

"The Sending of the Manna"**Part 1****Exodus 16**

Introduction: We live in a world that is polluted with many things that are toxic. There are plants that are toxic, there are mushrooms that are toxic, there are certain berries that are toxic, there are certain frogs that are toxic, and there are snakes that are toxic, and the list goes on and on. Because of the "FALL" and the curse that has come upon the earth there are many things that are dangerous.

There are also spiritual toxins which each of us as believers need to be very aware of. There is the toxin of anger, greed, lying, lust, sloth and this list also goes on and on. Tonight, in our study of the life of Moses we are going to consider a toxin that can really poison the believer and that is also very contagious. Before we look at this toxin let me give you the background of Exodus 16.

I. The Background**Notice Exodus 15:27**

After the experience with the bitter water God led Israel to Elim which was somewhat of an oasis in the wilderness. There were twelve wells of water there as well as shade. Israel camped there for a couple of weeks before they moved on. Let us notice how we know they camped there for several weeks. In Numbers 33 we get some detail of their travels.

Numbers 33:1-10

These are the journeys of the children of Israel, which went forth out of the land of Egypt with their armies under the hand of Moses and Aaron.

² *And Moses wrote their goings out according to their journeys by the commandment of the LORD: and these are their journeys according to their goings out.*

³ *And they departed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the morrow after the passover the children of Israel went out with an high hand in the sight of all the Egyptians.*

⁴ *For the Egyptians buried all their firstborn, which the LORD had smitten among them: upon their gods also the LORD executed judgments.*

⁵ *And the children of Israel removed from Rameses, and pitched in Succoth.*

⁶ And they departed from Succoth, and pitched in Etham, which is in the edge of the wilderness.

⁷ And they removed from Etham, and turned again unto Pihahiroth, which is before Baalzephon: and they pitched before Migdol.

⁸ And they departed from before Pihahiroth, and passed through the midst of the sea into the wilderness, and went three days' journey in the wilderness of Etham, and pitched in Marah.

⁹ And they removed from Marah, and came unto Elim: and in Elim were twelve fountains of water, and threescore and ten palm trees; and they pitched there.

¹⁰ And they removed from Elim, and encamped by the Red sea.

Notice Exodus 16:1

Here we see that they had left Elim and came to the wilderness of Sin on the fifteenth day of the second month. At this time, they have been gone from Egypt for a month. They therefore spent about two weeks at Elim by the wells.

This had been a very memorable month for Israel. First there was the tragedy of the death of the firstborn, then there was the pressure at the Red Sea, then there was the great miracle of the dividing of the Sea, then there was the drowning of the Egyptian military in the Sea, then there was the healing of the waters at Marah. What a month of events! This two-week rest at Elim was probably much appreciated by the people of Israel.

Now Israel is about to encounter another crisis.

Notice Exodus 16:2-3

Now they are running out of food! It will be in this chapter that we shall be introduced to the manna that God will provide for them. But before we get to the manna, we need to look at the toxin found in our passage.

I. "The Toxin of Murmuring"

Notice Exodus 16:2-3 again.

In chapter 15 when Israel faced the water crisis they murmured and now as they face the food crisis they begin to murmur again. This was a major problem for Israel. We are told that under the leadership of Moses they murmured at seven different occasions. For this reason, we need to consider this toxin because it also has infected many believers today.

In 1 Corinthians Paul looks back to Israel and gives a warning to the believers at Corinth.

1 Corinthians 10:7-11

⁷ Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.

⁸ Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.

⁹ Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.

¹⁰ Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.

¹¹ Now all these things happened unto them for examples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

We are exhorted not to murmur as we face the trials of this life. Let us notice the invitation which Jesus gave.

Matthew 11:28-30

²⁸ Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Let us consider a few thoughts about Israel's murmuring.

1. It was habitual.

Almost every time Israel faced a trial or test, they habitually murmured during their wilderness travels. Notice the words of Rawlinson;

"Murmuring was the common mode in which they vented their temper when anything went ill with them."

We too are creatures of habit and if we allow ourselves to do so we can fall right into the toxin of murmuring as we face the trials of life, and then every time something happens, we find ourselves murmuring. As we considered before there will always be trials so we must be careful not to fall into the habit of murmuring when the trials come.

Philippians 4:11-13

¹¹ *Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.*

¹² *I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.*

¹³ **I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.**

2. It was contagious.

Notice Exodus 16:2

Murmuring is one of the most contagious diseases known to man. It starts with one person and it will travel through a crowd like wildfire. That is what happened with Israel. It started with someone and Exodus 16:2 we see that "THE WHOLE CONGREGATION" was murmuring.

