

# Something to Pray About

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## *DESERT WONDER*

By Cindy Sears – October 2008

In Exodus 16:1-7, 31-36 and 17:1-6, we read the story of how the Israelites that were led out of Egyptian bondage by Moses and Aaron soon begin to grumble and complain. They have left the “flesh-pots of Egypt” literally giving up everything to follow the Lord. Now as they travel through the hot, dusty desert, they wonder if they made the right decision. Our walk with the Lord is very similar to what the Israelites experienced in their desert journey, which is why these stories have been preserved.

When we read about the grumbling Israelites, we like to laugh or sneer at them, pointing fingers at their lack of faith in the Lord who brought them out of Egypt using plagues and other miraculous signs. But how much trust do we show in the LORD’s provision in our own lives? How many of us trust in God enough to give 10% to Him right off the top of our earnings—counting on God to provide all that we need? How many of us step out in faith and trust and boldly speak of Christ to our friends, neighbors, and strangers that we meet daily? How much time are we willing to give to prayer, Bible reading and study, and corporate worship—instead of deciding that we have more important or fun things to do? How often do we forgo the purchase of an item to help someone in greater need?

We judge the Israelites because they cry for the flesh-pots of Egypt. Yet, how often do we opt to enjoy the fleshly things of our world and culture instead of attending church, volunteering to teach or help at the church, reading the Bible, or simply saying “No” to activities or things we know are not acceptable or pleasing to God? We have no right to look down on the Israelites. We are often just as self-centered, selfish, petty and untrusting of the Lord and His power to provide for our needs as the Israelites ever were on their worst days.

Consider this: when we grumble and complain about what we don’t have or how life is not going the way we want it to go—aren’t we doing what the Israelites did? They grumbled against Moses and Aaron—but they were really grumbling against the Lord. God is our provider, our Creator. He sets us where He wants us to be. If we complain about where we are and what we have, is this not a slap in God’s face—a denial of His love and care? When we grumble, we don’t really grumble against our bosses, teachers, pastors, parents, government, banks, etc.—we grumble against God. Do we need to work for changes in our situations? Yes. Do we need to constantly complain about our lives? No. We are called to live in joy—to count even suffering as a blessing in the Lord. God’s thoughts are not our thoughts (Isaiah 55:8-9). His ways are higher and beyond our understanding. Deep, true faith and trust means that we rest in God, in Christ, no matter what the temporary circumstances may be that beset us (James 1:2-4; 2 Corinthians 8:2-4). We lean on God’s promises, too (Matt. 6:25-34; 7:7-11).