**Are we there yet? Always Complaining**

[**Google Map of route**](https://www.google.com/maps/place/Egypt/%4029.5690632%2C32.5968783%2C1024272m/data%3D%213m1%211e3%214m2%213m1%211s0x14368976c35c36e9%3A0x2c45a00925c4c444%216m1%211e1)

Do you ever find yourself complaining about things? Are you displeased or dissatisfied with what you’ve got in life? Do you let other people know when you are not happy with your situation? Do words like these ever come out of your mouth?

* “Why can’t I have -*fill in the blank-*? Everybody else seems to have one”
* “Why do I always end up getting the short end of the stick”
* “Why does everything bad happen to me!”
* “That’s not fair

Many of us are quick to complain when things don’t go our way, when they don’t happen the way we want them to or when we want them to.

The Israelites had the same problem. They had just seen God do some amazing miracles to bring them out of bondage in Egypt and now they were on their way to the Promised Land.

To set the scene: the Israelites had been enslaved in Egypt for over 400 years and God saw their suffering and sent Moses to set them free. After performing 10 miracles (10 Plagues) pharaoh told them to leave. Then God parted the Red sea for the Israelites to escape on dry ground. God provided a pillar of cloud and a pillar of fire to guide them and now The Israelites just needed to cross the wilderness to get to the Promised Land. The journey from Egypt to Canaan was about an 15-DAY JOURNEY. The area they had to cross was a big and barren wasteland made of sand and stone. They had been so anxious to leave Egypt they hadn’t prepared themselves for the journey. After just three days in the wilderness they started to complain.

Exodus 15:22- 24 🡪 So Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea; then they went out into the Wilderness of Shur. And they went three days in the wilderness and found no water. Now when they came to Marah, they could not drink the waters of Marah, for they were bitter. Therefore, the name of it was called Marah. And the people complained against Moses, saying, “What shall we drink? ‟

The Israelites had just seen God do some amazing miracles. They witnessed God bring the plagues against the Egyptians and then He opened the Red see so they could pass through and then closed it on their pursuing enemies. Now just 3 days later the Israelites didn’t trust God to provide them water. So God does another miracle and cleans the water so they can drink.

Even though God showed he could provide water for them the Israelites will continue to complained about not having water over and over again. (Exodus 17:3, Numbers 20: 2 – 13, Numbers 21:4-9)

But they complain about other things too

Exodus 16:2-3 🡪 Then the whole congregation of the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. And the children of Israel said to them, “Oh, that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the pots of meat and when we ate bread to the full! For you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger. ‟

This time the people were complaining they had no food and that they wanted to be back in Egypt where they had lots of food. As soon as times got a little rough, they abandon God and want to turn and run. But again, God does a miracle and sends them Manna.

Then again, they complained about misfortune, the food they had to eat and because it was taking them to long to reach the promise land

Numbers 11:1 🡪 And the people complained in the hearing of the Lord about their misfortunes, and when the Lord heard it, his anger was kindled, and the fire of the Lord burned among them and consumed some outlying parts of the camp.

Numbers 11:4-6 🡪 … And the people of Israel also wept again and said, “Oh that we had meat to eat! We remember the fish we ate in Egypt that cost nothing, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic. But now our strength is dried up, and there is nothing at all but this manna to look at.”

Numbers 21:4 -5 🡪 And they journeyed from mount Hor by the way of the Red sea, to compass the land of Edom: and the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way. And the people spoke against God, and against Moses, wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread.

Numbers 14: 1-4 🡪 That night all the members of the community raised their voices and wept aloud. All the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron, and the whole assembly said to them, “If only we had died in Egypt! Or in this wilderness! Why is the Lord bringing us to this land only to let us fall by the sword? Our wives and children will be taken as plunder. Wouldn’t it be better for us to go back to Egypt?” And they said to each other, “We should choose a leader and go back to Egypt.

So The first time they arrived at the promised land they complained that they would have to fight for it even though they saw God defeat the Egyptians. They witnessed miracle after miracle, like bread from heaven, pillars of fire, parting seas, water from rocks, knee deep quail around their camp, not to mention the 10 plagues that delivered them from slavery, but now they are at the border of the Promised Land. Some of the spies brought back a bad report telling of giants in the land and the camp panicked and wanted to appoint a new leader and return to Egypt.

The Israelites waited hundreds of years for this moment, but it took longer than they thought (Because of their own doing) and it was not as easy as they wanted it to be. So the **2-week journey** turns in to a **forty year journey** because of their complaining & disobedience.

* **Does your focus on the problems in your life blind you to all the miracles God is doing?**

Many of us could name all the problems in our life pretty quickly but when it comes to the miracles we have to stop and think long and hard about it.

When things don’t go your way, we shouldn’t just look for the easy way out. Instead, think about God’s power and wisdom to help you deal with the situation. Maybe He’s trying to teach you something! Maybe He’s trying to teach you to trust Him in all situations.

Psalm 56:11 in God I trust and am not afraid. What can man do to me?

If you are focused on God and eternal life, what can man do to you? You may have some temporary discomfort but in the grand plan it amounts to nothing.

If we were to think about the Israelites complaints in today’s terms it would probably sound like this:

* Moses, we don’t want water to drink we want a Root Beer float
* Why is it taking so long for the hot pocket to heat up in the microwave?
* There is no cell coverage out here and I can’t text my friend sitting next to me!

