

## B'HA'ALATKHA – NUMBERS 8:1-12:16

Haftarah — Zechariah 2:14(10)\* – 4:7

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### Kavetch-Kavetch-Kavetch!

#### Outline of Parasha B'HA'ALOT'CHA

- **The lampstand (8:1–4)**

The dedication of the Levites (8:5–22)

- **The retirement of the Levites (8:23–26)**

The second Passover (9:1–5)

The delayed Passover (9:6–14)

The moving cloud (9:15–23)

The silver trumpets (10:1–10)

- **Marching from Sinai to Kadesh (10:11–12:16)**

Israel strikes camp at Sinai (10:11–28)

Request to Hobab to accompany Israel (10:29–32)

#### Three protests (11:1–12:16)

Taberah (11:1–3)

Kibroth-hattaavah (11:4–35)

The uniqueness of Moses (12:1–16)

Haftarah — Zechariah 2:14(10)\* – 4:7

#### Hebrew Words from Torah Portion

<b>mit'onenim</b>	<b>Moaning, Complaining</b>
<b>Mit'avim</b>	<b>Encampment</b>
<b>Meraglim</b>	<b>Spies</b>
<b>Ner</b>	<b>Lamps</b>
<b>Menorah</b>	<b>Candlesticks</b>
<b>Mar'eh</b>	<b>Pattern</b>
<b>Taher</b>	<b>Cleanse</b>
<b>chaṭ ṭ â'âh / chaṭ ṭ â'th</b>	<b>Purifying</b>
<b>Badal</b>	<b>Separate</b>
<b>Pesach</b>	<b>Passover</b>

## **Rabbi Leibtag Torah insights**

Note how this theme (of Bnei Yisrael's preparation for this journey) continues throughout the narrative in the first ten chapters of Sefer Bamidbar:

- \* The army is organized and counted (chapters 1-2)
- \* The mishkan/Tabernacle is placed at the focal point of the camp (2-5)
- \* The national leaders participate in its dedication (7)
- \* The levi'im/Levites are appointed to become the spiritual leaders (chapters 3-4 & 8)
- \* The entire nation offers pesach/Passover (chapter 9)
- \* Final instructions are given re: how and when to travel (10)

Had nothing 'gone wrong', it would have been precisely at this point (after chapter 10 in Sefer Bamidbar) that Bnei Yisrael should have begun their magnificent journey to the Promised Land. Instead, the next sixteen chapters (i.e. chapters 11-26) discuss exactly the opposite, i.e. how (and why) Bnei Yisrael **did not** inherit the Land. In those chapters, the Torah describes numerous incidents when Bnei Yisrael rebelled against God, culminating with God's decision not to allow that generation to enter the land.

[The final ten chapters of Sefer Bamidbar (27-36) discuss how the second generation prepares to enter the Land.]

## **WHAT WENT WRONG?**

So what went wrong? What caused Bnei Yisrael to sin at the incidents of **the 'mit'onenim' (moaning and complaining), the 'mit'avim' (encampment) and the 'meraglim'(spies) etc.?**

Chazal find a 'hint' in the pasuk/verse (which immediately precedes 'va-yehi bi-nso'a ha-aron') that describes Bnei Yisrael's departure from Har Sinai":

"And they travelled **from** God's mountain..." (see 10:33-34).

The Midrash comments:

"Like a child leaving school - running away, in the same manner Bnei Yisrael ran away from Har Sinai a three day distance, for they studied [too much] Torah at Har Sinai..."

[Quoted in first Tosafot on Masechet Shabbat 116a].

This Midrash compares Bnei Yisrael's stay at Har Sinai to a 'school year' [quite appropriate for this time of year]. Even though they studied God's laws at Har Sinai, it seems as though the spirit of those laws were not internalized. The people were indeed looking forward to **leaving** Har Sinai, **but they were not looking forward to keeping God's laws in Eretz Canaan.**

**Technically speaking, they may have been 'prepared' for this journey, but they most definitely were not spiritually 'ready'.**

**In this manner, the Midrash is highlighting the underlying reason that led to these sins. Once Bnei Yisrael left with the 'wrong attitude', it was inevitable that they would sin.**

But who is to blame? Certainly, first and foremost the people themselves; but if we follow the 'school' analogy of this Midrash, we should also consider the possibility that the 'faculty' may share some of the responsibility as well.

