

Numbers 11

Verses 1 – 3

Now the people became like those who complain of adversity in the ears of the Lord; and the Lord heard *them* and His anger was kindled, and the fire of the Lord burned among them and consumed *some* at the outskirts of the camp. ²The people then cried out to Moses; and Moses prayed to the Lord, and the fire died out. ³So that place was named Taberah, because the fire of the Lord burned among them.

Now the people became like those who complain of adversity

Life in the desert was challenging but the Israelites were unwilling to accept hardships

This seems odd for a people who just came out of slavery

Adam & Eve were the only two people in history to be born in to a perfect world.

Everyone else has been born into a fallen world (corrupted by sin) and we should not expect everything to go as one might wish or hope.

See the entire book of Ecclesiastes.

The Lord heard *them* and His anger was kindled, and the fire of the Lord burned among them and consumed *some* at the outskirts of the camp

God has been directing their way for over a year now – 14 months to be exact.

They were openly showing disregard for his leadership even though God had provided all their needs.

But in this case the squeaky wheel didn't get the grease

So that place was named Taberah

This is not one of the 42 stations listed in Numbers 33

We don't know why some places were included in the list and others were not.

Verses 4 – 9

⁴ Now the rabble who were among them had greedy cravings; and the sons of Israel also wept again and said, “Who will give us meat to eat? ⁵ We remember the fish which we used to eat for free in Egypt, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic; ⁶ but now our appetite is gone. There is nothing at all to look at except this manna!” ⁷ Now the manna was like coriander seed, and its appearance like that of bdellium. ⁸ The people would roam about and gather *it* and grind *it* between two millstones, or pound *it* in the mortar, and boil *it* in the pot and make loaves with it; and its taste was like the taste of cake *baked with oil*. ⁹ When the dew came down on the camp at night, the manna would come down with it.

Now the rabble that was among them had greedy cravings; and the sons of Israel also wept again and said, “Who will give us meat to eat?”

What had happened to their flocks and herds of cattle?

See Exodus 12:38

1. The cattle they owned would have been quickly depleted.

The people numbered something close to 2.5 million people

2. A good number of animals were used in the sacrifices

3. Many of the cattle would have been kept alive for their dairy products

We remember the fish which we used to eat for free in Egypt, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic

Did they eat for free in Egypt? No they did not.

They paid for it every day with their hard labor.

God had given Israel their freedom. He was supplying their daily bread and giving them water to drink.

But they were not satisfied with that. They wanted to eat like they did as slaves in Egypt. They wanted some meat and spices in their food.

There is nothing at all to look at except this manna!

Maybe they wanted another supply of quail like the first time

See Exodus 16:1- 21

The first time they asked for meat was 1 year earlier on 02-15-1446

See Pics 1105 Quail



Most people know what quail look like but the baby quail were so cute it was impossible not to add this picture just for the enjoyment factor. 😊

In Exodus 16:1- 21 God not only gave the people quail, He also began the daily supply of manna.

Perhaps the people were hoping that God would provide something new on a daily basis like He had done a year ago.

Verses 10 - 15

¹⁰ Now Moses heard the people weeping throughout their families, each one at the entrance of his tent; and the anger of the Lord became very hot, and Moses was displeased. ¹¹ So Moses said to the Lord, “Why have You been so hard on Your servant? And why have I not found favor in Your sight, that You have put the burden of all this people on me? ¹² Was it I who conceived all this people? Or did I give birth to them, that You should say to me, ‘Carry them in your arms, as a nurse carries a nursing infant, to the land which You swore to their fathers’? ¹³ Where am I to get meat to give to all this people? For they weep before me, saying, ‘Give us meat so that we may eat!’ ¹⁴ I am not able to carry all this people by myself, because it is too burdensome for me. ¹⁵ So if You are going to deal with me this way, please kill me now, if I have found favor in Your sight, and do not let me see my misery.”

Now Moses heard the people weeping throughout their families, each one at the entrance of his tent; and the anger of the Lord became very hot, and Moses was displeased.

The people’s demonstration of grief was done in a public way and this made the Lord very angry.

Some people are never satisfied. (Who are you thinking about right now?)

Why is it that a certain political party is always asking for tax breaks for the rich?

Are they not satisfied with what they have? Are they not satisfied with being rich?

Some of the angels that were living in heaven (a pretty nice neighborhood) were not satisfied. They wanted more!

