

The Prosperity of The Soul

January 14, 2026

Part 2

3 John 1:2

Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.

Psalm 106:15

And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul.

This phrase, “Leanness of soul” comes directly from Psalm 106:15 but seen in Numbers chapter 11.

NUMBERS CHAPTER 11 - READ

What Is “Leanness of Soul”?

The word leanness speaks of inner barrenness, spiritual dryness, weakness, and loss of vitality, not physical starvation, but a soul deprived of life, strength, and satisfaction from God.

Leanness of soul is having what we asked for, but without God’s sustaining presence

Being filled outwardly, yet empty inwardly

Living without spiritual nourishment, even while enjoying natural provision

It is the condition of a soul that has chosen desire over dependence, self-will over faith, and provision over Presence.

Why Did God Send It?

1. Because They Desired Something More Than God

Psalm 106 recounts Israel craving flesh in the wilderness, despising God's provision (manna), which symbolized Christ as God's daily sufficiency.

Psalm 106:14

But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert.

Their request was not sinful because they were hungry but because they rejected God's way of sustaining them.

Leanness came when they valued the gift above the Giver.

2. God Gave Them Their Will but Without His Life

This is one of the most sobering truths in Scripture: "He gave them their request..."

Sometimes God's judgment is not refusal, but permission.

Leanness is what happens when God allows us to have what we insist upon but removes the spiritual vitality that only flows through Faith in Christ and Him crucified.

This is not abandonment, as it is exposure.

3. Leanness Reveals the Futility of Living Apart from the Cross

Israel's manna pointed forward to Christ, the Bread from Heaven.

Jesus said:

"I am the living bread which came down from heaven." (John 6:51)

To reject God's provision in the wilderness was to reject daily dependence on God, humility before God, and trusting in God's one and only way.

Leanness came because they stepped outside the only place life flows which is Faith in God's provision, which is Christ and Him crucified.

Leanness Is Not God's Desire, but God's Warning

God does not delight in leanness. He uses it in the attempt to bring His people back to trusting in His one and only Way.

Deuteronomy 8:3

And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.

Leanness teaches us that self-sufficiency starves the soul, that the Cross is not optional but essential.

Leanness vs. Life in Christ

Leanness of Soul vs. Life IN Christ

Desire driven vs. Faith driven

Self will vs. God dependence

Temporary satisfaction vs. Eternal sufficiency

Outward fullness, inward emptiness vs. Inward Life, outward peace

The Cross Is God's Cure for Leanness

At the Cross our self-will was judged, our flesh was put to death and God's life was made available to those who will Believe.

Galatians 2:20

I am crucified with Christ: Nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Leanness disappears when the soul returns to Faith in Christ which is dependence on His finished work.

Leanness of soul is what happens when God allows His people to pursue their desires apart from Faith in His provision.

It is not cruelty; it is God's merciful exposure.

God sends leanness to reveal misplaced trust, to strip false satisfaction and to lead us back to the Cross, where true life flows.

Biblical Contrast: Fatness of Soul vs. Leanness of Soul