



[1 Corinthians 10:10](#)

(10) Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.

King James Version

Among the truly distinctive biblical terms describing the attitudes of those journeying through the wilderness are forms of the term "murmur." Such words are not used much today, as most would use a form of "complain," "gripe," "grumble," "protest," "criticize," or "whine." In referring to the children of Israel in the wilderness, the King James Version uses a form of "murmur" 24 times.

It is natural to complain against afflictions, losses, and hopeful expectations dashed. We seem to think that our possessions are ours unconditionally, especially those things on which we had set our hearts. We feel that, having worked diligently, we are entitled to success and deserve to enjoy and keep what we have accumulated. In the same way, when we are surrounded by a loving family, no one has a right to break into that circle and strike down a loved one.

We live our lives under the [sovereignty of God](#), whose watchful oversight is on us constantly. How do we react to Him when things are not going well? It is easy to gripe without even thinking of the ever-watchful [God](#) who promises to supply our every need. We may find ourselves complaining to Him about our state of affairs, as if He is totally unaware. Have we forgotten that this One, who by His grace has called us into a relationship with Him, has neither [afflicted](#) us nor allowed us to be afflicted anywhere near what we truly deserve as the wages of our sinful lives?

One of the benefits of fully accepting the sovereignty of God is not always appreciated because its cause and solution are not always understood.

Comprehending God's sovereignty brings resignation into our lives. In this day, being resigned to something almost seems like a position of defeat, as though at best we have to choose the lesser of two evils rather than forging ahead in confidence to grab life's brass ring.

The Reader's Digest Great Encyclopedic Dictionary defines *resignation* as "the quality of being submissive; unresisting acquiescence." *The Reader's Digest Oxford Complete Wordfinder* defines it as "uncomplaining endurance of a sorrow or difficulty." The mention of endurance is noteworthy because of Jesus' statement in [Matthew 24:13](#) for the need of endurance.

A major benefit of intelligently living by [faith, seeking God](#) through His Word, meditating on what we study, and relating everything in life to an awareness of God, looking for His hand in events, is that these activities will gradually produce a much deeper awareness of His loving nearness. It gives us a clearer sense that everything is under control. Recall Jesus' crossing the turbulent Sea of Galilee during a storm. There are huge waves and high winds. The disciples are terrified, but He is sleeping right through it. In fear, they wake Him. He arises and says to the wind and waves, "[Peace](#), be still," and they immediately calm. He then asks His disciples, "Why are you so fearful; how is it that you have no faith?"

When we have a right and true recognition of God's sovereignty, the griping and fears that we are so prone to because human nature is so easily offended can diminish considerably. Understanding God's sovereignty better teaches us that we must know that our lives are in God's hands. He owns us body and soul, we are in His view at all times, and we must bow to His will. Therefore, regardless of circumstances, He can take care of us.

He never afflicts us with more than we deserve nor more than we can bear ([1 Corinthians 10:13](#)). If He chooses poverty, poor health, or family problems for us, we must understand that He never piles more on us than we deserve. After all, we killed His Son, and besides that, He has great plans for us in His Kingdom for which we need to be prepared.

An upset woman once complained to her minister that church members had heaped much scorn on her and her family by saying derogatory things about them. She asked the minister if anybody else in his memory had had to

endure such things. He replied, "Yes, [Jesus Christ](#). All His disciples abandoned Him, and the government put Him, an innocent man, to death. He not only did not complain, He accepted God's will, and before He died, He forgave them all."

There are other examples: Job says, "The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away" ([Job 1:21](#)). God took away seven sons and three daughters, as well as his wealth and home. As a young boy, Samuel delivered God's judgments on Eli's two sons. That surely must have stung the old priest, but Eli responded, "Let [the LORD] do what seems good to Him" ([I Samuel 3:18](#)). Aaron accepted God's verdict of death on his two sons without a murmur ([Leviticus 10:3](#)).

— John W. Ritenbaugh

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