As we study Sefer Bamidbar, we will see how certain incidents may even allude to this possibility. **However, the first 'early warning' of teacher 'burn-out'** is found already in Parshat Beha'alotcha.

**However, after the lustful sin of the mit'avim, Moshe Rabbeinu simply 'gives up'. He is unable to fathom how this nation, after spending an entire year at Har Sinai, have become so preoccupied with such mundane desires. Moshe simply does not have the educational tools to deal with such a low level of behavior. [In other words - Moshe was hired to be a teacher, not a baby-sitter!]**

God's immediate reaction to Moshe's petition may reflect this aspect of Moshe's leadership. God finds it necessary to take some of the **ruach (spirit) from Moshe and transfer it to the seventy elders (see 11:16-17)**. God realizes that Moshe must now share some of his leadership responsibilities with elders who can possibly deal more realistically with this type of crisis.

One could suggest an additional insight. In Sefer Bamidbar, Moshe Rabbeinu could be considered 'over qualified' or 'too holy' to lead the people.

After spending some six months on Har Sinai, Moshe Rabbeinu is on a spiritual level far higher than that of his nation. **It is not that Moshe Rabbeinu is incapable of leading, rather the nation is on too low a level to benefit from his leadership.** Quite simply, 'over-qualified' for the job.

Ultimately, Yehoshua will be chosen to lead Bnei Yisrael into the Promised Land. As the dedicated student of Moshe Rabbeinu, and the experienced leader of his own tribe (and of the entire army in the battle against Amalek), Yehoshua possesses the necessary leadership qualities. He is also sufficiently 'down to earth', and therefore will be able to lead Bnei Yisrael into the 'land'.

**The lesson that we can learn from this Parsha is certainly not 'how to criticize' Moshe Rabbeinu. Rather, it should remind us when teaching - to keep in mind the emotional needs of our students; and when studying - to keep in mind the potential of how much we can gain from our teachers.**

## **HAS MOSHE 'HAD ENOUGH'?**

Beginning with chapter 11, and in almost every incident when Bnei Yisrael sin in Sefer Bamidbar, we find a growing strain in the relationship between Moshe Rabbeinu and the people. Not only do the people constantly complain to Moshe about their plight in chapter 11, even his own brother and sister criticize him in chapter 12!

**In chapters 13-14, the meraglim [spies] incite a national rebellion calling for new leadership to take them back to Egypt (see 14:1-5), while in chapter 16 (Parshat Korach) we find yet another rebellion against the leadership of both Moshe and Aharon. (next week)**

## Three Protests - The People Complain

**11:1–35: Murmuring in the wilderness.** As the Israelites resume their long trek in the wilderness, they fall into a pattern of complaining. After each incident God reacts by punishing the people, essentially because the grievances reflect disloyalty to the Sinaitic covenant. Moses responds to God's action by interceding on Israel's behalf—this is a typical role of biblical prophets (see, e.g., Jer. 7:16; 11:14; 14:11). The biblical writer preserves the incident in the collective memory of Israel by naming the location after the event that occurred there. This cycle repeats in one form or another throughout the wanderings. Two complaint stories are found in this chapter. **1–3:** The grievance in the first case is not specified, but God's punishment, deadly fire, is mentioned. The place name, Taberah, recalls the punishment by fire, and might be connected to the manifestation of God as fire in ch 9. Clearly, there is an intended lesson for Israel, but it is not heeded and the murmuring continues<sup>1</sup>

### #1 Taberah – Complaining about Hardship

(Num 11:1 TLV) **The people were murmuring in the ears of Adonai about hardship, and when Adonai heard, His anger burned. The fire of Adonai blazed among them, ravaging the outskirts of the camp.**

(Num 11:2 TLV) The people cried out to Moses, so Moses prayed to Adonai and the fire died out.

