

## **SERMON: CAN YOU BELIEVE THAT?**

### **Numbers 11:4-6**

**(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 onion, and the garlick: (6) But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes.**

### **Introduction**

This rhetorical question is used to express surprise for something that seems possible but very improbable. It could be a positive response to an athlete performing a feat that seems all but impossible. It could be a negative reaction to someone who crossed the line of decency and was totally disrespectful to a parent or some other authority figure. It could be a response, positive or negative, to something we heard on the news. I am sure each of us has witnessed incidents, both positive and negative, in which we either spoke out loud or thought silently, "Can you believe that?"

Monday, when I read this familiar Scripture, for the umpteenth time, I silently ask this same rhetorical question. "Can you believe that?" This is what I love about God's Holy Word. It is like a multi-faceted diamond that sparkles in a different, yet ever so beautiful way, when seen from a different angle.

God heard the cries of the children of Israel and sent Moses to deliver them from Egyptian slavery. They saw the ten plagues and how they were delivered from the tenth plague by the blood on the door post. They saw how Moses lifted up his rod and God opened the Red Sea and they walked across on dry ground. Then God was feeding them manna, bread from heaven. It was angel's food. It came like clockwork every morning, for six days. A double portion was provided on the sixth day, so that they would not have to gather it on the Sabbath. Can you believe that? They complained about manna from heaven. This could be a cautionary tale. Let me rephrase this: this is "cautionary history." If we are not careful, as an individual or collectively, we could make the same mistake they made. Let's extract a few practical and spiritual truths from this incident of Biblical history.

## **Exposition**

### **1. Be Selective In Who You Listen To.**

(I Know That Is Incorrect Grammar.)

(They Listened To The Wrong People.)

(They Listened To The Mixed Multitude.)

(Exodus 12: 38.)

### **2. It Is Surprising What People Will Do In The “In-Between State.”**

(They Had Left Egypt, But Were Not Yet In The Promised Land.)

### **3. Routine Blessings Can Be Taken For Granted And Even Worse, Not Appreciated.**

(They Got Tired Of The Manna And Complained About It.)

(They Got Tired Of Eating Angel's Food- Psalm 78:24-25.)

(Beggars Should Not Be Choosy.)

### **4. The Grace And Mercy Of Our God Is Amazing.**

(God Sent A Flock Of Quails So They Could Have Meat.)

(God's Mercy And Grace Came Before His Judgement.)

(Numbers 11: 31-33.)

## **Closing Statements**

Even though this is a rhetorical question and the answer is already implied, when it refers to our great God, we can still answer with an emphatic yes. Can you believe that

God still works miracles? Yes, I can. Yes, I do. Do you believe the Bible is trustworthy and reliable? Yes, indeed. All of us have experienced many times when God showed up and showed out, fixed a problem and showered us with a multitude of blessings. All of us are living miracles. Let us thank God for the miracles. Let us also thank Him for the routine blessings that come every day like clockwork.

Give God Glory! Give God All The Glory!

### **End Notes**

1. Over the years, the term “mixed multitude” has caused a lot of theological speculation. The Hebrew word is *ha-sap-sup*. It does have a definitely negative connotation. Some linguists translate it as “rabble” or “riffraff.” Why they left Egypt is not explained. Some of them may have been afraid that more judgements were coming after the ten plagues, and the safest course was to go with the Jews. Some servants and slaves may have seen in Israel’s departure an opportunity to get out of Egypt while people were burying their dead. Others may have had good intentions, but because they had no true faith in the God of Israel, they quickly became despondent. Some scholars believe they were the product of mixed marriages between the Egyptians and the Israelites and had conflicting loyalties. Whoever they were, whatever their origin, and whatever their motives, they caused Moses and the children of Israel a great deal of trouble. Please read Exodus 12:38.

2. Goshen, where the Israelites dwelled in slavery, was practically the breadbasket of Egypt. It was lush with vegetation and abounding with natural and man-made canals, which were supplied with an abundance of water from the Nile River. Slaves and the poor were allowed to supplement their diets with the fish that were teeming in the canals and waterways. All of the foods mentioned required a great deal of water to thrive. Of course, they would not grow in the desert. Notice what they missed. Everything they liked was a condiment, except the fish.

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