

A valid complaint?

- Complaints are invidious, sapping away hope and energy and joy
 - but sometimes they can be justified...
 - if something is really wrong, it can occasionally be a part of the process of sorting that thing out
- But a groundless, baseless complaint?

Context

- Out of Egypt
 - escaped from Pharaoh's army through the parting of the Sea
 - in the wilderness, desert
 - riches from the Egyptians, but you can only carry so much food and less water...
- God is providing for them:
 - *Manna - bread - implicit in Numbers, see Num 11:4-9*
 - *Quail - meat - Numbers 11 - following complaint that the manna is a bit boring!*
 - *Water - from the rock - Numbers 20*
- They are complaining:
 - but this reveals their heart, their lack of faith
 - who are they - God's redeemed people
 - not just escaped from slavery that had been a heavy burden on them...
 - they are now to be the people in whom God's glory will be displayed!
 - they have the Law, that revelation of God's character, that privileged position amongst all the nations
 - *they have the honour, the privilege of knowing God - and they are complaining about the menu!?!*
- They have no grounds for complaint whatsoever
 - God has been patient with them beyond comprehension: *they have seen his glory and his saving and judging activity time after time, and they still struggle to have faith!*

A terrible judgement

- *...for God is a holy and wrathful God...*
- *The judgement is against their lack of trust, their lack of faith*
 - comes in the form of snakes...
 - many people died - life and death issue
 - clear that this comes from God
 - and is deserved!

A miraculous salvation!

- Symbol of medical profession still today!
- Offer of salvation was made
- Required faith to receive that salvation!
 - had to actually look to receive
 - in some ways the offer seems daft.... powerless, weak - but the only hope!

John 3:14-17

- *(14) Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, (15) that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. (16) "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. (17) For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. (John 3:14-17)*
- Jesus is lifted up on the Cross for our salvation
 - we in same situation as Israelites - facing deserved judgement - but *God is merciful!*

