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The Sin Of Moses
Num. 20:1-13

The children of Israel have come to the end of their journeying after 38 years of wondering in the wilderness and once again they begin to contend with Moses and Aaron because there was no water.

God has told Moses to speak to the rock at Horeb in order to satisfy the children of Israel's thirst as God would bring forth water out of the rock but instead Moses struck the rock.

The account is an object lesson for all to understand that there is no person who is exempt from the accountability to God for ones actions and the consequences of sin due to those actions, no not even Moses!

The event before us is marked by three movements.

- I. The murmuring of the people against Moses. vs. 1-6
- II. The message of the Lord to Moses. vs. 7-8
- III. The misrepresentation of God by Moses. vs. 9-13

I. The murmuring of the people with Moses. vs. 1-6

- A. The place was the wilderness of Zin. vs. 1.
 1. The entire congregation was present in the first month of the fortieth year of their wondering.
 - a. Notice that the record of their 38 years of wondering in the wilderness is recorded in five chapters, 15-19, the remaining 30 deal with what took place within months.
 - b. The time spent in the wilderness is wasted time and not noted by God for it does not

glorify Him, though He is perfectly aware of all that takes place in it.

- c. The time in the wilderness spent over it's legitimate time is characterized by rebellion and murmuring.
2. The point of meeting is Kadesh, the very same place they had come to 38 years before and had refused to enter in to the land due to the giants and fortified cities.
 - a. They had made no progress in their journeying.
 - b. They had observed an entire generation die in the wilderness.
 - c. They had been kept from the promise land through unbelief but now were once again at the door.
3. The prophetess Mirium died there and was buried.
 - a. She had been instrumental in putting Moses in the Nile River only that he be drawn by Pharaohs daughter and directing her to Moses' mother to nurse him, for the purposes of God. Ex. 2:1-10
 - b. She had led the victory march in song and dance after they crossed the Red Sea, in celebration of the destruction of the Egyptian army. Ex. 15:20-21
 - c. She had instigated dissension against Moses with Aaron. Num. 12:1-6
 - d. She as the others who had rebelled against God could not enter the land.
- B. The problem was that there was no water for the congregation. vs. 2a
 1. The problem was common being in the desert.
 2. The need was legitimate not sinful.

- C. The personal attack was against Moses and Aaron. vs. 2b-5
1. The process had been going on for the last 38 years, nothing had changed. vs. 2
 2. The emotional response was the expressed desire to have died under God's judgment in the past with their brethren. vs. 3
 3. The same old false accusation was declared to Moses. vs. 4
 4. The longing for Egypt was never expelled out of their hearts. vs. 5
- D. The proper response of Moses and Aaron is exemplary. vs. 6
1. Their wisdom was that they turned from the presence of the people to the presence of the Lord in the tabernacle. vs. 6a
* It is always the wisest thing to do when people attack you or express some complaint but notice you must listen to the people and then go to the Lord and see if they are right or wrong!
 2. Their attitude was that of humility to this point, they fell on their faces before the Lord. vs. 6b
 3. Their privilege was that the Lord answered them, they saw the Shekinah glory of the Lord. vs. 6c

The murmuring of the people with Moses is a reminder to each of about our sinful nature that is ever present with us till we die and must be ruled by the Spirit of God!

II. The message of the Lord to Moses. vs. 7-8

- A. The proclamation was to both Moses and Aaron. vs. 7-8a-b

1. The Lord spoke directly to Moses. vs. 7
 2. The command was to take the rod, both Moses and Aaron and to gather the assembly together. vs. 8a-b
 3. The rod is not identified specifically.
 - a. The rod of Moses was used by God to deliver the children of Israel through miracles in Egypt.
 - b. The rod of Aaron was to confirm once and for all the High Priesthood of Aaron and was ordered to be kept in the Ark of the covenant as a testimony. 17:10
- B. The particular task of Moses was to, " Speak to the rock before their eyes". vs. 8c
1. The simple instructions were to be followed by faith.
 2. The obedience was to be before the eyes of the people.
- C. The promise was that the rock would yield its water. vs. 8d
1. The certainly was assured by God, "It will yield'.
 2. The content would quench the thirst of the people, "Its water".
- D. The personal compassion of Moses was to be an extension of God. vs. 8e-
1. He was to bring water for them out of the rock and give drink to the congregation.
 2. He was to do the same and give drink to their animals.