Where am I to get meat to give to this entire people? For they weep before me, saying, ‘Give us meat so that we may eat!’

Was it Moses job to provide meat? Of course not

God was the One that provided the manna, and the water.

God had provided meat before and he could do it again.

Leaders need to know when a job is beyond their purview.

I am not able to carry this entire people by myself, because it is too burdensome for me

A year ago Moses had appointed 70 men to act as Judges to lighten his burden.

But when it came to other leadership matters Moses was the one that all the people looked to for direction. So we can understand the frustration Moses must have felt.

So if you are going to deal with me this way, please kill me now, if I have found favor in your sight, and do not let me see my misery.

All Moses had to do was ask God to take care of this request. The rest was up to God.

However, it's easy to lose perspective when we think it's all up to us.

But this sin was not like the one that took place at the waters of Meribah. This one was in private between himself and the Lord

Verses 16 -23

¹⁶ The Lord therefore said to Moses, “Gather for Me seventy men from the elders of Israel, whom you know to be the elders of the people and their officers, and bring them to the tent of meeting, and have them take their stand there with you.

¹⁷ Then I will come down and speak with you there, and I will take away some of the Spirit who is upon you, and put *Him* upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with you, so that you will not bear *it* by yourself. ¹⁸ And you shall say to the people, ‘Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow, and you shall eat meat; for you have wept in the ears of the Lord, saying, “Oh that someone would give us meat to eat! For we were well-off in Egypt.” Therefore the Lord will give you meat and you shall eat. ¹⁹ 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 nose and makes you nauseated; because you have rejected the Lord who is among you and have wept before Him, saying, “Why did we ever leave Egypt?””

²¹ But Moses said, “The people, among whom I am *included*, are six hundred thousand on foot! Yet You have said, ‘I will give them meat, so that they may eat for a whole month.’ ²² Are flocks and herds to be slaughtered for them, so that it will be sufficient for them? Or are all the fish of the sea to be caught for them, so that it will be sufficient for them?” ²³ Then the Lord said to Moses, “Is the Lord’s power too little? Now you shall see whether My word will come true for you or not.”

The Lord said to Moses, “Gather for me seventy men from the elders of Israel, and I will take away some of the Spirit who is upon you, and put *Him* upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with you, so that you will not bear *it* by yourself.

Everyone has a breaking point and Moses was close to his so God provided a way out.

It seems unlikely that this is the same group of 70 men that was appointed as judges a year ago. These men were elders of Israel.

Some have tried to trace the origin of the Sanhedrin to this event, but that seems unlikely. The first historical recording of the Sanhedrin is dated around 57 B.C.

Therefore the Lord will give you meat and you shall eat. ¹⁹ You shall eat for a whole month, until it comes out of your nose and makes you nauseated; because you have rejected the Lord who is among you and have wept before Him, saying, “Why did we ever leave Egypt?

Was the lack of meat the real problem? No, the real problem was that the people wished they had stayed in Egypt.

They preferred the taskmasters of Egypt over the leadership of God.

But Moses said, “The people, among whom I am *included*, are six hundred thousand on foot! Yet you have said, ‘I will give them meat, so that they may eat for a whole month.

The 600,000 on foot is a reference to the men who were able to go to war.

Moses did not believe that God could supply enough meat to feed the 2.5 million people for a month.

Is this why he felt responsible to provide the meat rather than going to God.

God had divided the Red Sea (10 miles across and up to 2,400 miles deep) but providing meat was out of the question?

Did Moses believe that God created the heavens and the earth? Of course he did.

And yet Moses doubted that God could provide enough meat for 2.5 million people for a month. God had provided bread every day for over a year to this same group.

Then the Lord said to Moses, Is the Lord's power too little? Now you shall see whether my word will come true for you or not.

This is one of the great questions in the O.T.

Is anything too hard for God to do?

The obvious answer to that question is NO.

And yet there are people in the church who doubt the miracle that took place in Joshua 10.

There are others that put their faith in evolution over the God of Creation.

These people should be reminded of the question that God asked Moses.

They should also repent of their unbelief

Verses 24 – 25

²⁴ So Moses went out and told the people the words of the Lord. He also gathered seventy men of the elders of the people, and positioned them around the tent.

²⁵ Then the Lord came down in the cloud and spoke to him; and He took away some of the Spirit who was upon him and placed *Him* upon the seventy elders. And when the Spirit rested upon them, they prophesied. Yet they did not do *it* again.

