
COMPLAINERS OR PRAISERS?

EXODUS 16:1-12



When we complain about our circumstances to others, we're effectively (though usually unintentionally) accusing God and slandering his character. We're saying, God doesn't care, God doesn't know what he's doing, and God can't do anything about this.

These are serious and dangerous slanders against God. But Exodus 16:1-12 helps us move from complaining to praising by showing us how complaints are a heart problem not a God problem.

- **GOD PROVIDES FOR COMPLAINERS (1-4, 6-8)**
- **GOD TESTS COMPLAINERS (4-5)**
- **GOD REVEALS HIMSELF TO COMPLAINERS (9-12)**

LEARNING

GOD PROVIDES FOR COMPLAINERS (1-4, 6-8)

Forty-five days after leaving Egypt, the Israelites entered the wilderness and started their journey to the Promised Land (1). They'd hardly started, though, when the people complained about Moses's leadership and their hunger (2-3). Moses warned them that they were actually complaining about God not him (7-8).

If I'd just delivered the Israelites from Egyptian slavery, Egyptian soldiers, and the Red Sea, I think I'd rain fire from heaven upon them for such ingratitude. But, instead, God rained bread from heaven upon them and promised to keep doing so (4, 6-8).

**WE DESERVE HEAVENLY FIRE,
BUT GOD SENDS HEAVENLY FOOD.**

God does care and does provide, but why did he let this situation develop in the first place? To test his people.

GOD TESTS COMPLAINERS (4-5)

God didn't let the moment pass without teaching the Israelites how to trust and obey him. Instead of giving them enough bread for days, he promised enough supply for each day and told them to take just enough for each day (4). He gave them double on the sixth day and told them not to look for it on the seventh day (7). If we ask God, why he did it this way, he explains, "**That I may test them, whether they will walk in my law or not**" (4).

WHEN WE'RE COMPLAINING,
GOD IS TESTING.

So, God does know what he's doing. But what's his aim in the provision and the test?

GOD REVEALS HIMSELF TO COMPLAINERS (9-12)

If I were leading this bunch of ungrateful moaners and whiners, I'd be leaving them right there in the wilderness. Instead, God met them right there in the wilderness, so that they would see not just the glorious provision of bread but the glorious God behind it. **They looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud** (10). Why? Because his great aim in the provision of bread and the revealing of his glory was, "**You shall know that I am the Lord your God**" (12). He wanted them to know him and have a relationship with them.

GOD DOESN'T RUN AND HIDE FROM US,
BUT RUNS TO US AND REVEALS HIMSELF TO US.

LOVING

Fast forward two thousand years, and we find the same nation hungry and complaining in the desert (John 6:7-9). In Jesus, God ran to them, provided for them, and showed them so much of his glory that the people said, "**This is indeed the Prophet who is to come into the world!**" (14). Jesus revealed even more of his glory to the disciples when he later said, "**I am the bread of life, whoever comes to me shall not hunger**" (35).

LIVING

When tempted to complain about lack and loss, and to run from God, wait for God to run to you and provide for you in such a way that you gain a new sight of his glory and your complaint becomes a chorus.