The message of the Lord to Moses is a reminder to each of us of the clarity of God's word that we are to obey by faith!

III. The misrepresentation of God by Moses. vs. 9-13

- A. The perspective of Moses was manifested in his actions. vs. 9-11
1. Moses appeared to be obedient. vs. 9-10a
 - a. Moses took up the rod from before the Lord as He commanded. vs. 9
 - 1) The rod could be the rod of Moses.
 - 2) The rod could also refer to the rod of Aaron that was placed in the Ark of the covenant "before the Lord".
 - 3) If the rod was not the rod of Moses which represented the law that judged man as guilty before God then it was the rod of Aaron which was symbolic of the grace of God through the resurrection of Jesus Christ to come that would quench the thirst of every man. Jn. 4:13-14, 7:38
 - b. Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock. vs. 10a
 - * Jesus said, "whoever falls on this rock will be broken but on whomever the rock falls, it will grind him to powder. Math. 21:44
 2. Moses appeared to be angry with the people. vs. 10b-11
 - a. His words are insulting because of their contention, "Hear now, you rebels!". vs. 10b-c
 - b. He brought attention and glory to himself and Aaron instead of God, "Must we bring water for you out of this rock". vs. 10d
 - c. He lifted up his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod. vs. 11a
 3. Moses appeared to be representing God. vs. 11b-c

- a. The water came out abundantly.
 - b. The congregation and their animals drank.
- B. The personal accountability of Moses was to the Lord. vs. 12-13
1. God proclaimed the sin of Moses and Aaron which the people were completely ignorant about.
 - a. They did not believe what God told them evident by their disobedience. vs. 12a--b
 - b. They did not hollow, honor or sanctified God in a accurate and clear way before the eyes of the children of Israel. vs. 12c
 - * The word hollowed "qadash" in the Hebrew means sanctified, consecrated, honored etc.
 - 1) God was represented as being mad and insulting.
 - 2) God was represented as being reluctant to give them water. Ps. 106:32-33
 2. God proclaimed the consequences of their disobedience, "Therefore you shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them". vs. 12d
 3. God proclaimed the event as a lesson that God must be hollowed by obedience. vs. 13
 - a. The waters were memorialized as a place of contention with the Lord. vs. 13a-b
 - b. The Lord was hollowed among them by His righteous justice without respect of persons. vs. 13c
- C. The prophetic type of Jesus was destroyed by Moses.
1. The Scriptures are clear as to who is the rock, it is God. Deut. 32:4, 31

2. The Lord Jesus said He was the rock on which His church was to be founded and built on. Math. 16:16-18
3. The Lord told Moses to strike the rock of Horeb once before and the people would receive water. Ex. 17:6
4. The Lord told Moses to speak to the rock and it would give them water. Num. 20:8
5. The New Testament tells us that they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ. 1Cor. 10:4
6. The rock representing Jesus Christ who gave them to drink had been smitten once already at Horeb, therefore it did not have to be smitten again, let alone twice, for He offered Himself once and for all for the sins of the world.
7. The only thing any one has to do is speak to the rock who is Jesus and confess with his or her mouth and believe in their hearts and they shall be saved. Rom. 10:9
8. The man Moses disregarded God's finished work to quench the spiritual thirst of people and communicated God in a bad light, self glory, the need of self effort and work to merit God's benefits.
 - a. So with some individuals who communicate the word of God in a way that leads people to think He is mad. Jn. 3:16
 - b. So with some individuals who add to the finished work of Jesus Christ by personal efforts and works. Col.2:9-10
 - c. So with some individuals point to themselves as the source of God's blessings. 1Cor. 4:7

The misrepresentation of God by Moses is a reminder to each of us that we are to represent God in an honorable way through our obedience!

Conclusion

God has no respect of person, He holds every person responsible and accountable for their sin and that He might receive glory and honor among the people.

- I. The murmuring of the people with Moses had legitimate grounds.
- II. The message of the Lord to Moses was very clear.
- III. The misrepresentation of God by Moses was personally costly.