

# Complaining

By David Maxson

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 we loathe this worthless food." - **Numbers 21:5**

What was the number one sin of Israel in the wilderness?

Complaining!

The people complained as soon as they crossed the Red Sea all the way till this story which is near the end of their pilgrimage. There are at least ten unique stories during Israel's wilderness days where we find the people complaining against God and/or Moses (**Ex 16:2; 17:2; 32:1; Num 11:1; 14:2; 16:3 17:6, 28; 20:2; 21:5**).

Grumbling is a problem. None of us is above the temptation to murmur or complain. We need to learn from the book of Numbers that this is a serious issue with God. He never took grumbling lightly. He sent fire to consume some, swallowed up others with the earth, and sent fiery serpents among the people, all because of complaining!

What lies at the heart of a complaining spirit?

**1. A lack of faith.** Israel usually complained because they failed to see God's ability to provide for them.

**2. A selfish heart.** This is seen in the rebellion of Korah. He and his family were jealous of the position God had given Moses.

How do you remedy a complaining spirit?

**1. Remind yourself that God is in control.** Your life may look like a wilderness with no food or water in sight, but God has not abandoned you. He will guide you home.

**2. Give thanks.** Instead of grumbling about what you don't have, turn your attention to what God has given you.

Father, forgive us of our ingratitude and lack of faith. Cultivate in us a heart of thankfulness and trust in your ability to provide.



# The Auburn Beacon



Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (**Matthew 5:16**)

Volume 7, Issue 26

March 13, 2016

## In Remembrance of These Things

By Connie W. Adams



### Thoughts to Ponder

For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. (**2 Peter 1:12**)

Some things ought to be forgotten. To dwell on past blunders gives rise to despair. Paul wrote, "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (**Phil. 3:13-14**). Nursing old wounds sours the spirit. We cannot go into rewind and undo what is done.

Some things must be remembered. To Israel God said, "Remember that thou wast a stranger in the land of Egypt . . . therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day" (**Deut. 5:15**). The blessings of Canaan could best be appreciated against the background of Egypt. The feasts of Passover and Tabernacles were intended to help them remember how God spared them from the death of the firstborn in Egypt and how God supplied their needs in the wilderness.

"Help me to remember how short my time is" (**Psa. 89:47**). "Remember now thy creator in the days of thy youth" (**Eccl. 12:1**). "Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord" (**Jn. 15:20**). "Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (**Acts 20:35**). "Remember ye the words which were spoken before the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ" (**Jude 17**). The remedy for loss of "first love" is to "remember from whence thou art fallen" and repent and "do the first works" (**Rev. 2:5**).

I was in a meeting a few years ago in a large southern city where there are many congregations and we were having day services. A preacher in the area attended each day. Toward the last of the week he said, "I want to thank you for making it worthwhile for me to bring my Bible.

Peter said, "I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth. Yes, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance" (**2 Pet. 1:12-13**). Timothy was charged, "If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained" (**1 Tim. 4:6**).

Like Timothy, I aspire to be "a good minister of Jesus Christ." To that end we have prepared a special issue of this paper to take us back to some fundamental Bible lessons which we are in grave danger of forgetting.

The Need For This Special

*(Continued on page 2)*

Brad Marshall (Allie Hosey's Cousin)	Jesse Godwin (Troy's father and Mac's grandfather)	Virginia Box (Sarah Norman's grandmother)	Louise Pack (Anna and Christopher's grandmother)
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Don Lanier (Father of Greg Lanier)	David Hartsell (Holly and Brad's Father)	Terri Sams (Erica's friend)
Terri Moore (Joey's aunt)	Audrey Barnett (Joanetta's sister-in-law)	Betty Bradford	Hazel Gilliland and Sherry Carroll (Toni's relatives)
Tom Davis (Walker Davis' Uncle)	Ermogene Laxson (Sara Lail's grandmother)	Danny Weldon (Rusty Weldon's brother)	William Smith (Ken Sullivan's brother)
Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father)	Bernice Martin (Will Harris' great-grandmother)	Rebecca Davis (Chuck Hahn's Niece)	Eva Jean Cavender (Matt's grandmother)
John M. Rhodes and Bonnie Rhodes Kirkley (Toni Herd's family)	Joe Perkins (Scott Perkins' Dad)	Aubrey Meeks (Toni Herd's Nephew)	

