

Numbers 20:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And wherefore have ye made us to come up out of Egypt, to bring us in unto this evil place? it is no place of seed, or of figs, or of vines, or of pomegranates; neither is there any water to drink.

Analysis

Israel complains: 'Wherefore have ye made us to come up out of Egypt, to bring us in unto this evil place?' They call the wilderness an 'evil place' lacking seeds, figs, vines, pomegranates, and water. The Hebrew 'ra' (evil/bad) reveals their twisted perspective - God's guided journey becomes 'evil.' They yearn for Egypt's produce, forgetting slavery. This illustrates human tendency to romanticize the past and blame leaders for following God's call. The new generation repeated their parents' complaints, showing sin's generational patterns. Yet God still provides (v.8-11), demonstrating grace despite ingratitude. Believers similarly complain about God's will when it doesn't match preferences, forgetting the slavery from which Christ delivered us.

Historical Context

This complaint occurred near wilderness wanderings' end, at Kadesh in Zin. The new generation, though not guilty of their parents' Kadesh rebellion forty years earlier (Num 13-14), exhibited identical attitudes. The complaint about lacking agricultural produce was ironic - they rejected Canaan (which had these things) generations earlier! Their wandering was consequence of unbelief, not divine cruelty. The pattern warns that even second-generation believers can repeat

predecessors' spiritual failures without learning from history. Paul uses Israel's wilderness experiences as warning for Christians (1 Cor 10:1-13).

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. Do you complain about following God's call when circumstances become difficult, forgetting the bondage from which He saved you?
2. How can you learn from previous generations' spiritual failures rather than repeating them?

Interlinear Text

וְלֹמַת הָ	בְּשָׁלִיחַ נָ	לְקַבֵּב יְאָ	מִמִּצְבָּה יְמָ
H4100	And wherefore have ye made us to come up	H5927	out of Egypt
			to bring
H853	it is no place	H4725	H2088
H413	us in unto this evil	H7451	H3808
			it is no place
			H4725
וְתַאֲנַה זֶ בַע	וְרַמֵּזֶן יְמַ	וְמַ	אֵל
of seed	or of figs	or of vines	or of pomegranates
H2233	H8384	H1612	H7416
לְשִׁתּוֹתָ			
to drink			
H8354			

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 16:14 (Parallel theme): Moreover thou hast not brought us into a land that floweth with milk and honey, or given us inheritance of fields and vineyards: wilt thou put out the eyes of these men? we will not come up.

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