This shows just how contagious murmuring is. Complaining and murmuring go together and so they are both contagious and when someone begins to complain or murmur it makes its way through the ranks.

Numbers 11:4-10

⁴ **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?**

⁵ *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:*

⁶ *But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes.*

⁷ *And the manna was as coriander seed, and the colour thereof as the colour of bdellium.*

⁸ *And the people went about, and gathered it, and ground it in mills, or beat it in a mortar, and baked it in pans, and made cakes of it: and the taste of it was as the taste of fresh oil.*

⁹ *And when the dew fell upon the camp in the night, the manna fell upon it.*

¹⁰ **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.**

Here was complaining that started with the mixed multitude and it spread through the people of Israel.

3. It was unbelief.

We do not often think about murmuring as an act of unbelief, but we can see that it is if we look at the meaning of the word that is used. Let me show you the words of Wilson.

"The root meaning of the Hebrew word translated "murmur" means "to show oneself obstinate, to be stubborn"."

Obstinate means "to refuse to change one's opinion". So, murmuring is a symptom of rebellion. We see this clearly in Numbers 14. The scene is the response of the people after the twelve spies returned from the land of Canaan and gave their report.

Numbers 14:1-4

And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night.

² *And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness!*

³ *And wherefore hath the LORD brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? were it not better for us to return into Egypt?*

⁴ *And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt.*

Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron and they made the choice to appoint another leader and return to Egypt. This was nothing short of rebellion against the plan and the will of God.

It is the very same in our lives when we murmur. We are rebelling against the path which God has appointed for us to walk. We are admitting that we do not like His plan, and we would rather go in a different direction.

4. It was the result of a lack of faith.

This is exactly what brought about the murmuring of Israel. They had a need and they lacked the faith to believe that God could meet the need. God had done so much for Israel. He brought the plagues on Egypt and set Israel free, He saved them from the Egyptians, He parted the Red Sea, and He turned the bitter water sweet. Yet every time there was a test or a trial, they thought they were going to die of either thirst or hunger.

Therefore, in these tests they worried and murmured about being killed. Let us notice the words of Matthew Henry;

"It argues great distrust of God, and of His power and goodness, in every distress and appearance of danger to despair of life, and to talk nothing but being speedily killed."

We are so much like Israel. God has done so much for us and has promised to continue to meet our needs. We can look back to the cross as they looked back to the crossing of the Red Sea. God has never failed us yet.

Romans 8:31-34

³¹ *What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?*

³² *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?*

³³ *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.*

³⁴ *Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.*

Even though we have these verses we still murmur/lack faith in God in the trials we face at different times. Let us remember that our Lord is the Savior of the world, but He is especially the Savior of us who believe.

II. "The Consequences of Murmuring"

Notice Exodus 16:9

Here we see that God calls on Israel to come close for He had heard their murmurings. Within this verse we can see the consequences of the murmuring of the believer. Murmuring is sin and sin breaks our fellowship with the Lord.

Israel had broken fellowship because of their murmuring and when we murmur the very same thing happens. It also hinders our prayer life with God.

Psalms 66:18

¹⁸ *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me:*

Keeping in mind that murmuring is a lack of faith I am reminded of what the writer of Hebrews wrote.

Hebrews 11:6

⁶ But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Let me share with you how sin breaks our fellowship.

Genesis 16:15 - 17:1

¹⁵ And Hagar bare Abram a son: and Abram called his son's name, which Hagar bare, Ishmael.

¹⁶ And Abram was fourscore and six years old, when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram.

¹ And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.

Abram was eighty - six years old when Ishmael was born. Then in Genesis 17:1 we see he was ninety - nine years old when God the Lord appeared to him. There are thirteen years between Genesis 16:16 and 17:1. They were thirteen years of silence. Most likely the silence was the result of broken fellowship which came about because of Abram's sin of unbelief.

Conclusion:

Murmuring is very serious and really has no place in the life of the believer. I will leave you with the words of Spurgeon on murmuring.

"Murmuring is a great sin and not a mere weakness; it contains within itself unbelief, pride, rebellion, and a whole host of sins. It is a home sin and is generally practiced by complainers "in their tents," but it is just as evil there as in the streets and will be quite as grievous to the Lord."