### March Birthdays

- 1-Amanda Cagle
- 2-Maddie Norman
- 2-Chase Harrison
- 2-Bryan Golden
- 2-Angela Fowler
- 2-Elizabeth Barham
- 2-Connell Hodges
- 3-Shaun Oliver
- 5-Sophie Borden
- 7-Josh Pender
- 8-Carmen Herd
- 9-Richard Zacarius
- 9-Austin Bartlett
- 10-Pepper Humphrey
- 10-Parker Godwin
- 12-Brad Hartsell
- 13-Adam Holliday
- 17-Susan Sullivanne
- 18-MaKenzie Anderson
- 18-Alaina Barham
- 20-Jimmy Roberts
- 21-Carter Hunt
- 21-Rachel Bobo
- 22-Will Hollis
- 23-Sarah Embry
- 25-Sawyer Hall
- 27-Shelby Freeman
- 27-Katie Jasper
- 28-Jacob Hagedwood
- 29-Rachel Simpson
- 29-Makenzie Reynolds
- 30-Amanda Stephens
- 30-York Smith

### News and Notes

- ☒ - Lisa Carter, Luke's mom, continues with bi-weekly chemo treatments.
- ☒ - Our VBS will be June 6-9, on the "journeys of Paul."
- ☒ - Baby Everett Nowlin, Erica's cousin, received a good report this week from cardiologist of progress.
- ☒ - Please continue to pray for Rebecca Davis, Chuck Hahn's niece.
- ☒ - Kimberlee Myers' cousin, Brian, had lung surgery on wed, and is in serious condition.
- ☒ - Rachel Hobgood's friend's baby, Ben Raine, was born at 28 weeks and placed in NICU. And is doing well!
- ☒ - Heath Fowler's mother, Reba Patterson, was taken to the hospital Fri night with a high fever and infection
- ☒ - Mary Ann's grandfather, Howard Vaughan, is in rehab in B'ham.
- ☒ - Please remember the family of Chuck Hunt in the recent loss of his grandmother.
- ☒ - Rachel Bobo had successful knee surgery on Friday in Huntsville.
- ☒ - Rachel Hobgood's brother-in-law, Josh Reynolds was deployed to United Arab emirates for at least 6 months.

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**SCHEDULE OF SERVICES**  
Sunday  
Bible Class .....9:30 AM  
Worship .....10:20 AM  
Evening Worship ..... 6:00 PM  
**Wednesday**  
Bible Classes.....7:00 PM  
E-Mail:  
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**Larry Rouse**  
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Find us on the Internet: [www.auchurch.com](http://www.auchurch.com) and [www.aubeacon.com](http://www.aubeacon.com)

(Continued from page 1)

Historically, gospel preachers have repeatedly emphasized the truths you will find in this issue to help people in denominationalism see the difference between truth and error. Again and again these same passages and illustrations have been called in-to service when brethren in the Lord were flirting with apostasy whether in worship, work, organization, or whatever threatened the peace and welfare of the kingdom of God.

The institutional brethren have a crisis on their hands now with some going so far that they are advocating a "new hermeneutic." Commands, examples and necessary inferences are too limited for their fertile imaginations. Never mind the fact that Jesus used them in teaching truth, the apostles used them, and the first doctrinal issue facing the church was settled by an appeal to all three (**Acts 15**). This "new hermeneutic" is subjective. We are called upon to practice whatever we think "Jesus would do." How shall we know that without Scripture to show it? While this "hermeneutic" may be new to some institutional folk, it is far from new to the denominational world. The denominational approach to Bible authority has been largely to ignore it in favor of whatever the majority want.

There are some men among the ultra-liberals who often speak of themselves as "on the cutting edge" of the kingdom. A few years ago an article appeared in Mission Magazine entitled "The 301 Cubit Ark." It ridiculed the idea of an exact pattern. It was chosen as "article of the year." Another magazine which has been on "the cutting edge" is Image. Now comes Wineskins with the avowed purpose of remaking the church. "Pattern theology" is out. The gospel when first given was new wine in new wineskins. It was not poured into the old wineskin of the law of Moses. It was not a patch on the old garment of Judaism; it was all new cloth. But what these men forget is that it is ever new. It does not need revision nor updating to make it "relevant." It is relevant. It always will be relevant.

Among those who have resisted the burgeoning institutionalism there is also a need for remembering passages which help us see the danger of human wisdom as opposed to divine wisdom, the danger of trifling with divine instructions, the folly of confusing the broad way with the narrow way, the disaster which comes from "going onward." Illustrations help to impress truth. But in our search for sermon illustrations, let us not overlook the most useful source of all -- the illustrations in the Bible itself. Tell me, how long has it been since you heard a sermon on Cain and Abel? How about "Make Thee an Ark of Gopher

Wood"? or, "Nadab and Abihu"? or "Uzzah's Sin"? What about "Naaman the Leper," "To Obey Is Better Than Sacrifice," Jesus on "The Traditions of Men," "Plants to Be Rooted Up," "Are There Few Saved?", "**Mark 16:15-16**" or "Going Onward"?

