

THE MAN MOSES: LEARNING HOW TO BE USED BY GOD

Part III: After Ministry Failure, Being Mightily Used By God G. Step Seven - Learning From Moses' Service Disqualifying Sin (Numbers 20:1-13)

I. Introduction

- A. It is a privilege to serve the Lord. In fact, if we do not watch ourselves, God will "shelve" us from future effective service due to sin, cf. 1 Cor. 9:27!
- B. Moses sinned in striking the rock for water provision instead of just speaking to it, Num. 20:7-12.
- C. We can examine the elements behind Moses' sin and learn a lesson ourselves about avoiding such a sin in which God removes us from future blessings in service.

II. Learning From Moses' Service Disqualifying Sin, Numbers 20:1-13 et al.

- A. When Moses disobediently struck the rock instead of just speaking to it, he voiced an opinion of the people that fueled his sin: **he complained that they were a bunch of rebels, and that he had to fetch water for them**, v. 10. This statement reveals a ventilated wrath of Moses against the people, a wrath that had been building from numerous similar situations in which the people had complained about **Moses** for their lack, cf. Bible Knowledge Commentary, Old Testament, p. 238!
- B. For instruction, we briefly review **Moses'** thinking during some of those former crises when the people chided against him, and from these learn the dynamics of what fueled his anger:
 1. When the people complained about the lack of food in Ex. 16, Moses retorted to the people, saying, "What are **we** (Aaron and Moses) that you murmur against **us**?" (Ex. 16:7)
 2. When the nation complained about the lack of water in Rephidim, Moses told the Lord, "What shall **I** do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone **me**!" (Ex. 17:4)
 3. When God told Moses to get down out of the mount of Sinai as the people had quickly turned unto idols, he **furiously** threw down the divinely engraved tables of the law, shattering them, 32:19.
 4. In Korah's rebellion against the leadership of Moses and Aaron, Moses was very angry, and told the Lord not to respect Korah's offering as **he** had not done anything wrong to deserve Korah's rebellion against **him**, Num. 16:15. This was tantamount to asking God to go ahead and kill Korah in revenge!
 5. Summary: Moses took the criticisms of the people against himself personally as though **he, Moses** was responsible for their plight. This personalizing of the complaint is echoed in Moses' words against the nation in the sin of striking the rock in Num. 20:10: he expressed anger at **his** having to fetch water for them out of the rock at Rephidim! **When Moses failed to see that the criticism was really against the plan of God in choosing Moses to lead the people where there were these crises, he took critical problems personally, leading to his own sinful disobedience in striking the rock!**

***Lesson:** While serving the Lord, we must keep in mind that the ministry is not for our glory, by our power, for our purposes or for our advancement or promotion. Ministry is God's business, and we merely serve HIM. Complaints, problems, criticisms against our efforts when we serve God in His way are really to be transferred to the Lord, for the One Who must bear the burden of that is HIM -- not us!!*

***Application:** (1) While serving God before others, always remember that we do not earn the right nor deserve the privilege to serve in the first place -- period! That keeps us from ever having to be defensive as Moses became! (2) Make sure that we are doing that which is right so that the criticism that comes our way is not justified. If the criticism is justified, we had better heed it and change, cf. 1 Peter 4:15-16! (3) If the criticism is against a human weakness that we have, a weakness over which we have no control (as in the case of Paul in 2 Cor. 10:10), do not fall into Satan's trap and defend that weakness, for that is carnality, cf. 2 Cor. 10:12,3. Simply focus on using our supernatural gift (2 Tim. 1:6-7) WHICH GOD GAVE US TO MAKE UP THE DIFFERENCES IN OUR HUMAN WEAKNESSES ANYWAY (Acts 1:8; Ep. 4:11ff)!*