

The Sin of Murmuring Part 2

We will continue in this message to speak and tackle the sin of murmuring by reading and studying the Scriptures.

3. “1 And all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin, after their journeys, according to the commandment of the LORD, and pitched in Rephidim: and there was no water for the people to drink. 2 Wherefore the people did chide with Moses, and said, Give us water that we may drink. And Moses said unto them, Why chide ye with me? wherefore do ye tempt the LORD? 3 And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst? 4 And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me. 5 And the LORD said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go. 6 Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. 7 And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the LORD, saying, Is the LORD among us, or not?” (Exodus 17:1-7 KJV)

“1 And all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin, after their journeys, according to the commandment of the LORD, and pitched in Rephidim: and there was no water for the people to drink.” (Exodus 17:1 KJV) The congregation of the Israelites after being in the wilderness of Sin where they received the manna, now they moved from there to reach Mount Sinai and reached and pitched their tents in Rephidim. Possibly they stayed there in the wilderness of Sin for one week before they moved to Rephidim which means a ‘resting places’, in which there was no water.

“2 Wherefore the people did chide with Moses, and said, Give us water that we may drink. And Moses said unto them, Why chide ye with me? wherefore do ye tempt the LORD?” (Exodus 17:2 KJV)

“Wherefore the people did chide with Moses,” here the people they made a fight and contended with Moses; and sure spoke to him in indecent manner and with ill words quarreled with him. They said to him, **“Give us water that we may drink.”** Such request only God would be able to meet them with. They were obliging Moses to do it for them, as if they were still in the old mind since Moses led them out from Egypt, they were thinking that all what was going on was in his power and his plan. Until this moment we can see clearly they were not able to see God or have the mind to pray and ask God for their needs. *** Learn to have faith in God and in whatever difficulty or trial you are passing through then you need to turn to God and to cry to Him; praying to Him that He will relief you and provide your needs. * Learn also to stop pouring out your anger and frustration on the people around you and those whom God had put in authority over you. Don’t make from them an escape goat for what you are passing through from troubles.** The people were thinking that Moses can do miracles and provide water for them since he had done before many miracles, and God may allow him to do that. But they had forgotten that the LORD was the one who had brought them out of Egypt, who led them through the Red sea, and who had sweetened the waters at Marah for them, who brought them to

fountains of water at Elim, and had rained flesh and bread about their tents in the wilderness of Sin, and still continued the manna to rain on them. *** So even now trust God and lean on Him that he will take you out from the troubles that you are in.**

“And Moses said unto them, Why chide ye with me?” Moses here faced the people in order to correct them and to reinstate them to think correctly as supposed to be. He asked them why they were fighting with him; as if he was telling them that the LORD who brought them there in that desert place and the LORD who was going before them in the pillar of cloud and fire, and not himself who kept them from having water. So they were very unreasonable with him. **In the same way we need certain times to face the people and correct their wrong view perhaps they will realize and repent and come back to the right way of life.** Moses went further and told them the following:

“wherefore do ye tempt the LORD?” In what they were doing they were tempting the LORD, who is Christ, as appears from the writing of Paul, **“10 Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.” (1 Corinthians 10:9 KJV)** They were aware that they were not fighting with Moses but with God for previously he told them on the account of their murmuring for lack of food the following, **“And Moses said, This shall be, when the LORD shall give you in the evening flesh to eat, and in the morning bread to the full; for that the LORD heareth your murmurings which ye murmur against him: and what are we? your murmurings are not against us, but against the LORD.” (Exodus 16:8 KJV)** They were aware that what they were doing with Moses in chiding with him was not right, and in such they were testing the LORD, **“7 And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the LORD, saying, Is the LORD among us, or not?” (Exodus 17:7 KJV)** They tried the power of God, whether He could give them water in a dry and desert land; and they tried God’s patience by chiding with His servant and showing so much distrust of His power and provision, of His goodness and faithfulness; and by their ingratitude and rebellion they tempted Him in order to force Him to work a miracle for them. **We need to face the people and shake them; not that they are not aware of what they are doing, but they are trying to get what they want from God by fighting with us. Therefore we should not be afraid and be shaken with such an attitude of people.**

“3 And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?” (Exodus 17:3 KJV) When they came to the place and find no water there they fought with Moses, because why he brought them there to a place without water and how they can manage their lives without water; and having stayed some little time there, and all the water they brought with them from Alush, the previous station, being spent, and so having none to drink, began to be very thirsty. They became more impatient and angry with Moses, and started to complain and murmured against him using ill and grievance words and statements. **When people start to speak in bad words against us that is how they are fighting with us and murmuring against us, therefore we should not be intimidated, but to be more patience and persevering and allow God to deal with them.** They said to Moses **“Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?”** They were as if blind and could not see that God was with them and He was the one who brought them out of Egypt, and it was His will and not the decision or the will of Moses to go into such a kind of suffering. True they were facing the hardship of thirst

especially to their children, wives and cattle, and to the old and even sick people and how their lives became miserable without it and were threatened because of that even with death. But it was not the fault of Moses neither his doing, but it was God who brought them there. **That is why the more we need to be persevering and not to give in to the people murmuring and complains when we are aware that the hardship that they are passing through are the discipline of God for them and the training that He had prepared them to pass through.** If they would come to Moses and asked him to pray to God to solve this problem and meet that need it be far better and acceptable. But to accuse Moses that he brought them out of Egypt to kill them and their children and cattle, and they were chiding with him who did many good things to them, such was too much for them to do against their faithful leader.