I dare say that if you were to preach a couple of these subjects in a gospel meeting there would be older people who would tell you they had not heard that in a long, long time. Some of the younger ones have never heard it. I was in a meeting a few years ago in a large southern city where there are many congregations and we were having day services. A preacher in the area attended each day. Toward the last of the week he said, "I want to thank you for making it worthwhile for me to bring my Bible. I have sat through many meetings in this city where I might as well have left my Bible at home."

What is happening about preaching? Check the shelves of preachers' libraries and see what they are using for source materials. Catchy, glitzy, witty works of Swindoll, Lucado and a few others will often be found. Motivational preaching has become the order of the day. Don't get me wrong. We all need to be motivated to do what we know is right. But there is the catch. All too many among the Lord's people do not know what they ought to know. There is a dearth of Bible knowledge. That sets the state for heartache down the road. The last few times I have preached on "Bible Authority" in meetings, invariably some older brethren have commented that they had not heard a sermon on that in twenty years. It may be that they forgot, or just didn't pay attention, or that they were just "carried away" at the moment. What if they are right?

The purpose of this special issue is not to suggest that these are the only passages on which we ought to teach. The Bible is an inexhaustible treasure. From it we are to declare "all the counsel of God" and to "keep back nothing which is profitable" to the hearers. Our work must be balanced. Error must be exposed and reproved. Sin must be rebuked. Struggling saints facing the pressures of an increasingly irreligious society must be given help from the word of God to keep their poise and not lose sight of their goal. Babes in Christ must grow. So must those who are more mature. If they stop growing they will die. Older Christians need to have their spirits lifted. Elders, deacons, teachers, and preachers must all be encouraged. No faithful preacher of the gospel should ever be afraid of running out of material. The word of God is admirably suited to supply all our needs.

But through all of this, God's people must ever be cautioned about taking liberties with what the Lord said. The consequences of disobedience must be clearly understood...

**Guardian of Truth - February 4, 1993**



## Longsuffering

By L.A. Stauffer

Someone noted that "longsuffering" is the ability to "suffer long" with people and circumstances; to put up for long periods of time with disagreeable relationships and situations. It is relatively synonymous with our use of the word "patience."

It is the word that describes God's patience with a world of sinners. God, he has told us, hates sin and he is prepared by his very righteous nature to punish it. But though he hates sin, God loves sinners and in His long-suffering is putting off the day of judgment to provide transgressors time to turn from their iniquity. The apostle Peter tells us: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some count slackness; but is longsuffering to you-ward, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (**2 Pet 3:9**).

As disciples seek to imitate the love of God Paul teaches them that love "suffers long, and is kind." In the apostle's descriptive portrayal of God's greatest commandment, he also notes that love "is not provoked," or as another version says, "is not irritable or resentful" (**1 Cor 13:5, ESV**). All brethren appreciate the longsuffering and patience of God, but, as the brethren at Corinth, are often short of it when relating to one another (**see 1 Cor 3:1-3**).

We sometimes struggle with it when relating to newborn babes in Christ. We too often expect them in the early weeks and months of their lives in Christ to have all the character of a mature saint. But in long-suffering we must patiently work with them to nurse them, to spoon-feed them, and to speak daily words of encouragement over a considerable span of time. As long as we see in them signs of belief, indications of effort, openness to reproof, and elements of spiritual life—there is always hope that with longsuffering and nurturing these babes will mature unto the measure of the stature of Christ. That is the goal of every local church in its work of edification (**see Eph 4:11-13**).

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I recall when I was first selected and appointed to the eldership, I was easily discouraged by the response of some to my visits and words of encouragement. And it was important to keep reminding myself that these things take time and that there were other avenues I needed to explore in trying to reach these brethren. I remembered the words of Peter and Paul and counseled myself to be "patient" and to be "gentle" in seeking to reach the hearts of weak brethren and implant within them the seeds of faith and hope and love that bear the fruit of faithfulness and devotion to God.

What is so easy to forget is that many folks have spent years messing up their thinking, perverting God's design for their lives, and digging themselves into a deep pit of self-centered and worldly behavior. Let us not think that a few home studies, baptism into Christ, and a couple of exhortations are going to set everything right in a newborn's life in Christ. It is easy when sinners obey the gospel to forget about the demands and difficulties of repentance.

Repentance demands an entirely different way of thinking, calls for a completely new lifestyle, and requires a commitment and devotion to One I must permit to control me totally. Bringing forth fruit worthy of repentance is no small task and if God sees the need to be "longsuffering" with sinners, who am I to take this quality of life lightly.

And so it is with all of us brethren. We must keep trying to teach our erring brethren. We need to call on them, send them cards of encouragement, and pray for God's help in reaching them. Elders cannot accomplish the work of restoration alone. We have recently received the help of many members and have seen signs of encouragement in some of our weak members. Longsuffering is good, but is not just sitting and waiting for brethren to repent. It calls for patient effort to bring them to repentance.

