

Are You Part of the Problem or the Solution?

In Numbers 11:1-20, a familiar account is given. The children of Israel were not only out of slavery, in which they had been for over 200 years, but they had received the Law from God on Sinai, manna, and the cloud/pillar of God preceded them day and night. They were on their way to the land of promise and they began to complain. Moses alone tried to solve the problem. Moses spoke with God to find a problem, but the people all complained and murmured

Some may say, "Well their complaining got the job done." To some extent everyone would agree, but God is not one of them. In verses 19-20 He states, "*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?'*" (Numbers 11:19-20 NKJV)

Their complaining landed them in hot water with their deliverer. Moses was not punished to the extent that the nation of complainers were. Why? Instead of complaining and murmuring, Moses tried to find a solution.

What does complaining accomplish? Who feels better after hearing it or participating in it? Most often it only adds to the uncomfortable situation everyone finds themselves in. So why do we do it?

The New Testament speaks about complaining and murmuring also. In I Peter 4:9 it simply states, "*Be hospitable to one another without grumbling*" (I Peter 4:9 NKJV). To often hospitality is coupled with complaining. In today's high pace world, the idea of catering to others is, at best, unwelcome. Christians truly shine in this world in this area. Visitors are welcomed, enjoyed before and after services, and invited back to services and into some of our homes.

John 6:43 tells us, "*Do not murmur among yourselves*" (John 6:43 NKJV). Nothing can tear a group apart faster than for factions and divisions to arise. People of similar backgrounds will naturally find more to talk about and to enjoy together, but this should not include murmuring. We are to confess our sins to one another and to edify each other. Adversity should be part of the glue that binds Christians together. When we fail, we have each other to support us. When someone else hurts us, because of the closeness we share, we work through it together.

James 5:9 states, "*Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door!*" (James 5:9 NKJV). Grumbling against one another not only divides a congregation, but causes the loss of one's soul.

Truly, complaining caused problems for the Israelites, Christians in the first century, and causes them today. When problems arise among us, especially at our size, we should pull together, not apart. Satan is that "*roaring lion*" that divides sheep from each

other to pick them off. When you feel yourself unhappy pray, sing, call me, call someone else in the congregation, do something so that you do not become part of the problem but part of the solution.