



PAUL'S ALLUSIONS TO NUMBERS 11-15

Concept/Issue	Philippians	Numbers
Problem of complaining	2:14	14:27, 29; [11-12]
Complaining against leaders / discontent	Hints of this? 1:1; 1:27; 2:2; 1:17; 2:3; 2:29; 4:2; 1:13:17	11:2; 12:2; 14:10
Drink offering	2:17	15:5 (whole chapter)
Leader an example of humility	Key theme: 2:3,4,8,12,20 Jesus + Paul	12:3 – tolerant, etc. = Moses was not self-seeking
Two women at odds	4:2	12:1
Among crooked/perverse generation	2:15	13:28-29 <i>*Deut 32:5 (themselves!)</i>
Leader (Moses/Paul) guiding to promised land	2:16	14:5, 26-30, etc
Two key examples in their midst	2:19,25 Timothy & Epaphroditus	14:6 Caleb & Joshua
Importance of obedience	2:8,12	14:9,41,44
Witness to others around	2:15	14:14-17
End Purpose = Glory to God	2:10-11	14:21
Imperative to out-work their redemption	2:12 <i>*redeemed in Christ!</i>	14:22; 15:41 <i>*liberated from Egypt!</i>
Problem of complaining	2:14	14:27, 29; [11-12]
Children enter	2:15	14:31 [Deut 1:39]
Promise of salvation	3:20	15:2
God will do it (complete)	1:6; 2:17; 3:21; etc. <i>*idea of drink offering – completed the sacrifice</i>	15:1-5, etc. <i>*idea of drink offering – completed the sacrifice</i>

Significance – learn from Israel in the Wilderness:

Numbers documents the children of Israel leaving for the Promised land under the guidance of Moses. In chapter 11-12 they complain, and in chapter 13 they lose faith that God will bring them into the land and provide (doubt whether He will complete His work in them). God rebukes and punishes them and relegates them to wandering for 40 years. BUT in chapter 15 there is an abrupt change (which most commentators struggle to understand). It is suddenly the laws of burnt and peace offerings – and for the first time clear expectations on the grain and drink offerings that need to be offered to complete these sacrifices of obedience and faith. Why the change? What is the connection to preceding chapters? The juxtaposition is amazing – suddenly God turns and clearly tells them that He will complete His promise – He will bring them and in richly bless them. But they need to respond to His salvation (from Egypt, etc). It is God's work, despite them. They needed to show out their salvation from Egypt! They need to stop grumbling and complaining and live in thankful selflessness as God's people in among 'a crooked and perverse generation'.

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