

Lusting, Murmuring and Tempting Christ

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BIG SANDY, Texas—I hope that you had an edifying and uplifting week as you observed the Days of Unleavened Bread. I hope that you were able to strengthen your relationship with God and to renew your commitment to love your neighbors as you love yourself.

Before the Memorial of the Suffering and Death of the Son of God, we focused upon God's grace. After the Memorial of the Suffering and Death of the Son of God (as we observed the Days of Unleavened Bread), we focused upon our Father's expectations of us.

In 1 Corinthians 10:6-10, the apostle Paul listed five negative characteristics that were displayed by the children of Israel in the wilderness after they were delivered from Egypt.

- Lusting after evil things—Numbers 11:1-33
- Idolatry—Exodus 32:1-6
- Sexual immorality—Numbers 25:1-9
- Tempting Christ—Numbers 21:5-6
- Murmuring—Numbers 14:2-37

For this article, I am going to combine the subjects of lusting, murmuring and tempting Christ. While the three subjects have some differences, they also have noticeable overlap.

Old Testament history

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.' "

Exodus 17:2-3—"Therefore the people contended with Moses, and said, 'Give us water, that we may drink.' And Moses said to them, 'Why do you contend with me? Why do you tempt the LORD?' And the people thirsted there for water, and the people complained against Moses, and said, 'Why is it you have brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?' "

Numbers 11:4-6—"Now the mixed multitude who were among them yielded to intense craving; so the children of Israel also wept again and said: 'Who will give

us meat to eat? We remember the fish which we ate freely in Egypt, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic; but now our whole being is dried up; there is nothing at all except this manna before our eyes! ”

Numbers 14:2-4—“And all the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron, and the whole congregation said to them, ‘If only we had died in the land of Egypt! Or if only we had died in this wilderness! Why has the LORD brought us to this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and children should become victims? Would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?’ So they said to one another, ‘Let us select a leader and return to Egypt.’ ”

Numbers 14:24—“But My servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit in him and has followed Me fully, I will bring into the land where he went, and his descendants shall inherit it.”

Numbers 14:30—“Except for Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun, you shall by no means enter the land which I swore I would make you dwell in.”

Numbers 16:3—“They gathered together against Moses and Aaron, and said to them, ‘You take too much upon yourselves, for all the congregation is holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the LORD?’ ”

Numbers 16:7—Moses said: “You take too much upon yourselves, you sons of Levi!”

Numbers 16:10—Moses asked: “Are you seeking the priesthood also?”

Numbers 21:5-6—“And the people spoke against God and against Moses: Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and our soul loathes this worthless bread. So the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and many of the people of Israel died.”

New Testament example

Notice the tempter (the devil) sought to derail the Son of God.

Matthew 4:3-4—“Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, ‘If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.’ But He answered and said, ‘It is written, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.” ’ ”

Matthew 4:5-7—“Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, ‘If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written: “He shall give His angels charge over you,” and, “In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.” ’ Jesus said to him, ‘It is written again, “You shall not tempt the LORD your God.” ’ ”

Matthew 4:8-10—“Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him, ‘All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.’ Then Jesus said to him, ‘Away with you, Satan! For it is written, “You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.” ’ ”