“4 And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me.” (Exodus 17:4) Moses in his distress cried out to the LORD; he prayed unto Him for the distress and the threat that he was put in. That was the way Moses always doing whenever he was put in such trouble with the people, and that was the refuge that he always took; in which he did well, and set a good example of faith and trust in God. **In the same way we need to cry to God whenever we are passing through such kind of painful experience with the people whether in life or whether in our ministry unto God.** Moses cried to God, ***“What shall I do unto this people?”*** Moses was here crying to God with earnestness to find out from God what he needed to do for this people so that they will be relieved from the distress of the thirst that they were in and so Moses himself will be relieved. With that cry of Moses to God he was telling Him that he was unable to do anything for them at this time to relief them except in praying and crying to God and asking from Him the help in such time of need. Moses was in the same condition with the people, in lack of water and thirstiness, except that his wife and children were not with him, but he did not show any complain or sign that the lack of water had so severely affected him, but only what the people were doing was his cause of distress. So he cried to God yet not despairing for relief, but rather expressing faith in the power and goodness of God to keep them, desiring that He would open a way to help them, and to direct him what he needed to do for them in that situation. Moses in his cry desired that such relief to be done speedily for the glory of God, for his own safety as he added, ***“they be almost ready to stone me”***, and to prevent the people sinning yet more and more, and so bring destruction upon them. **So we need to cry and pray to God and that express our faith on Him that He is able to relieve us, and also that we are telling that we can do nothing in our hands to relieve the people that is why we are crying to Him to solve such crisis that we are placed in and also telling Him to protect us from the people who are venting their anger against us.** Moses pleaded with God, for the people were ready to stone him; they were ready to do such an offal act to an innocent leader who had done all the good things that God had asked him to do for them. **So when we do all the good things to the people and they come and fight with us and want to harm us, then that is their murmuring against God.** The people were impatience, in rage, and being in a stony and rocky place they were willing to stone Moses the same of what he expected from the Egyptians would do to the Israelites if they would sacrificed to God in front of them, ***“26 And Moses said, It is not meet so to do; for we shall sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians to the LORD our God: lo, shall we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, and will they not stone us?” (Exodus 8:26 KJV)*** So what Moses was afraid from the Egyptians would do, the Israelites were about to do it to him. **To tell you the truth I had never being hurt from the non believers around us but being hurt by the very believers whom we serve.**

“5 And the LORD said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go.” (Exodus 17:5 KJV) Here God answered the prayers and the cry of Moses and told him of what he needed to do with the people and how he will handle them. God asked him to ***“Go on before the people”***, that is to lead the people and to go before them to Mount Sinai or Horeb as if nothing had happened; to the place that God supposed to meet Moses with the people as we will see in the next verse, and as was agreed upon previously between Moses and God as we read here, ***“12 And he said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain.” (Exodus 3:12 KJV)*** God was saying here to Moses to be bold and not to be afraid, but to go forward to lead them. *** We need not to be intimidated by the people grumbling and fighting with us. God will not change His plan and what He ordained for His people to pass through in the wilderness and in the narrow way that He put before us to enter eternity through the blood of Jesus. * That is why I say and announce that I did not and I will not change the teaching that God had given to me, and people if they will grumble, fight, chide or quarrel with me, I announce today, that I will not do but what God had said in His Word and what the Holy Spirit had said and He is saying to me.** You see here when Moses prayed and cried out to God he was encouraged and empowered by the power of God to go forward and lead the people and do the will of God. **That encourages us more to pray more and to cry to God at the time of distress.** God said to Moses, ***“and take with thee of the elders of Israel”***; the elders of the tribes and the heads of the families to take with him so they will be witnesses to see the water that will come out of the rock. In addition, he told him to take his rod, ***“and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go.”*** The same rod that he used to smite the river Nile and the water became blood, and which was the same rod used to divide the sea. That rod was not for inflicting punishment, as on Pharaoh and the Egyptians, but for bringing good things unto them; because when they will see this in his hand, by which so many miracles had been done, they might be encouraged to hope that something was going to be done in their favor, and that water would be produced for them to drink. **We always need to go back to God in our troubles and hardship so He will tell us exactly what we need to do.**

