

“Have You Been Feeling A Little Overwhelmed?”

Numbers 11:1-35

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Teaching Aim: To examine the circumstances surrounding the emotional breakdown of Moses. To realize how easy it is to sink into depression when we are under too much pressure or working too hard. To explore God’s solution to the problem Moses was facing and see how this solution still works for us today. To realize a team effort is always better than one person trying to do everything alone. To recognize the resilience of Moses once he understood the importance of sharing the load.

DIGGING DEEPER INTO GOD’S WORD (*BIBLE STUDY*)

Part I: The Israelites were not happy with God’s miraculous provision of Manna during the Exodus (Num. 11:1-15)

1. What do we find the people doing as we enter **Numbers 11 (vs. 1)**? How did the LORD respond to their ungrateful behavior? Who intervened on behalf of the Hebrew people to stop the wrath of God (**vs. 2**)? How did he do this? How would you rate your prayer life?
2. What specific group in the camp of Israel yielded to their cravings for the flavorful food they had eaten in Egypt (**vs. 4**)? Had they forgotten how difficult their captivity had been? How did their complaining affect the rest of the camp (**vs. 10**)? Do you find that many Christians today still compromise in their efforts to reach unbelievers? When we do this, who is influencing who? Why is it critical for Christians to remain faithful to the essential truths of the Christian faith?
3. What do we find these tag-along foreigners complaining about in **verses 4-6**? Why was this offensive to God? (See **Exod. 16:14-16**) What did manna look like? (See Commentaries) What did it taste like? What is the meaning of the word “*manna*?” Why do you think the people were complaining about this miraculous life-sustaining food that God had so graciously given them? Do you ever complain about what God has or has not given you?
4. God was already angry at the previous complaining; how did He respond to the continued grumbling in **verse 10**? How was the negative talk from the mixed multitude affecting the whole nation? Have you ever witnessed grumbling affect family, friends, co-workers, or even fellow Christians? How can grumbling destroy a church? How did the grumbling affect Moses? Does negative talk help or hinder the work of God? What are some ways that we can use our mouths today to build the church up instead of tearing it down?

5. What do you think Moses suffered an emotional breakdown in **verses 11-15**? Have you ever gone through a time where the circumstances of life piled up to the point where you broke down? How did the breakdown affect you? How long did it take to recover? Were you able to think clearly during the breakdown? How did it affect you spiritually?

6. Finally, after all the constant complaining, Moses couldn't take it anymore. Does a spirit of ungratefulness still exist in the church today, even after the many blessings God has given us? How should pastors and elders respond when they are overwhelmed by unnecessary complaining and inhouse bickering? (See **Matt. 18:15-18**) Moses wrongly assumed that all the responsibility was on him to take care of the two million plus Israelites in the desert, he was completely overwhelmed. What did Moses ask God to do in **verse 15**? Why?

7. Have you ever become so overwhelmed and discouraged by life that you wished you were dead? Besides Moses, what other famous Old Testament prophet became so discouraged and depressed that he asked God to kill him? (See **1 Kin. 19:1-4**) What were the circumstances surrounding this request? Is it possible that many people (like Moses and Elijah) are really crying out for help when they get that desperate? Is it possible that their desire to die is really a longing for the intense pressure they are under to just stop? How should we respond as Christians when we suspect someone is considering suicide?

Part II: God's solution to a problem that was too big for Moses (Num. 11:16-23)

1. How did the LORD respond to the cry from Moses for help (**vs. 16**)? Who were considered to be the elders and what did the title signify? What is the function of an elder spiritually? (Hint: Search online) What role did the elders play in Judaism? What role do elders play in the Christian church today? Who are the elders in your church? According to **verse 16**, were these men randomly selected as elders, or were they already acting in that capacity in the community? Today many churches are led by elders, how should we find new elders today? What are the Biblical qualifications of an elder. (See **1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9**)

2. Where did God tell Moses to bring the seventy elders (**vs. 16**)? Why? In what unique way did God promise to help Moses (**vs. 17**)? Did the Holy Spirit function in the same way under the Old Testament as "*He*" does under the New Covenant? How has His function changed?