(Num 11:3 TLV) **The name of that place was thus called Taberah because fire from Adonai had burned among them.**

### #2. Kibroth-hattaavah – Complaining about Food

(Num 11:4 TLV) **The grumblers among them began to have cravings, so Bnei-Yisrael began to wail repeatedly, saying, “If we could just eat some meat!**

**(Num 11:5 TLV) We remember the fish that we used to eat in Egypt, for free—the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic!**

**(Num 11:6 TLV) But now we have no appetite. We never see anything but this manna.”**

(Num 11:7 TLV) Now the manna was similar to coriander seed and had an appearance like gum resin.

(Num 11:8 TLV) The people went about, gathered it up, and ground it in a hand mill or crushed it in a mortar. They cooked it in a pot or made it into cakes. It had a taste like something made with olive oil.

(Num 11:9 TLV) When the dew descended on the camp at night, the manna descended with it.

**4–35:** The second incident is far more detailed and complex. It originates from the camp's non-Israelite contingent which joined the Israelites in the exodus (Exod. 12:38). The people crave a more varied diet than just manna, like the one they claim was available in Egypt. As commonly happens, the complaints of a few are echoed by the entire group. This larger section seems to combine two originally independent stories concerning the quail and the seventy elders. **4–5:** *If only we had meat ... we remember the fish:* Meat may actually refer to fish, a cheap and ample food from the Nile. Why the Israelites do not slaughter animals from their herds (Exod. 12:38; Num. 32:1) is not explained in the text. **7–9:** Manna is described here as a rich and tasty food suitable for various modes of preparation. This positive depiction of manna underscores the unjustified complaints of the people. Some scholars identify the manna with the edible sap of the tamarisk tree that forms

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see Frequently used in place of *cf.*, but usually intended to begin a note attached to another passage in the Bible.

<sup>1</sup> Berlin, A., Brettler, M. Z., & Fishbane, M. (Eds.). (2004). [The Jewish Study Bible](#) (p. 306). New York: Oxford University Press.

flaky sweet pellets in conjunction with the activity of plant lice. Its description here differs from Exod. 16:31; this is reconciled in classical Jewish thought by suggesting that the manna could take on various flavors (see, e.g., *m. Yoma* 75a)<sup>2</sup>

### **Moses cries out for help!**

(Num 11:10 TLV) **Moses heard the people wailing by their families, each man at the door to his tent. Adonai’s anger became very hot, and Moses was troubled.**

(Num 11:11 TLV) **So Moses asked Adonai, “Why have You brought trouble on Your servant? Haven’t I found favor in Your eyes—that You laid the burden of all these people on me?”**

(Num 11:12 TLV) Did I conceive all these people, or did I give birth to them, that You should say to me, ‘Carry them in your bosom just as the nurse carries an infant’—to the land You promised to their fathers?

(Num 11:13 TLV) Where can I get meat for all these people? For they wail to me saying, ‘Give us meat to eat!’

**(Num 11:14 TLV) I am not able to carry all these people by myself! The load is too heavy for me!**

(Num 11:15 TLV) If this is how You are treating me, kill me now! If I have found favor in Your eyes, kill me please—don’t let me see my own misery!”

(Num 11:16 TLV) **Adonai said to Moses, “Bring me 70 of the elders of Israel whom you know to be elders of the people and their leaders. Take them to the Tent of Meeting, so they may stand with you there.**

**(Num 11:17 TLV) Then I will come down and speak with you there, and, I will take some of the Ruach that is on you and will place it on them. They will carry with you the burden of the people, so you will not be carrying it alone.”**

(Num 11:18 TLV) “Now to the people say: Sanctify yourselves for tomorrow, because you will eat meat, for you wailed in Adonai’s ears saying, ‘If only we could eat meat! It was better for us in Egypt!’ Now Adonai will give you meat and you will eat!

(Num 11:19 TLV) **You will eat—not for one day, or two days, or five days, or ten days, or twenty days,**

**(Num 11:20 TLV) but for an entire month—until it is coming out of your nostrils and it becomes loathsome to you! For you rejected Adonai who is among you, and you wailed to His face saying, ‘Why did we ever leave Egypt?’”**

(Num 11:21 TLV) Moses then said, “600,000 foot soldiers—the people I am in the middle of—yet You say, ‘I am going to give them meat to eat for an entire month?’

