

Why Was Moses So Humble?

Numbers 12:3 states simply the following truth:

(Now the man Moses was very humble, more than all men who were on the face of the earth.) NKJV

The situation that brought this statement to the surface was due to the fact that both Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom Moses had married. I won't go into this background here, but suffice it to say it is a bit convoluted. Scholars have studied into the [works of Josephus and the extra-canonical writings like Jasher](#) to determine what the truth is here. There's no point in going into that here because for this particular article, it doesn't matter. The main point is that both of Moses' siblings - Miriam and Aaron - decided that they would start complaining about Moses and the marriage he had to "the Ethiopian" woman. Zipporah had most likely died and Moses had married another woman. Some believe "the Ethiopian" woman in question was someone Moses had married years *earlier*. It is doubtful that Moses was married to two women at the same time though. It would've been fine for Moses to marry a Cushite (Ethiopian) woman. The only prohibition from God is that Israelites could not marry Canaanites (Ex 34:16).

The real issue is that both Miriam and Aaron chose to stand against Moses and complain about him. It's almost as if what they chose to complain about didn't really matter. They found something they felt was worthy of complaint so they uttered it to one another. It probably had to do with the fact that they may have felt their roles in the nation as prophetess and high priest were being diminished. It's natural for people to become jealous when they feel their roles or leadership are being diminished by someone else. Happens all the time.

Let's also be clear that the statement in Numbers 12:3 above is not a statement of bragging by Moses (since he most likely wrote Numbers), but was a statement penned under inspiration from the Holy Spirit. It is a statement of fact that God wanted in the text.

At any rate, I think it's pretty clear that Moses was extremely humble and there are numerous passages in Scripture that conclusively prove this. Notice, however, that God had heard the complaints and immediately stepped in to deal with it; "*And the Lord heard it*" (v 2b).

Suddenly the Lord said to Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, "Come out, you three, to the tabernacle of meeting!" So the three came out. ⁵ Then the Lord came down in the pillar of cloud and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam. And they both went forward. (vv 4-5)

Talk about being called on the carpet! Wow, I would not have wanted to be in their shoes, would you? In the next few verses, God explains that if there is a prophet among the people, He speaks to that prophet in dreams. This was not the case with Moses, with whom God spoke face to face and in plain language (v 8a).

How did Moses "deserve" this type of treatment from God? Clearly, it was God's choice, wasn't it? But Moses had something that God had placed within Moses that allowed God to approach Moses in such a way. That something was *humility*.

How do we know Moses was truly humble? It is seen in the way Moses reacted to various situations beginning with the Burning Bush (Exodus 3). We might be tempted to think that Moses was simply *scared* and reacted from that vantage point. However, we need to understand that reverential fear of God is a *prerequisite* to humility.

A proper reverential fear of God will keep us from breaking His laws, won't it? The correct reverential fear and awe of God will help us to stop relying on ourselves and throw ourselves on His mercy for the working out of His will in and through us, right? The fear of God that we *should* have but all too often do *not* have is what helps keep us on the straight and narrow, helps us understand our own shortcomings and causes us to realize our great need for God in all circumstances and situations.

Consider Exodus 17 regarding lack of water. Moses' responded with *fear* and directly to God.

So Moses cried out to the LORD, saying, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me!"

God's answer was immediate. It solved the problem for the people of Israel and for Moses. There are numerous examples of Moses immediately seeking God's face when various situations arose that put Moses' life in danger or made him fearful. In each situation, Moses sought God (Exodus 15:25; Numbers 11:11; 14:15; 16). That was his *first* reaction to the many situations that came his way. Without any fear, Moses might have decided to rely on himself and what he may have thought was his ability to get through the situation on his own merits.

Moses' fear caused him to immediately run to God. Often, my fear does not do this. My fear tends to make me look inward for my own strength and knowledge. This is in spite of the fact that it is infinitely better for me to forget myself and my perceived abilities and simply go to God as Moses did.

Moses was truly humble because there is only one time that the Scriptures highlight where Moses relied on himself to handle the situation (*after* he was chosen by God). Just one time and it is found in the second instance of getting water from the rock (an image of Jesus our Rock). The first instance is found in Exodus 17:1-16. There, the people are upset (what's new?), and Moses strikes the rock after God tells him to do that and water flows from the rock. God mercifully responded to the complaints of the people.

The second instance is found in Numbers 20. The people came to a place called Kadesh that unfortunately, did not have any known source of water. So, the people did what they normally did - they complained and grumbled. Because of the complaining of the people, "*Moses and Aaron came away from the congregation to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, and fell on their faces, and the Glory of YHWH appeared to them*" (Numbers 20:6). Up to this point, Moses was

doing it correctly. He heard the complaints and fell on his face before God waiting for God to instruct him.

God *did* instruct Moses and told him that he should *speak* to the rock and water would flow from it (v 8). Okay, so Moses had his marching orders. Unfortunately, instead of obeying God here to a "t" Moses went off-script and instead of speaking to the rock, he *struck* the rock as he did the first time.

So even though Moses did the correct thing by immediately going *to* God and trusting Him to provide necessary instruction (remember, Moses did not have the Bible as we do today), Moses made a severe mistake in judgment by actually *not* following God's spoken instruction here. God had specifically said to "speak" to the rock, but Moses, in his *anger* at the people and their constant grumbling, wound up *hitting* the rock. The rock here, just as it did the first time, represents Jesus, though during His second coming. During Jesus' first coming, He came as *Servant* and became *the* propitiation for our sin - yours and mine. Jesus was falsely accused, *beaten* and ultimately crucified.

In Jesus' second coming, He will arrive as *KING* of all Creation. Because of this, no one will accuse him falsely nor will He be struck or attacked. In fact and all will bow the knee, Jesus will vanquish His enemies with a word or breath of His mouth. Had Moses obeyed God diligently in both instances, the imagery of Jesus' first and second coming would have been clearly seen by later generations. Unfortunately, Moses, in his unchecked anger, ruined the effect and diminished the truth.

But this is the only instance I can find in Scripture where Moses was not humble. In all other cases, once he had been called by God to lead the Israelites out of bondage, Moses was supremely faithful and he was so because of his humility. He was humble because he had a proper fear of God, often lacking in too many Christians today.

I tend to think I can "do it." After all, didn't God give me abilities? Didn't He expect me to eventually stand on my own? Yes to the first. No to the second. God has given me abilities but He always expects me to come to Him in absolute reliance. I fail at that miserably at times.

Case in point. In today's ever-changing world, we see what's happening in America. We see that Marxism has broken through the ranks and is taking over. We see the corruption and evil as it attempts to stare us down and overcome us. I honestly do not know what to do other than pray.

As I said in my first Short Takes video from yesterday, they appear to want us focused on voter fraud so that we don't see what else they're accomplishing. The problem though is that I do not know what God would have me do except to simply *carry on* as I heard Todd from Wretched Radio say the other day. We can become super involved in the politics of the day or we can see our calling as one of still trying to help people understand their need for redemption. It really cannot be both, though I know that many disagree with me there.

Whatever it takes, I need to submit myself to God and seek to give Him my fears and anxiety in every situation. That must occur every time I am tempted to begin to focus on the things that

cause fear, frustration and consternation in me. I *must* submit myself, my attitude and my fears to God because even though I'm tempted to think I can deal with it, I really cannot unless He supplies the power to do so.

I want to be humble as Moses was humble by fearing God and seeking His will, not moving out on my own. What other option is there since all other roads lead to a reliance on *self*, not God?