

People Grumble

Key Verses: *“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

Selected Scripture:
Numbers 11

through the study of his Word and frequent assembly through meetings and conventions with others of like precious faith.

THE ISRAELITES HAD PRE-viously voiced their discontent at Marah because the water there was too bitter to drink. (Exod. 15:22-24) Now, after departing from Mount Sinai, the people complained again and God manifested his displeasure by sending a fire into the outskirts of the camp.—Num. 11:1-3

In our Key Verse, it is evident the earlier warning concerning the spirit of being malcontent did not have a sustained impact upon the Israelites. The provision of manna for which the people had originally been thankful was now a source of vexation.

As consecrated believers we must exercise care not to be enticed by the flavors and stimulation of what the world has to offer. God provides spiritual manna as nourishment for us

Despite God's continued provision for the people's temporal needs by means of the manna, Moses became overburdened by Israel's continued complaints. (vss. 7-9) "Then Moses heard the people weep throughout their families, every man in the door of his tent: and the anger of the LORD was kindled greatly; Moses also was displeased. And Moses said unto the LORD, Wherefore hast thou afflicted thy servant? and wherefore have I not found favour in thy sight, that thou layest the burden of all this people upon me?"—vss. 10,11

God then directed the institution of seventy elders to hear and counsel the people who had various issues. While Moses still would remain as the head of the nation, the elders would share in the responsibility of guiding the people. Moses then directed these leaders to meet him at the Tabernacle where they were given a measure of God's Spirit and the ability to prophecy. "I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone.—vss. 16,17

In view of the continued murmurings of the Israelites, God sent them a month's supply of quail which the people were able to gather and eat to their full. The end result, however, was that they partook of this flesh in such a greedy manner that a pestilence broke out among them.—vss. 18-20,33

Israel's sin of murmuring has profound implications for true Christians who can profit by examining that nation's experiences. To the extent that our focus is on spiritual goals instead of yearning for earthly things, we have a great future prospect. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."—Col. 3:1-4 ■