

The Complaint Department

Psalm 142:1-7 In the old days stores had complaint departments. These departments are now called Customer Service, but the name change has not changed the function of these departments. Customer service usually handles disgruntled people who have purchased something they are not satisfied with and have brought it back to the store for an exchange or for their money back. Those who stand behind the desks of customer service think they have a tough job, but their job does not compare to the job Moses had. He had over 600,000 complaining, murmuring Israelites at his throat day and night. At one point in the travels through the wilderness Moses asked the Lord to show him favor by just killing him. He had had it with their complaints, and he knew God was weary of it also.

God, however, does not mind when we pour out our complaints to Him directly. David knew this, and he wrote, "I cry out to the Lord with my voice; with my voice to the Lord I make my supplication. I pour out my complaint before Him; I declare before Him my trouble (vv. 1-2).

God is the Divine Complaint Department. He does mind it when we murmur and complain to others, however. He knows by our negative comments we stir up others to be unhappy with their situation. Have you ever been around a negative person and at the end of the day you are totally worn out? I had a Russian Jewish friend to whom I ministered on a regular basis, but when I did, I was exhausted at the end of the day. All she did was murmur and complain. Nothing I or anyone else did seemed to satisfy her. The last time I saw her alive was on her birthday. I wanted to be sure of her salvation so I asked her if she knew for sure she would go to heaven and did she love Jesus. She said yes to both questions, and then I said, "Well, Sophie, in heaven you will have no complaints."

God's wrath was kindled when the people of Israel murmured and complained to one another. His mercy, however, was extended to David when David poured out his complaint to the Lord. David said, "God will deal bountifully with me." He knew that whatever was wrong at that time in his life, only God had the ultimate power to change it, and He was full of grace and mercy. I believe the fact that David knew where to pour out his complaint was one of the reasons he was called a man after God's own heart.

Have you ever had people complain to you, and the whole time they are complaining you are thinking, Well, what on earth do they think I can do about this? God alone has the only power to work eternal change in our own lives and the situations we encounter. He does not give us our money back either, nor does He let us return our situations and circumstances to Him. Instead, He gives us the grace to get through our circumstances. He deals bountifully with us.

**READ: 2 Kings 6:1-7:20; Acts 15:32-16:15; Psalm 142:1-7;
Proverbs 17:24-25**