So Moses went out and told the people the words of the Lord

Moses went out from where?

Moses was in the tent of meeting that was stationed outside the camp.

See verse 30 below

And when the Spirit rested upon them, they prophesied. Yet they did not do *it* again.

The gift of prophesy was given to the 70 to mark their new role as leaders.

But it was a onetime thing.

Verses 26 - 30

²⁶ But two men had remained in the camp; the name of the one was Eldad, and the name of the other, Medad. And the Spirit rested upon them (and they were among those who had been registered, but had not gone out to the tent), and they prophesied in the camp. ²⁷ So a young man ran and informed Moses, and said, “Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp.” ²⁸ Then Joshua the son of Nun, the personal servant of Moses from his youth, responded and said, “My lord Moses, restrain them!” ²⁹ But Moses said to him, “Are you jealous for my sake? If only all the Lord’s people were prophets, that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them!” ³⁰ Then Moses returned to the camp, *both* he and the elders of Israel.

But two men, Eldad and Medad, had remained in the camp. And the Spirit rested upon them and they prophesied in the camp

We don't know why these two were not with the others before the Tent of Meeting that was outside the camp.

But their absence did not prevent them from receiving the blessing.

Then Joshua the son of Nun, the personal servant of Moses from his youth, responded and said, “My lord Moses, restrain them

The first mention of Joshua was in Exodus 17 when Moses chose Joshua to lead the battle against Amalek. Joshua was 38 years old at that time.

When it says he was the servant of Moses from his youth what age does this indicate. If he was 16 at that time then he had been the servant of Moses for 22 years. However, it has been nearly a full year since Exodus 17 so he has been the servant of Moses for 23 years now.

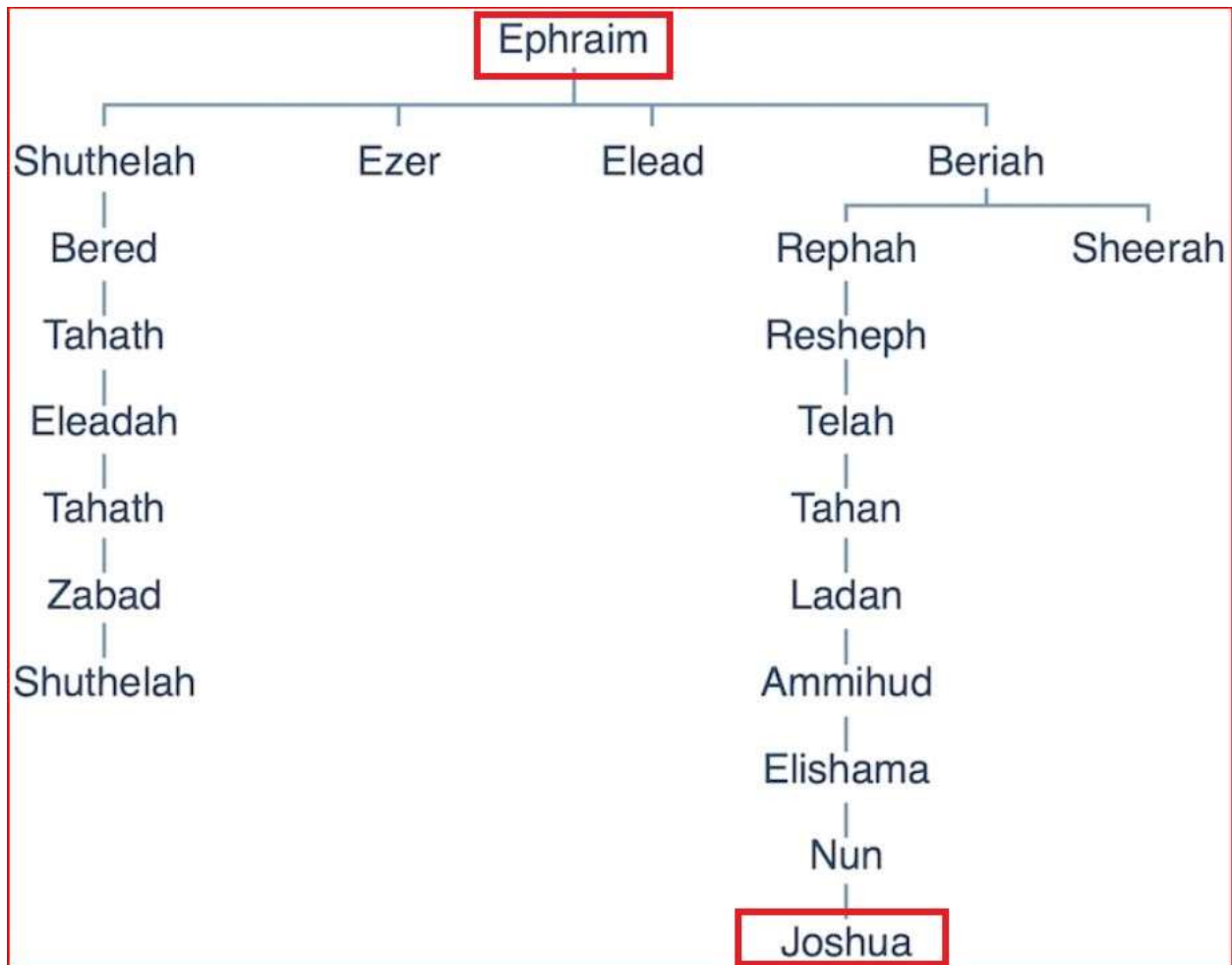
It is obvious that he looked up to Moses, the prophet of God, but his desire to limit the Spirit of God to work in others was not right.