(Num 11:22 TLV) If flocks and herds were slaughtered, would they have enough? Or if all the fish in the sea were caught, would they have enough?”

(Num 11:23 TLV) **Adonai said to Moses, “Is Adonai’s arm too short? Now you will see whether My word will come true for you or not.”**

(Num 11:24 TLV) So Moses went out and told the people Adonai’s words. He gathered 70 of the elders of the people and had them stand around the Tent.

(Num 11:25 TLV) Adonai descended in the cloud and spoke with him. He took some of the Ruach

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*m. Mishnah*

*Yoma Yoma* (Talmudic Tractate)

<sup>2</sup> Berlin, A., Brettler, M. Z., & Fishbane, M. (Eds.). (2004). *The Jewish Study Bible* (pp. 306–307). New York: Oxford University Press.

that was on him and placed it on each of the 70 elders. It so happened that when the Ruach first rested on them, they prophesied—but never again.

(Num 11:26 TLV) Two men, however, had remained in the camp. The name of one was Eldad and the name of the other was Medad. The Ruach rested on them. They were among those listed, but they had not gone out to the Tent. So they prophesied in the camp.

**(Num 11:27 TLV) A young man ran and told Moses and said, “Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp!”**

**(Num 11:28 TLV) Joshua son of Nun, the assistant of Moses since his youth, cried out and said, “Moses, my lord, stop them!”**

**(Num 11:29 TLV) But Moses said to him, “Are you jealous on my behalf? If only Adonai would make all the people prophets! If only Adonai would put the Spirit on all of them!”**

**26–29:** This account is connected to the broader story since both involve the transmission of some of Moses’ “spirit” to other individuals (vv. 17, 26; cf. v. 31 which uses the same Heb word “ruah” in its other sense of “wind”). This story may reflect an ancient debate concerning whether there is only one legitimate prophet at a time, as assumed perhaps by Deut. 18:15–18, or if there may be many prophets in a single era.

**(Num 11:30 TLV) Then Moses and the elders of Israel returned to the camp.**

(Num 11:31 TLV) Now a wind went out from Adonai and drove quails from the sea. He brought them into the camp to about a day’s journey in any direction, about two cubits above the ground all around the camp.

(Num 11:32 TLV) The people went out all that night and all the following day and collected quail. No one gathered less than ten omers. They spread them out all around the camp.

**(Num 11:33 TLV) Yet while the meat was between their teeth, before it was swallowed, Adonai’s anger burned against the people. So Adonai struck the people with a severe plague.**

**(Num 11:34 TLV) For that reason the name of that place was called Kibroth-hattaavah , because they buried the people who were craving.**

(Num 11:35 TLV) From Kibroth-hattaavah the people journeyed to Hazeroth and stayed in Hazeroth.

**10–35:** Utterly frustrated, Moses questions his heavy burden of leadership and his ability to succeed at it. He is ready to die if no relief comes. The point of this episode, including Moses’ desire to satisfy the people, is to elicit divine solutions for the problems. Most important is the appointment of seventy elders to assist Moses. The judicial roles of Israel’s elders are legitimated for all time because of their endowment with Moses’ spirit. Simultaneously, this scene affirms Moses’ human traits and limitations. God’s solution to the meat crisis differs from an earlier rendition of the story. In Exod. ch 16, quail and manna are God’s gift to Israel; here in Numbers the wording of their grievance bespeaks their desire to return to Egypt, clearly a rejection of God that warrants punishment. Therefore, when the quail finally arrive, many people become fatally ill from gorging themselves with meat. Appropriately, the place name for this event becomes Kibroth-hattaavah, “burials of the craving.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Berlin, A., Brettler, M. Z., & Fishbane, M. (Eds.). (2004). [\*The Jewish Study Bible\*](#) (p. 307). New York: Oxford University Press.

### **#3. Miriam and Aaron Oppose Moses – Complaining about Leadership**

**(Num 12:1 TLV) Then Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses on account of the Cushite woman he married, because he had married a Cushite woman.**

**(Num 12:2 TLV) They asked, “Has Adonai spoken only through Moses? Hasn’t He also spoken through us?” Adonai heard it.**

(Num 12:3 TLV) Now the man Moses was very humble, more so than anyone on the face of the earth.

