

Care vs. Complaint

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[0 : 00] A Pastor's Reflections, Care vs. Complaint Exodus 16, 9 And Moses spake unto Aaron, Say unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, Come near before the Lord, for he has heard your murmurings.

Jeremiah 29, 11 and 12 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall you call upon me, and you shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you.

1 Peter 3, 12 For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers. But the face of the Lord is against them that do evil. In the wilderness of sin, Israel's voice is once again heard murmuring against the God who saved them.

Israel continues to prioritize the fulfillment of their own desires above the fulfillment of God's will. Israel is yet to see the purpose of their deliverance in light of God's purposes, and is still only able to see deliverance in light of what it can accomplish for their immediate needs.

When those needs go unfulfilled according to their timetable and plan, they then turn their complaint upon God. God responds to Israel's ingratitude and complaint, not with punishment, but with grace.

[1 : 28] God, who hears past the complaint and to the need, is able to meet that need with his perfect provision. Does that mean that God's people should be a complaining people so they can get what they want?

No, not at all. But what it does mean is that God hears his people. The scripture seems to indicate that it is not so much about what someone says as who it is that says it.

1 Peter 3.12 For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers. But the face of the Lord is against them that do evil. You see, no amount of flowery speech or religious talk will ever move God to hear the one who has rejected his deliverance and is walking in iniquity.

Isaiah 59.2 But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. God had delivered Israel, led Israel, and provided for Israel.

Despite all of that, Israel still complained, falsely accused, and expected God to give them what they wanted. However, none of those things caused God to respond in anger or rejection.

[2 : 48] Did God care about their ungrateful attitude? Yes, he did. But God's heart to care was not affected by their heart to complain. These were God's people, and he would see to it that not only were their needs met, but in the process, they would understand more of his grace.

For you and I, we have chosen to put our trust in a God who loves and cares for us. There are times, however, where our hearts do not align with God's heart. Times where our complaints overwhelm our ability to see the care and provision God has for us.

And yet, no matter how overwhelming our complaints, they can never overwhelm God's ability to care. Romans 10, 21 through 11, 1.

But to Israel he saith, all day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people. I say then, has God cast away his people?

God forbid. Father, thank you that your people will always be your people. There will never be a time when you forsake your own.

[4 : 04] Just as you patiently cared for your complaining people Israel in the wilderness, so do you so graciously care for us when we, your spiritual people, also complain.

Quiet our murmurings so we can see past our complaints into your care. Amen.