3. According to **verses 18-20**, how did the LORD decide to respond when the people constantly complained about the manna and asked for meat? It appears the Hebrew people had a mindset of, *"Not Thy will, but MY will be done!"* Have you ever been guilty of doing this when it comes to your relationship with God? Why is it better for us to pray the correct way, *"Not my will, but Thine be done?"* (See **Matt. 26:39; Rom. 8:28**)

4. What did the LORD decide to do in **verses 18-20**? Moses misunderstood the plan that the LORD had shared with him in **verse 21 and 22**, he was not thinking clearly. What responsibility did Moses think God had given to him? Have you ever been so stressed out that you weren't thinking clearly and didn't hear what another person was clearly telling you? How did the LORD respond when Moses misunderstood Him (**vs. 23**)?

Part III: God distributes the same Holy Spirit resting on Moses to seventy elders of Israel (Num. 11:24-35)

1. What did Moses do after the LORD corrected him (**vs. 24**)? How do you respond when God corrects you through His Word? What kind of changes have you made?

2. What supernatural event took place in **verse 25**? What kind of supernatural events have you experienced in your own life? (See **John 3:3, 5; Tit. 3:4-7**) What happened to each of the seventy elders when they received the Holy Spirit of God? What was the purpose behind each elder prophesying? Was this sign continual, or was it a one-time event to establish their role as a leader before the people of Israel?

3. Some have speculated the seventy elders spoke in unknown tongues, others say that they were praising God in a similar way to King Saul and the prophets of **1 Sam 10:9-13** and **19:22-24 (vs. 25)**. What are your thoughts about what happened on this special day?

4. Two of the seventy elders for some reason remained behind in the camp, we don't know why. What were the names of the two elders who remained behind? What happened to the surprise of everyone in the camp (**vs. 26**)? How did the people respond to this unexpected manifestation (**vs. 27**)?

5. What can we learn about Joshua in his youth from **verse 28**? Why do you think Joshua was so alarmed at Eldad and Medad remaining behind in the camp? What was Joshua trying to protect? Have you ever become jealous when God called another person into ministry in a way that you didn't approve? How should we respond when God anoints and blesses other believers?

6. How did a resilient Moses respond once he realized what God was doing for Israel (**vv. 29-30**)? Does it appear that Moses was threatened, or was he relieved by the change in his leadership role? What was Moses' wish once he realized what was happening? When would the desire of Moses be fulfilled? (See **Jer. 31:31-32; Joel 2:28-29; Ezek. 36:25-27; Acts 2:14-21**) How has being baptized by the Holy Spirit at "*regeneration*" changed your life? (See **1 Cor. 1:12-13**)

7. What supernatural event did the LORD perform in **verse 31**? How did the people respond to the fresh quail? Was this a gift from God or was it His judgment on the people because of their constant complaining and ungratefulness (**vv. 33-35**)? Is there any ungratefulness in your life that you need to confess to the Lord? (See **1 John 1:9**)

8. Have you ever been guilty of grumbling to other people over things you are not satisfied with? Why should Christians not grumble? How should we respond to the blessings of God in our lives? (See **Heb. 13:5**)

MINER'S CORNER ~ *Manna to live by!*

- Sometimes we create our own problems by placing too big of a load on ourselves.
- A team effort is always better than an individual effort.
- Moses apparently thought he was the only person spiritual enough to lead the Hebrew people through the Exodus; he was wrong.
- Moses had to reach the breaking point before he was willing to share "*his*" spiritual leadership with the seventy elders of Israel.
- Once Moses submitted to God, seventy-one people led Israel spiritually instead of just one person; the change was better for Moses and better for the people of Israel.
- A jealous Joshua thought he was protecting Moses, but he was wrong, he was fighting against God's plan to help both Moses and the nation.
- Moses longed for the day when all believers would be filled with the Holy Spirit; it happened on the Day of Pentecost fifty days after the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