(Num 12:4 TLV) Immediately, Adonai said to Moses, Aaron and Miriam, “The three of you, come out to the Tent of Meeting.” So the three came out.

(Num 12:5 TLV) Adonai descended in a column of cloud, stood at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, and called to Aaron and Miriam. The two of them stepped forward.

**(Num 12:6 TLV) “Hear now My words!” He said. “When there is a prophet of Adonai, I reveal Myself in a vision, I speak to him in a dream.**

**(Num 12:7 TLV) Not so with My servant Moses. In all My house, he is faithful.**

**(Num 12:8 TLV) I speak with him face to face, plainly and not in riddles. He even looks at the form of Adonai! Why then were you not afraid to speak against My servant Moses?”**

**(Num 12:9 TLV) Adonai’s anger burned against them, and He left them.**

(Num 12:10 TLV) When the cloud lifted up from above the Tent, behold, Miriam had tza’arat, like snow! **As Aaron turned toward her, behold, she had tza’arat!**

**(Num 12:11 TLV) He said to Moses, “Please, my lord, don’t hold against us the sin we have committed so foolishly!**

**(Num 12:12 TLV) Don’t let her be like a stillborn baby, who comes from his mother’s womb with his flesh half-eaten away!”**

**(Num 12:13 TLV) So Moses cried to Adonai saying, “O God, heal her now!”**

(Num 12:14 TLV) Adonai said to Moses, “If her father had but spit in her face, would she not be in shame for seven days? Let her be confined outside the camp for seven days. After that she may be brought back.”

**(Num 12:15 TLV) So Miriam was restricted to outside the camp for seven days. The people did not move on until Miriam was brought back.**

(Num 12:16 TLV) Afterward, the people left Hazeroth and encamped in the Wilderness of Paran.

### **Torah Practical Application**

#### **Complaining about Hardship**

**And when:** Num 10:33, Num 20:2-5, Num 21:5; Exo 15:23-24, Exo 16:2-3, Exo 16:7, Exo 16:9, Exo 17:2-3; Deu 9:22; Lam 3:39; 1Co 10:10; Jud 1:16

**complained:** or, were as it were complainers

**it displeased the Lord:** Heb. it was evil in the ears of the Lord, Gen 38:10; 2Sa 11:27 \*marg. Jas 5:4

**and the fire:** Num 16:35; Lev 10:2; Deu 32:22; 2Ki 1:12; Job 1:16; Psa 78:21, Psa 106:18; Isa 30:33, Isa 33:14; Nah 1:5; Mar 9:43-49; Heb 12:29

**the uttermost:** Deu 25:18

## **Complaining about Food and Provision**

### **Six Things the Complainers Remembered**

1. **Fish.** They are mentioned 62 times in Scripture, classed as both clean and unclean food (**Lev 11:1-47; Deu 14:1-29**).
2. **Cucumbers.** There were a variety, some different from ours—about a foot in length and very delicious. See Isa 1:8.
3. **Melons.** These were said to be watermelons which grew in abundance in Egypt where the river Nile flooded the land and receded, leaving the ground very rich. They were used in Egypt as meat, drink, and medicine.
4. **Leeks.** The same Hebrew word is translated grass in 1Ki 18:5; Job 8:12; Job 40:15; Psa 104:14. It is said this was a vegetable unique to Egypt and something like clover. The common people ate it as a delicacy.
5. **Onions.** They were the same as ours except they were sweet and their juices did not burn the eyes.
6. **Garlic.** This vegetable was evidently plentiful in Egypt in the days of Moses, being one of the more popular foods among the poorer classes.