The disciples of John the Baptist were jealous for their leader and they complained about the Lord's disciples because they were baptizing more people than the followers of John. Their jealousy was not warranted.

See John 3:25-30

Joshua came from the tribe of Ephraim

See chart 1110



Ephraim was born around 1710 BC and Joshua in 1485BC

But Moses said to him, “Are you jealous for my sake? If only all the Lord’s people were prophets, that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them!”³⁰ Then Moses returned to the camp, both he and the elders of Israel.

Moses wished that God would put his spirit on all his people.

Here we see that Moses had been at the tent of meeting (his home outside the camp) not at the Tabernacle which is at the middle of the camp.

Verses 31 - 35

³¹ **Now a wind burst forth from the Lord and it brought quail from the sea, and dropped *them* beside the camp, about a day's journey on this *side* and a day's journey on the other *side* all around the camp, and about two cubits *deep* on the surface of the ground.** ³² **And the people spent all that day, all night, and all the next day, and they gathered the quail (the one who gathered least gathered ten homers) and spread *them* out for themselves all around the camp.** ³³ **While the meat was still between their teeth, before it was chewed, the anger of the Lord was kindled against the people, and the Lord struck the people with a very severe plague.** ³⁴ **So that place was named Kibroth-hattaavah, because there they buried the people who had been greedy.** ³⁵ **From Kibroth-hattaavah the people set out for Hazereth, and they remained at Hazereth.**

Now a wind burst forth from the Lord and it brought quail from the sea, and dropped *them* beside the camp, about a day's journey on this *side* and a day's journey on the other *side* all around the camp, and about two cubits deep on the surface of the ground

God often uses a natural agency (because we live in a physical world) to accomplish his will but the event is still miraculous.

The supernatural element appears in the timing and the scope of the event.

1. The timing does not happen by chance, but is determined by God
2. And the number of quail is far beyond any natural occurrence.

And the people spent all that day, all night, and all the next day, and they gathered the quail (the one who gathered least gathered ten homers)

Ten homers are thought to be equivalent to 60 bushels.

Verse 31 says the quail were about two cubits deep (3 feet deep) on the surface of the ground, and here in verse 32 it says it took 36 hours to gather all the birds.

We should not forget that the 60 bushels was the least amount gathered by one person.

It should be mentioned that some of the drawings of this event are less than inspiring.

See pic 1115



A picture with the people waist deep in birds would be more appropriate.

And kids would probably find that picture a lot more interesting than the one above.

While the meat was still between their teeth, before it was chewed, the anger of the Lord was kindled against the people, and the Lord struck the people with a very severe plague

A year earlier, God was willing to overlook their murmuring because they were in need.

Their daily supply of manna had not started yet and they were hungry.

But now they cried for meat, not from need, but out of desire for something different.

So that place was named Kibroth-hattaavah, because there they buried the people who had been greedy.

Kibroth-hattaavah means graves of lust.

We don't know how many died but we do know it was only those who were demanding more than they really needed.

Contrary to the movie, Wall Street, greed is not good.