***Numbers 11: Discontent of the People / Rebellion***

Numbers 11:1-9

* The Israelites complained about not having the food they were accustomed to having in Egypt. The people had grown tired of manna and desired to have different kinds of food.
* In their defense, it was difficult for them traveling in the desert. God was testing them. Would they trust in Yahweh? Would thy be faithful in the face of hardship and adversity?
* The trials and sufferings they experienced in Egypt for four hundred years was part of their formation as a nation.
* The trials and hardships that they were presently suffering in the Sinai desert was also part of their formation. They are to put their trust in God in the face of trial and hardship. Would they be grateful for manna or would they be bitter and angry that they could not have other types of food?
* The text reads that upon hearing the Israelites complain, ***“******so that the LORD became very angry, he was grieved”***. *(Num 11:10)*
* The fire of the Lord burned among them. The Israelites were in fear that they would be consumed by the fire. The Israelites cried out to Moses for relief. Moses prayed to God and God relented in His anger.
* Throughout the book of Exodus, Moses is a mediator between Yahweh and the Israelites. Moses was a type of Christ. He took the sins of Israel upon himself so that the Israelites might be reconciled with Yahweh.

Numbers 10-23

* In assessing the situation Moses was displeased. Moses expresses frustration that God has put him in a difficult situation.
* Moses expresses the burden that comes with being the mediator of the Israelites. Moses reminds God that is was He that conceived all these people; that is was God who brought them forth from Egypt.
* Moses advises God that he can not carry the people by himself. The burden has become to great.
* God responds to Moses that he is to gather seventy men of the elders of Israel. Moses is to take the seventy men to the “tent of meeting”.
* God will come down and talk with Moses there. God will take some of the spirit which is upon Moses and put it on the seventy men.
* Moses had the spirit of prophesy to such a degree that God was able to give a share of it to the seventy.
* Moses’ prayer reveals the depth of Moses’ relationship with God. Moses is not disrespectful but makes the point that he is overwhelmed in being responsible for the Israelites and that he can no longer do this himself.
* The scripture makes no mention of the Israelites going to God in prayer to request different types of food. They made a conscious decision to focus on what they did not have as opposed to what they had.
* The Israelites did not express their needs to God in prayer. Instead of praying to God they were openly rebellious to the point that they complained that they were led out of Egypt.
* In appointing seventy elders and placing some of Moses’ spirit upon them, Moses’ burden would be a shared burden and lightened.
* ***“Sanctify yourselves for tomorrow, when you shall have meat to eat. For in the hearing of the LORD you have cried, ‘If only we had meat for food! Oh, how well off we were in Egypt!’*** (Num 11:18)
* God explains that the people will not just have meat for a brief period of time but will have meat for a month.
* They will have meat to the point that they tire of it and it becomes loathsome to them. The meat will become a form of punishment because they rejected God and did not trust.
* Moses reminds God that there are six hundred thousand people. Moses questions how he will be able to accomplish this.
* ***“The LORD answered Moses: ‘Is this beyond the LORD’s reach? You shall see now whether or not what I have said to you takes place.’*”** (Num 11:23)
* *The people are brought to the point where they are in need. God will perform a miracle to fill their need. The miracle is to make the people conscious that they are dependent on God and that they need to trust God will provide for their needs even in difficulty trials and hardships.*

Numbers 11:24-30; Appointment of the Elders

* Moses gathered the seventy elders of the people in the “tent of meeting”. The Lord came down and spoke to Moses.
* God took some of the spirit that was upon Moses and put it on the elders. When the spirit came upon them, they prophesied.
* There were two men who were appointed elders but were not in the tent of meeting when the spirit rested upon them. These two men began to prophesy in the camp.
* Joshua and others were disturbed by this and wanted to stop them.
* ***“But Moses answered him, ‘Are you jealous for my sake? If only all the people of the LORD were prophets! If only the LORD would bestow his spirit on them!’”*** *(Num 11:29)*
* This scripture parallels with Mark 9:38-39. The apostles came across someone driving out demons in Jesus’ name. They tried to stop him. Jesus advised that they were not to stop him for whoever in not against us is with us.

Numbers 11:31-34

* The Lord used the wind to drive a large number of quail from the sea into the Israelites camp.
* ***“So, all that day, all night, and all the next day the people set about to gather in the quail. Even the one who got the least gathered ten homers***[***\****](http://www.usccb.org/bible/numbers/11#04011032-1)***of them. Then they spread them out all around the camp”.*** *(Num 11:32)*
* A homer was a donkey’s load. Ten homers were an enormous amount. Those who took the least amount took ten homers of Quail. Imagine how much those who took an average amount. The Israelites were consumed with gluttony and greed.
* With the manna the Israelites were instructed to take only enough for one day. If

someone took more than what was necessary it would go bad after one day. The lesson was that they were to depend on God. God would give them enough for one day. The following day God would provide for their needs for that day.

* God’s anger was kindled. The people were afflicted with a plaque. Many of the people died. The place where they died was names ***Kibroth-hattaavah.*** The Hebrew work Kibroth-hattaavah means “graves of greed”.

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