**They forgot where they came from and the freedom, they now had to worship YHVH. Have you forgotten where you came from and forget how He delivered you and provided for you? Do we have selective “remembering? Israel soon forgot of their slavery, hardship and torment under the hands of the Egyptians!**

## **Twenty-five issues that cause Backsliding and Sin**

1. Lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and pride of life (Gen 3:6; 1Jn 2:15-17)
2. Jealousy (Gen 4:4-5; Gen 37:3-11, Gen 37:18-36; Jdg 8:1-35; Jdg 12:1-15; 1 Samuel 18:8-26:2)
3. Fear of Man (Gen 12:12-15; Gen 20:2, Gen 20:11; Gen 26:7)
4. Sex perversion (Gen 19:1-38; Rom 1:18-32)
5. Desire for children (Gen 19:31-38)
6. Covetousness (Gen 25:27-34; Gen 27:1-33; Num 22:1-41; 2Pe 2:15; Jud 1:11; Jos 7:1-26)
7. Thirst (Exo 15:23-26; Exo 17:1-7)
8. Hunger (Exo 16:2-13)
9. Absence of a leader (Exo 32:1-35)
10. Drunkenness (Lev 10:1-10)
11. Complaining (Num 11:1-3)
12. Lust for flesh to eat (Num 11:4-35)
13. Dislike of sister-in-law (Num 12:1-16)
14. Unbelief (Numbers 13:26-14:44; Heb 4:1-8; Jud 1:5)
15. Pride and self-exaltation (Num 16:1-50; Jud 1:11)
16. Beautiful women (Num 25:1-18; Jdg 16:1-31; 2Sa 11:1-27; 2Sa 13:1-39; 1Ki 11:1-43)



17. Stubbornness (Jdg 2:7-19)
18. Desire to be like other nations (1Sa 8:5, 1Sa 8:20)
19. Self-will and love of authority (1Sa 13:1-23; 2Sa 15:1-37)
20. Selfishness (1Ki 12:25-33)
21. Seeking to please wife (1Ki 11:4-8; 1Ki 16:31; 1Ki 21:25)
22. Refusal to hear God (2Ki 17:13-18)
23. Following advice of youth (1Ki 12:1-15; 2Ch 10:1-11)
24. Listening to false prophets (1Ki 22:1-53; 2Ch 18:1-34)
25. Love of praise (Joh 12:43)

## **Elders Appointed**

### **Fivefold ministry, Deacons/Deaconesses, Bishops etc.**

#### **Ephesians 4**

**a** [Gather unto me ...bring them] Two commands for the relief of Moses:

1. Gather the seventy elders of Israel
2. Bring them to the tabernacle

**b** [seventy men of the elders of Israel] Just when and by whom the seventy elders were chosen or elected is unknown, but they had been in place about a year before this (Exo 3:16; Exo 24:1-11). **Now they were commissioned and anointed with the Holy Spirit to take part in the responsibility of Moses as head of the nation** (Num 11:16, Num 11:24-25). Rabbis say that this was the beginning of the Sanhedrin. Which tribes the seventy came from is unknown, but six from each tribe would have been seventy-two.

The first aspect deals with the nature of the office of an elder. This can be seen from three specific terms which are used in describing elders.

The first term is “elder.” The Greek word is *presbuteros* from which the word “presbytery” comes. The word “elder” emphasizes the office itself and the position of authority that lies with the office.

A second term for the same office is “bishop.” The Greek word is *episkopos*, which is the origin of the English word “episcopal.” This term emphasizes the function of the office, and that is general oversight (**Acts 20:28; Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:1–2; Titus 1:7; 1 Pet. 2:25**).

The third main term used of the same office is the word “pastor.” The Greek word is *poimanos*, which emphasizes the aspect of shepherding and feeding (**Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 2:25; 5:1–2**).

**These three terms describe the office. They are not three different offices, but are three different terms describing the same office.** The best way of proving this is to notice the Scriptures where these terms are used of the same body of leaders. **For example, in Acts 20:17 and 28, all three terms are applied to the same body of leaders. Another example is 1 Timothy 3:1–7 compared with 5:17 and with 3:4; again, these different terms are used for the same body of people. Another example is Titus 1, comparing verse 5 with verse 7. One more example is 1 Peter 5:1–2. Once again, these terms are used of the same body of leaders.**

Furthermore, the concept of “elder” originated from the concept of the elders of Israel who had authority within the body of Israel. The elder form of Kahilah government is to be preferred over the

national, hierarchical or episcopal, federal or presbyterian, and congregational governments because this is the biblical form, and it naturally arises out of God's previous dealings with Israel. The concept of a Kahilah government did not arise out of a vacuum.

