you shall eat meat; for you have wept in the hearing of the Lord, saying, "Who will give us meat to eat? For it was well with us in Egypt." Therefore the Lord will give you meat, and you shall eat. 19 You shall eat, not one day, nor two days, nor five days, nor ten days, nor twenty days, 20 but for a whole month, until it comes out of your nostrils and becomes loathsome to you, because you have despised the Lord who is among you, and have wept before Him, saying, "Why did we ever come up out of Egypt?"'"

21 And Moses said, "The people whom I am among are six hundred thousand men on foot; yet You have said, 'I will give them meat, that they may eat for a whole month.' 22 Shall flocks and herds be slaughtered for them, to provide enough for them? Or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them, to provide enough for them?"

23 And the Lord said to Moses, "Has the Lord's arm been shortened? Now you shall see whether what I say will happen to you or not."

God explains He will satisfy the people's fleshly craving, so much so it will come out there nostrils.

Be careful what you are asking of the Lord, He might give it to you, and you might find that thing you have desired is really a curse.

Remember in Romans God gave those who desired idols and fleshly passions, God gave them over to their debased minds.

He said if you want it, you can have it, and He handed them over.

Rom 1:26 For this reason God gave them up to vile passions

What is your heart's desire, what are you asking the Lord for? Be sure it lines up with His Word and His Will, He might just give you what you ask for, and you will find it loathsome.

So next Moses explains to the people God's plan.

24 So Moses went out and told the people the words of the Lord, and he gathered the seventy men of the elders of the people and placed them around the tabernacle. 25 Then the Lord came down in the cloud, and spoke to him, and took of the Spirit that was upon him, and placed the same upon the seventy elders; and it happened, when the Spirit rested upon them, that they prophesied, although they never did so again.

26 But two men had remained in the camp: the name of one was Eldad, and the name of the other Medad. And the Spirit rested upon them. Now they were among those listed, but who had not gone out to the tabernacle; yet they prophesied in the camp. 27 And a young man ran and told Moses, and said, "Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp."

28 So Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant, one of his choice men, answered and said, "Moses my lord, forbid them!"

29 Then Moses said to him, "Are you zealous for my sake? Oh, that all the Lord's people were prophets and that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them!" 30 And

Moses returned to the camp, he and the elders of Israel.

So two of the 70 elders were outside of the court of the tabernacle for some reason, they did not make it in before the Spirit of God came over them.

And we see here again a test for Moses' leadership as God continues to make this man.

And Moses we see has regained his usual composure.

His irrational depression is behind him, and he is strengthened by the help. He is able to now think clearly.

Joshua, his loyal assistant, was trying to maintain this spiritual exclusiveness for Moses.

And Moses passed the test of jealousy.

There are not many things more destructive than for a man to be jealous of what god is doing through someone else.

Jealousy will destroy your ministry. Be on guard continually from its destructive ways.

Rejoice when others are used by the Lord.

Moses was not the only one tested with this, John the Baptist was as well, as he watched his followers go to Jesus and be baptized, he even lost disciples to Jesus.

His reply should be our heart... **John 3:27 "A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven.**

Moses has learned this mighty truth...

Next, the Lord answers the people's carnal demands...

The Lord Sends Quail

31 Now a wind went out from the Lord, and it brought quail from the sea and left them fluttering near the camp, about a day's journey on this side and about a day's journey on the other side, all around the camp, and about two cubits above the surface of the ground.

32 And the people stayed up all that day, all night, and all the next day, and gathered the quail (he who gathered least gathered ten homers); and they spread them out for themselves all around the camp. 33 But while the meat was still between their teeth, before it

was chewed, the wrath of the Lord was aroused against the people, and the Lord struck the people with a very great plague. 34 So he called the name of that place Kibroth Hattaavah, because there they buried the people who had yielded to craving.

35 From Kibroth Hattaavah the people moved to Hazeroth, and camped at Hazeroth.

Remember God told the nation of Israel the way they treated the manna would be a test.

Ex 16:4 Then the Lord said to Moses, "Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you. And the people shall go out and gather a certain quota every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in My law or not.

These people failed the test and God judged them.

He gave them piles of quail 3ft high.

10 homers a piece were gathered that is about eighty six gallons a piece.

Now you can't just leave them laying around, they did not have refrigerators for storage, so they had to cook them and stuff their faces before they went bad.

They were shameless in their gluttony, and foolish in their demand.

33 But while the meat was still between their teeth, before it was chewed, the wrath of the Lord was aroused against the people, and the Lord struck the people with a very great plague.

They are judged once more by a corrective God.

And the sad testimony of this people is in their wonderings through the wilderness, had they obeyed, they would have quickly received God's Glorious promises.

But their disobedience will leave a trail of 40 years worth of graveyards as a testimony to their unfaithfulness and disobedience.

This is only the first of such graveyards.

This reminds us to treat God's Word, Manna with all reverence and gratefulness.

You see instead of craving and feeding on the things of this world, we need to maintain an appetite for God's Word.

Disobedience in this comes with great consequences. Remember we are fighting against the last day's church of Laodicea.

The Lukewarm mindset, that has to be entertained and sustained with fancies and delights.

I received a message today of a person who left our church, because of our approach to scripture here.

It was so discouraging to read that complaint against the Word of God being taught.

I tell you complaints really do a number on a pastor. But God reminded me of something though.

Paper illustration.

It totally makes no sense why we tend to focus on the negative.

Listen, that one person should not compare to all of you who do love God's Word, who love the study of God's Word, who depend on it for your Daily Manna.

God is doing such an awesome work here, and already has done more than we ever hoped dreamed or imagine.

Let's keep pressing on hopeful and obedient toward the promise land, our eternity.

No looking back to Egypt, but a hopeful obedience until we enter into all the promises.

Amen?