

Series: Questions  
Title: Only One Cure  
Text: Numbers 10: 33-11:9  
Date: November 17, 2013  
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The congregation of Israel was assembled by the hand of God. God gave them a preacher, brethren and God gave them his word of promise. That is what we have in this place. But many became troubled. They thought they knew the cure. But there was only one cure.

**Title:** Only One Cure

## **I. IF CHRIST HAS FIXED YOU IN THIS BODY THEN HE WILL LEAD YOU SO YOU MUST FOLLOW HIM BY FAITH.**

The congregation in Israel had gone 3 days journey from Mt. Sinai.

### **Christ Leads His Church**

**Numbers 10: 33** And they departed from the mount of the LORD three days' journey: and the ark of the covenant of the LORD went before them in the three days' journey, to search out a resting place for them.

By faith, the true believer follows Christ our Ark. Christ is our Mercy Seat where God meets with us and has mercy on us. He is the one in whom God has made his everlasting covenant of grace in our hearts through faith.

Christ goes before us. He is the Way to God and Christ makes a way for his church in this wilderness as we journey through it. Christ is our resting place and he searches out a resting place for his church in this wilderness.

### **Christ Defends His Church**

**Numbers 10: 34:** And the cloud of the LORD was upon them by day, when they went out of the camp.

The believer has Christ to cover us and defend us constantly. Believer, Christ is the Covering over His Assembly—as citizens of heavenly Mt. Zion, this is God's promise to each of us in the assembly he has assembled.

Isaiah 4:5: And the LORD will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence. 6: And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain.

Christ is that glory, Christ is that defense, Christ is that refuge and covert.

Isaiah 32:2 And a Man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land...18: And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places;

Psalm 91:1: He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

Brethren, we have been given something more precious than all the treasures of this world combined: we are members of God's secret place, Christ's body, the church of the living God. Christ is our Head and we his body.

### **Christ Directs His Church**

**Numbers 10: 35: And it came to pass, when the ark set forward, that Moses said, Rise up, LORD, and let thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate thee flee before thee. 36: And when it rested, he said, Return, O LORD, unto the many thousands of Israel.**

Believing Christ requires the believer to follow the Lord. When Christ moves, he gives his messenger the faith to declare to his people, it is time to "Rise up!" We do so praying in faith, "LORD, will you rise up, will you let thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate thee flee before thee."

When Christ rests, he gives his messenger the faith to declare to his people, "Return!" He does so praying, "LORD, will you return unto all your people in Israel." We won't rest unless you rest upon us.

## **II. YET, FLESHLY MEN ONLY LUST AFTER FLESH.**

Many in the congregation were not satisfied with what God had given them and what he was doing in their midst.

### **Stiffnecked & Impatient**

**Numbers 11: 1: And when the people complained, it displeased the LORD: and the LORD heard it; and his anger was kindled; and the fire of the LORD burnt among them, and consumed them that were in the uttermost parts of the camp.**

First, fleshly men do not like having to follow the LORD or wait on the LORD—1. From the meaning of the word here, it appears those in the uttermost parts of the camp were planning to separate and return back to Egypt. "But without faith it is impossible to please God." Brethren, do not even think about going back to Egypt!

**Numbers 11: 2: And the people cried unto Moses; and when Moses prayed unto the LORD, the fire was quenched. 3: And he called the name of the place Taberah: because the fire of the LORD burnt among them.**

Moses, in faith, in love for his brethren, interceded with the LORD on behalf of Israel and the LORD quenched the fire—what a type of Christ our Intercessor! Christ consumed the wrath for his people. Only unbelievers will be consumed in his wrath. Christ everlives to make intercession for us.

### **Lusting for Flesh**

**Numbers 11: 4: And the mixt multitude that *was* among them fell a lusting: and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat? 5: We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick: 6: But now our soul *is* dried away: *there is* nothing at all, beside this manna, *before* our eyes.**

Secondly, they were fleshly men so they longed for flesh rather than the manna from heaven. These were Gentiles amongst Israelites. But in every congregation there is a mixed multitude: unregenerate sinners mixed with regenerated believers. Some join the Lord's people, professing faith in Christ, but it is for vain reasons—fleshly reasons. The Holy Spirit has not regenerated them and given them faith in Christ. The complaint of the mixed multitude resulted in the children of Israel complaining with them.

1 Corinthians 15:33: Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.

Galatians 5:9: A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.

What an instructive picture! Let's apply this to where we live. When a false believer joins with God's people under the sound of the gospel of Christ, they start out rejoicing. Yet, without the Spirit of God to sustain the heart, they begin to long for the world or for what they were fed in the religious assemblies from where they came, saying, "I remember the programs, the humanitarian services, the community services, the activities, the plays, the awards, the Sunday school pins, and so on." Those are fleshly things which appeal to fleshly men. It a lust for bondage.

Men begin to say in their hearts, "We ate so freely then?" Worldly men, as well as men in works religion, are themselves slaves in bondage so they are not free. And that fleshly meat free-will preachers give is not free—the world and all false religion comes with a great price.

Men will say, "But now our soul *is* dried away." A man's flesh may wither under the sound of the gospel because he's not being fed fleshly works which the sinful flesh craves. But if a man's soul is dried up it is because of unbelief, it is not the fault of the gospel.

The false professor begins to think, "*there is* nothing at all, beside this manna, *before* our eyes." The manna represented Christ our Bread from heaven. They wanted earthly flesh rather than heavenly manna.