**Remember, all of the early Kahilah leaders and members were Jews**, and they would naturally have brought in much of their Jewish frame of reference when the Kahilah was born. **Therefore, the concept of "elder" arises out of the elder within the nation of Israel who was able to exercise authority.** It is not the congregation of the synagogue that exercises authority, it is the elders of the synagogue. By the same token, it is these elders in the local Kahilah that actually rule the Kahilah. From a Jewish frame of reference, this is the biblical form of government; it is encouraging to see more and more Kahilah's switching over to this form of government as they see clearly what the Bible teaches.

**The nature of the office of an elder, then, is threefold: that of an elder to rule, a bishop to oversee, and a pastor to shepherd and feed the flock.**<sup>4</sup>

### **Complaining against Leadership**

**12:1–16: Miriam and Aaron speak against Moses.** Miriam and Aaron, like other Israelites, are subject to complaining. **Their grievance against Moses is founded on two issues: his wife, and more seriously, his authority.** This narrative continues the themes from the previous chapter, namely, prophecy and the questioning of Moses' leadership capabilities and his limitations. **The first objection that Miriam and Aaron raise is to Moses' marriage to a Cushite woman; the second questions his special role as a prophet.** Moses remains silent in the face of these accusations so that God takes up his defense. **The message of the narrative is clear: God chose Moses to be His unique prophet and no one, not even other key Israelite leaders, may challenge that decision.** Miriam's severe punishment underscores the point and makes clear that any other who arise to challenge Moses are doomed from the start.<sup>5</sup>

### **Ten Murmurings against Moses**

By:

1. Israel for water (Exo 15:24-26)
2. Israel for food (Exo 16:2-8)
3. Israel for water (Exo 17:3-7)
4. Miriam and Aaron—jealousy (Num 12:1-16)
5. Israel—fear and cowardice (Num 14:2-38)
6. Korah and company—jealousy (Num 16:1-35)
7. Israel—bitterness (Num 16:41-50)
8. Israel—jealousy (Num 17:1-13)
9. Israel for water (Num 20:1-13)
10. Israel for food (Num 21:4-9)

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<sup>4</sup> Fruchtenbaum, A. G. (1983). [\*The Messianic Bible Study Collection\*](#) (Vol. 106, pp. 15–16). Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries.

<sup>5</sup> Berlin, A., Brettler, M. Z., & Fishbane, M. (Eds.). (2004). [\*The Jewish Study Bible\*](#) (pp. 308–309). New York: Oxford University Press.

Half the complaints were for food and water; three were because of jealousy; and the other two were prompted by bitterness and cowardice.

**Do we hold up our Leaders hands via prayer and helping with the work of the ministry?**



([Heb 13:17 TLV](#)) Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as ones who must give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no benefit to you.

**Other Translations**

<p>17 Obey your leaders and submit <i>to them</i>, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you. NASB</p>	<p>17 Obey your [<i>spiritual</i>] leaders and submit to them [<i>recognizing their authority over you</i>], for they are keeping watch over your souls <i>and</i> continually guarding your spiritual welfare as those who will give an account [<i>of their stewardship of you</i>]. Let them do this with joy and not with grief <i>and</i> groans, for this would be of no benefit to you. AMP</p>	<p>17 Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your lives, as people who will have to render an account. So make it a task of joy for them, not one of groaning; for that is of no advantage to you. CJB.</p>
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**Obey:** [Heb 13:7](#); [1Sa 8:19](#), [1Sa 15:19-20](#); [Pro 5:13](#); [Php 2:12](#), [Php 2:29](#); [1Th 5:12-13](#); [2Th 3:14](#); [1Ti 5:17](#)

**have the rule over:** or, guide

**submit:** Gen 16:9; 1Co 16:16; Eph 5:21; Jas 4:7; 1Pe 5:5

**watch:** Eze 3:17-21, Eze 33:2, Eze 33:7-9; Act 20:24-26, Act 20:28; 1Co 4:1-2; 1Pe 5:2-3

**give account:** Luk 16:2; Rom 14:12; 2Co 5:10-11

**with joy:** Php 1:4, Php 2:16, Php 4:1; 1Th 2:19-20, 1Th 3:9-10

**with grief:** Exo 32:31; Jer 13:17; Php 3:18