

*Beulah Baptist Church*  
*Rev. Jerry D. Black, Pastor*

*Sunday School Lesson*  
*September 24, 2023*  
*Rev. Mark A. Seals, M.Div., Instructor/Teacher*  
*Mike Moore, Superintendent*

## **Lesson—People Grumble**

**Text: Numbers 11:1-6, 10-15**

### **I. Aim for Change/Learning Objectives**

By the end of this lesson, we will...

1. EXAMINE the Israelites' grumbling about life in the wilderness;
2. RECOGNIZE that grumbling reflects an ungrateful heart; and,
3. GIVE THANKS for the blessings in our lives.

**Key Verse**— *“And the mixt multitude that was among them fell a lusting: and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat? We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick: But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes” (Numbers 11:4–6, KJV)*

**Lesson Song of Praise and Worship:** *“Thank You Jesus(For My Journey)”* by Rev. James Cleveland and the Southern California Community Choir

### **II. People Places and Times**

**Moses.** His name means “drawn out of the water.” He was chosen by God to lead the Israelites out of Egypt, where they were enslaved and oppressed.

**Taberah.** A place near the wilderness of Paran, whose name means “burning.” It is the place where God punished the Israelites for murmuring and complaining about only having manna to eat.

**Cloud By Day and Pillar of Fire By Night.** The cloud by day and pillar of fire by night were the manifestations of God’s direction and His will. When the cloud by day lifted, the people were to follow it. When the cloud settled, it was God’s will that the people stop and set up camp. The pillar of fire by night was a sign of God’s protection during the darkness of night.

### **III. Background**

After their long enslavement, as they followed the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, the Children of Israel left Egypt and traveled from place to place. The book of Numbers chronicles the story of the 40 years during which the Children of Israel wandered in the desert before entering the Promised Land. After two years camped in the Sinai desert, God lifted the cloud and the Israelites left the wilderness of Sinai. They followed the cloud until it rested in the wilderness of Paran. Today’s text finds the Israelites, only three days into their journey, mumbling and complaining about the hardships they have to endure while traveling in the desert.

#### **IV. The Lesson At-A-Glance...**

1. *The People Complain (Numbers 11:1–6)*
2. *Moses Complains (11:10–15)*

#### **V. In Depth with More Light on the Text**

##### **1. The People Complain (Numbers 11:1–6)**

The Children of Israel began to complain only three days into their journey (10:32ff). Angered by their ungrateful attitude, God began to consume the Israelites' camp with fire, and many people were killed. The people looked to Moses and began to cry out for help. Moses prayed for the people, and when God heard his prayers, the fire stopped. Moses then named the place Taberah, which means "burning." The place served as a reminder of God's burning anger against the Israelites for their ungratefulness.

When we complain, it's an indication that we do not trust God. Reflect on your personal experiences. During times of trials, do you forget God's blessings? Do you complain? Are you unhappy because God has not blessed you with more? Consider all that God has done for you. God gives you life, health, strength, family, employment, and many other blessings— too numerous to count. Turn your complaints into praise. Consider praying instead of murmuring. Know that your wilderness experiences are moments to praise and thank God for everything He has provided in your life. By faith, ask God to provide for your needs and quietly wait for God's answer.

##### **2. Moses Complains (11:10–15)**

God's servant, Moses, did his best for the good of the people. But when Moses heard the people complaining, he could not help but become agitated by their behavior. Moses did the only thing he knew how to do; he took his concerns to God. Moses knew he was God's man and his divine commission obligated him to intercede on behalf of the Israelites. But he was so overwhelmed by the people's complaints that he, himself, began to grumble and complain—so much so that he said he would rather God kill him than make him continue to deal with the ungrateful ramblings of the people (v. 15). It's amazing how easy it is for someone else to make our life a living hell and cause us to forget God's divine providence. As believers, it is our job to appreciate the good things God has provided and continually give Him praise for our many blessings.

**Liberating Lesson— See Sunday School Book...**

**Application for Activation— See Sunday School Book...**

**Food for Thought and Questions for Consideration (from the Application for Activation)?**

1. *Have you complained or been ungrateful for how the Lord chose to sustain you?*

#### **Vocabulary-New Words**

**A. Mixt** (Mixed) *Multitude* (Numbers 11:4) 'acpecuph (Heb.)—A collection or collected multitude—a mass or crowd.

**B. Manna** (v. 6) *man* (Heb.)—The bread from the sky that fed the Israelites, who wandered in the wilderness for 40 years.

**Daily Bible Readings for the week of September 24<sup>th</sup>**

**DAY 22** Exodus 13–15

**DAY 23**Exodus 16–18

**DAY 24** Exodus 19–21

**DAY 25** Exodus 22–24

**DAY 26** Exodus 25–27

**DAY 27** Exodus 28–29

**DAY 28** Exodus 30–32