Hebrews 13:5 🡪 Be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you. ‟

It is human nature to want to get where we are going as quickly as possible. We set out to go somewhere or to achieve something and just want to get there the easiest and quickest way possible. We are always looking ahead at things to come:

You may often find yourself saying

* This weekend I am going to…
* Next year I am going to …..
* When I graduate I am going to …
* When I find a good job I am going to…
* when I retire I am going to… Give my life to Christ

We find we are completely ignoring our life that is quickly passing us by waiting for something else bigger and better.

We need to remember life is a journey to be experienced, and how you react will determine how long it takes to reach your goals. It is during the journey where you learn the most. Imagine if the day you started school you were handed a diploma. (Some kids would like that very much) What would you have learned? Would you be prepared to get a job? To run a family? To teach your own kids?

God has provided everything you need in life; maybe not everything you want, but everything you need.

Complaining is a sin. It’s like slapping God in the face and saying, “What you’ve given me isn’t good enough!” When you complain, you are saying that He doesn’t know how to care for you or meet your needs. Each time the Israelites complained the bible tells us the LORD'S anger burned against Israel. So if you think it is ok to complain all the time you might want to rethink that.

God is pleased when you show contentment in your life and God tells us not to complain so we can stand out in this world

Philippians 2:14-15 Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, “children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.” Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky

If you are a Christian and complaining about the way your life is going, you are saying that you do not trust God’s purpose. You are telling God you do not like what he is doing in your life and that you think you could do better. It also shows those around you, non-Christian’s, that we have no faith in our God to deliver us through and provide for us.

Israel complained whenever their situation failed to measure up to what they had in Egypt. As long as their situation was better, they were willing to follow God but the minute any hardship came along, when things didn’t measure up to their expectations, they were ready to run back. For this reason God left them in the desert.

When things don’t go your way are you ready to give up on God or do you continue to follow God wherever he takes you without complaining.

Life is not an accident you are where you are because God put you there for a reason. Remember that Paul led a jailor and his family to Jesus while in prison (Acts 16:30). It was not an accident that Paul was there. Later he was shipwrecked on the island of Malta and led many of them to Jesus (Acts 28). God will place you where you need to be and when you get the job done or learn the lesson He has for you the you will get to move on to the next thing in his plan for you. When you get in a situation that you don’t understand and are ready to complain about it stop and ask “Why has God placed me here?” If you don’t know the answer, ask God he is always faithful. Our life is not an accident.

God wants you to be satisfied with His care for you. When you are tempted to complain, think about all the ways God cares for you and say a “thank-You” prayer to Him instead. Ask Him to help you be content.

We even need to be thankful during those times of hardship and difficulty because they offer us an opportunity to learn something new and become closer to God by trusting him to get you through.

James 1:2-3 Consider it pure joy, my brothers, when facing trials, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance.

I know it is easier said than done but if we could set our minds to find the good side of every bad situation, try and learn something new and become closer to God, we would get through so much quicker and easier.

* **After all what good does complaining and worrying do.**

I think everyone probably knows someone who is always happy no matter what is happening, kind of makes you sick and want to hate them but they have it right. Medical science has proven that worry shortens your life.

We all probably know someone who is complaining all the time. They are usually not very fun to hang around – depressing if anything.

Philippians 4:6-7 🡪 Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

**Something to Think About:** The following inventions did not exist before the late 1800s: 1876 telephone, 1901 Vacuum cleaner, 1908 Car, 1917 Radio, 1920 hairdryer, 1940 Color television, 1969 The Internet, 1988 mobile phones. 2007 Apple iPhone.

None of these things we around 150 years ago. What have people done for the 1000s of years without them and all of them were supposed to make our lives better and easier. So, what happened? Why are we still complaining?

Do you realize we can have a hot plate of food in under 10 minutes and talk to someone on the other side of the world in real time but yet we can’t figure out how to be content much less happy?

* Daniel, who was born of royal family, was taken prisoner when Nebuchadnezzar captured Jerusalem. He was taken from his homeland, made a eunuch and a servant in Babylon. I am sure this was not in his plan, but in due time, God raised him up to second-in-command and he was the wisest man in Babylon.
* Joseph was born his father's favorite of 10 brothers, but they sold him into slavery, he served time in prison after being wrongly accused, and then, after 10-15 years, was promoted to second-in-command to Pharaoh of all of Egypt.
* Moses was raised and educated in Pharaoh's royal family but then spent forty years tending sheep in the wilderness. He then became the most powerful man living on earth.
* David was anointed the new king of Israel by Samuel but then was on the run for 4 years from King Saul who was trying to kill him, before he actually became the king.

During these bad times, each of these men were growing, learning and maturing to be used by God. They could have gotten made and thrown in the towel and we would not be reading about them today.

Paul continued to say in Philippians

Philippians 4:11-13 🡪 Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need**. I can do all things through him who strengthens me.**

I always liked the movie “Click” staring Adam Sandler. It is about a guy who wishes he could skip all the boring or difficult times in life and get right to the good times. He ends up with a magic remote that he trains to skip all those moments and finds out he has skipped through his entire life and missed all the most meaningful moments.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pDj1GM3RRWs>

God has a plan for you but before it comes to pass there is a time of trial, testing and maturing. To us, it often looks like just plain waiting or suffering. Do not get discouraged while you are in the wilderness. God is completely faithful and the things that He has spoken to you, He will bring to pass.

“Enjoy today, lighten up and laugh a little. Keep a positive attitude.

Yesterday is history, tomorrow a mystery, today is a gift. That is why it is called the present. “

**No, we are not there yet, but we are on the way.**

[**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4dKqrwl0EFk**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4dKqrwl0EFk) **(47 minutes)**

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