

Monday 9th November

Numbers 11:18-23, 31-35

Key verses 11: 33-34

33 *But while the meat was still between their teeth and before it could be consumed, the anger of the Lord burned against the people, and he struck them with a severe plague. 34* *Therefore the place was named Kibroth Hattaavah, [a] because there they buried the people who had craved other food.*

Are you as amazed as I am how God reinforces his word to us? As I sit writing this, our message from Richard this morning is still reverberating. Test yourself to see if your salvation is genuine! The crunch comes in whether we are serious about pursuing holiness or not!! It's no coincidence that God has brought Andy Paine in to guide us in that!!

Here God addresses the true heart motives of his people! Sometimes physical symptoms mask more serious underlying health issues and in a similar way God sees there is more to the peoples moaning than just boredom with manna.

He's sees people who are turning away from the whole project of salvation. First they are moaning about slavery in Egypt, now they are saying they were better off there!!

God has set us on a journey to heaven. Are we still clinging to the pleasures of our old unsaved lives or willing participants on the journey?

The Hebrew word for wind is 'ruach' (v31), which is the same word used for the Holy Spirit. The Spirit provides so much Quail that it most likely goes bad and kills them from food poisoning (v33) The Bible is clear on God's attitude to our worldly cravings. (Ps 81 v 12, Ps 135 v 15-18, Ro 1 v 24)

Kibroth Hattaavah (v34) literally means, 'graves of the craving'.

The people were complaining but there was an underlying discontent with God's way and God acted to sort it out.

'In church, complaints about simple things like food, rotas, and the use of money can actually hide a deeper discontent and a deeper failure, especially the failure to understand the greater plan and purpose of God for us as a church.' Christopher Wright.

As Richard pointed out this morning from the book of James, difficulties, trials and challenges are a test of our faith (Ja. 1v2). The Israelites complained, God gave them over to their desires and they died as a result.

Let us balance our complaints, challenges and trials with the reality that we are God's people and that we may miss out on his teaching if we only think in small earthly terms instead of seeing ourselves in the big picture of God's salvation.