In this place, we do not spread the table with flesh-pleasing meat. We preach Christ and him crucified. But fleshly men will say, "All he ever does is preach Christ and him crucified?"

God tells us plainly what the problem was with those in our text and with men who long for the slavery of this world and of works religion.

Psalm 106: 12: Then believed they his words; they sang his praise. 13: They soon forgot his works; they waited not for his counsel: 14: But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert. 15: And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul.

First, they rejoiced then they soon forgot God's works. We preach the works of the LORD rather than men's works because that is what the LORD sends his preachers to preach.

Psalm 9:11: Sing praises to the LORD, which dwelleth in Zion: declare among the people his doings.

Psalm 105:1: O give thanks unto the LORD; call upon his name: make known his deeds among the people.

Psalm 107:22: And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing. 2: Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him: talk ye of all his wondrous works.

Isaiah 12: 3: Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation. 4: And in that day shall ye say, Praise the LORD, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted.

We do so to turn men FROM their works TO Christ because the believer is Christ's workmanship. Christ said, "He that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God." (Jn 3: 21) We preach the works of the triune God in Christ so we will not soon forget his works.

Secondly, they waited not for God's counsel. Men who do not believe God will not wait for God to bring his works to pass. Unbelief makes men impatient to wait on God to do what he has promised in his gospel.

Thirdly, they lusted exceedingly and tempted God. Men long to return to free will religion because they are flesh and flesh lusts after flesh. God gave them what they wanted.

### **III. THE ONLY CURE IS THE GOSPEL--CHRIST JESUS IS FOOD FOR OUR SOULS**

#### **As Coriander Seed**

#### **Numbers 11: 7: And the manna was as coriander seed,**

Like coriander seed, our gospel may appear as a small insignificant thing to fleshly men who perish but like coriander seed the gospel is plentiful to the believer because it is from Christ's fullness. Christ our Bread comes down in the gospel to his people and blesses us from Christ's fullness.

John 1:16: And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.

Through the gospel Christ accomplishes the work of grace in the hearts of those he has redeemed by his blood.

John 3:34: For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him.

Christ said to those born of his Spirit,

John 15: 3: Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

**Illustration:** When the lame man was healed, Peter said,

Acts 3:16: And [Christ's] name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by [Christ] hath given [this lame man] this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

Christ is the food for our souls because,

Colossians 2:3: In [Christ] are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge...

Ephesians 1:7: In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; 8: Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence;

1 Corinthians 1:5: That in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; 6: Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: 7: So that ye come behind in no gift;

waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: 8: Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 4:7: But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

**Illustration:** Sarah's Soul Food—Home of No Cans and No Boxes. The gospel is true soul food.

### **As the Color of a Precious Stone**

#### **Numbers 11: 7:...and the colour thereof as the colour of bdellium.**

When Christ speaks effectually into our hearts, Christ becomes precious to the believer. It means as the color of a precious stone—the color of a pearl; a round white stone.

Revelation 2:17: He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh [we overcome by faith, so it means to him that believeth] will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth *it*.

When the Holy Spirit forms Christ in the heart we are given the hidden manna and Christ becomes the white stone, the pearl of great price, his name is our name—the LORD our Righteousness. That precious, white stone makes a man depart from Egypt and all vain bread.

Matthew 13: 45: Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls:  
46: Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

### **Christ is the Only Cure**

Christ and his gospel is the only cure for our unbelief.

#### **Numbers 11: 8: And the people went about, and gathered it, ground it in mills, or beat it in a mortar, and baked it in pans, and made cakes of it: and the taste of it was as the taste of fresh oil.”**

What is the cure for hunger? What do you do when you are hungry? You eat. By the Spirit giving us a hunger and thirst after righteousness, the believer does not depart from the table, we assemble and gather Christ our Manna. He makes us hunger to hear his gospel; he makes us thirst for the sincere milk of the word

While preparing it they looked at that manna being “ground in mills or beaten in a mortar.” As we gather Christ, through faith by the Holy Spirit, we behold Christ “wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities.”

As they prepared it they watched that manna being “baked in pans”—through the gospel we behold Christ enduring the fire of God’s wrath in our room and stead. We eat Christ our bread—like as they made “cakes of it” and ate it. By the Holy Spirit’s discernment—“the taste is as fresh oil”: we have peace with God because in Christ: by his work we are justified, made righteous, redeemed by his precious blood and kept by his grace.

We do none of this of ourselves, it is all of his grace. Verse 9 says, “the dew fell upon the camp in the night, the manna fell upon it.” The Holy Spirit falls upon us in this world of night, into our dark, unbelieving

hearts like “the dew fell upon the camp in the night.” As the Holy Spirit enters, Christ falls upon us to the nourishment of our souls—as “the manna fell upon it.”

In twenty-five years, I have seen this time and again. Men and women become troubled. They begin to whisper and complain. They want to talk about their troubles. They want men to tell them what to do. They begin looking back. Then they vanish.

Please try to hear what I am about to say. If you truly desire a cure for the withering away of your souls, for any and every trouble you have, assemble with God's people under the preaching of the gospel. Give your undivided attention to hear and study Christ. Follow the Ark under the Cloud together with God's people as we hear of his wonderful works and wait on the LORD to do those works. Christ and his gospel is the cure—the only cure—for unbelief.

**Amen!**