“6 Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.” (Exodus 17:6 KJV) Here God told Moses that He will stand upon the rock in Horeb, and the purpose here that God will stand before Moses was in order to support him and to encourage him that he was not alone but God with him. The purpose of God in that He wanted Moses to believe that as he will strike the rock that water will come out of it. **God want us to believe on Him that all what He had promised us in His Word that He will do for us and He is there to support us and to encourage us and to sustain us in times of troubles.** So Moses was supposed to smite the rock in God’s presence, and have the promise of God that water will come out of it so that the thirsty Israelites can drink water; so they and their cattle will not die, as well as Moses will be protected. In such God was showing Himself gracious and merciful even to the murmuring and ungrateful people. Truly as Moses smote the rock with his rod, the waters gushed out and the people with their cattle, herds and flocks drank and their needs were met; in great abundance, like streams and rivers, for the refreshment of the people, and their cattle. Other Scriptures that speak about that are the following: ***“15 Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint;” (Deuteronomy 8:15 KJV)*** ***“20 Behold, he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out,***

and the streams overflowed; can he give bread also? can he provide flesh for his people?” (Psalm 78:20 KJV) “41 He opened the rock, and the waters gushed out; they ran in the dry places like a river.” (Psalms 105:41 KJV) This Rock was Christ, “And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.” (1 Corinthians 10:4 KJV), and the flow of water was similar to the grace of God that He released to help us and sustain us, and similar to His blood that was shed on the cross to save us from our sins.

“7 And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the LORD, saying, Is the LORD among us, or not?” (Exodus 17:7 KJV) Moses gave these two names for the place. The meaning of Massah is ‘temptation’, and the meaning of Meribah is ‘strife’, or ‘contention’, for the following reasons: first “because of the chiding of the children of Israel,” that is why he called it Meribah. Second “because they tempted the LORD, saying, Is the LORD among us, or not?” that is why he called it Massah. What they were saying in their fighting and grumbling actions and deeds the following: If God will give them water to drink; for themselves, for their children and for their cattle then He is with them, but if not then He is not with them, and with such they tempted the LORD. As if they totally forgot all the previous miracles and wonders that God did and save them and provided their needs.

***My dear and beloved:** Come now to God in repentance. Do not let God’s provision is the only reason for you to believe that God is there with you. God would lead you through such trials into the wilderness as we are moving forward looking to meet Jesus, and you need to learn to be content as Paul said, “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.” (Philippians 4:11-13 KJV) God is gracious to us therefore:*

- Let us see Him in each and in every occasion of our Christian life.
- Let us walk with Him. Let us not look with negative looks to the people and those who are in offices and leadership and blame them, accuse them falsely and grumble against them for the hardships that we are passing through.
- Let us read the mind of God and let us see beyond the hardships that we are passing through.
- Let us discern and see the new life style that God had ordained for us to pass through.
- Let us learn to see the glory of God in the wilderness of this life that we are living until we translate to Heaven.
- Let us shun worldliness and its life styles knowing that it will lead us to be astray and away from God.
- Let us be glad with the manna that God is giving to us and the way He is providing all our daily needs and necessities.
- Let us be thankful to Him for every provision, and for the guidance and the discipline, His presence in our lives and the place in Heaven that He has for us.

Let us pray ...

***My prayer:** Father God, I come before you in the name of Jesus, who died on the cross for my sins to give me eternal life. Lord thank you for your Word and the teaching that I received in this message.*

Confess and renounce your sins to God. Renounce the sin of grumbling and fighting with others, especially with the leaders who are over you and those in offices. Renounce the sin of the lack of reading God’s Word and prayer, and the lack of faith in God. Confess and renounce your worldliness and the love for material things. Confess and renounce your greed and lack of contentment. Confess and renounce doing your own will and plan and not the will and the plan of God for you. Confess the sin of non willingness to suffer and go through the narrow gate and the wilderness that God ordained for you to pass through. Lord forgive me I repent from the following sins _____.

Lord I cry out to you to take me out from the following trouble _____.

Lord I commit myself to apply your Word and to implement your will in my life. Lord I commit myself to reproduce more fruit of the Holy Spirit; love joy, peace, gentleness, kindness, patient, self-control, long-suffering, perseverance and meekness that people will see Christ in my life.

Lord thank you for all my Brothers and the Sisters who committed their lives to live for you. Lord help them and preserve them and sustain them as they are willing to go through the narrow gate and the plan that you have for them. Lord continue to reveal yourself to them and speak to them and show them your glory so they will continue to go into the right direction that you ordained for them to go.

Lord bless us as a church, and help us to persevere in this life in teaching the people and in preparing them for your coming. Lord sustain us and provide all our needs so that we can continue to serve you and walk with you. Lord protect us and deliver us from the evil one and aid us in times of troubles. Lord I pray for all the workers of the church to be in good attitude and away from grumbling and complaining and be willing to persevere in the time of suffering. Lord refill us again with the Holy Spirit and give us the spiritual gifts to go and evangelize and make disciples and train new workers to plant new Bible studies and new congregations for the church. Lord fulfill the vision that you gave to your church, ‘Multiplication in peace with implementing the whole will of God’. Lord bless us, enlarge our territory, let your hand be with us and free us from harm so that we will not feel pain. May the grace of the Lord Jesus and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all in Jesus name, Amen.

The Sin of Murmuring Part 2. Exodus 17:1-7. 1 Corinthians 10:9. Exodus 16:8. Exodus 8:26. Exodus 3:12. Deuteronomy 8:15. Psalm 78:20. Psalms 105:41. 1 Corinthians 10:4. Philippians 4:11-13.

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