

## **The End: A Great Place to Start**

### **Overwhelmed**

Numbers 20:1-13

*“He (Moses) is one of the great figures in all of history, a man who took a group of slaves and, under inconceivably difficult circumstances, molded them into a nation that has influenced and altered the entire course of history.” W.A. Elwell*

**Main Idea:** When I am Overwhelmed, God is Not!

#### **There are Three Typical Causes for Being Overwhelmed**

##### **I. Overwhelmed by Loss**

*“And the people of Israel, the whole congregation, came into the wilderness of Zin in the first month, & the people stayed in Kadesh. And Miriam died there & was buried there.”*

**Numbers 20:1**

*“When she could hide him no longer, she took for him a basket made of bulrushes & daubed it with bitumen & pitch. She put the child in it & placed it among the reeds by the riverbank. And his sister stood at a distance to know what would be done to him. Now the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her young women walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds & sent her servant woman, & she took it. When she opened it, she saw the child, & beheld the baby was crying. She took pity on him & said, ‘This is one of the Hebrews’ children.’ Then his sister said to Pharaoh’s daughter, ‘Shall I go & call you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?’ And, Pharaoh’s daughter said to her, ‘Go.’ So the girl went & called the child’s mother.” **Exodus 2:3-8***

*“The death of Moses’ dear sister Miriam may have caused the prophet to enter a period of depression or even despair, which might have led him to respond so negatively in the following account.” **R.D. Cole***

##### **II. Overwhelmed by Pressure**

*“Now there was no water for the congregation. And they assembled themselves together against Moses and against Aaron. And the people quarreled with Moses and said, ‘Would that we had perished when our brothers perished before the LORD! Why have you brought the assembly of the LORD into this wilderness, that we should die here, both we and our cattle? And why have you made us come up out of Egypt to bring us to this evil place? It is no place for grain or figs or vines or pomegranates, and there is no water to drink.’ Then Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly to the entrance of the tent of meeting and fell on their faces. And the glory of the LORD appeared to them, and the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ‘Take the staff, and assemble the congregation, you and Aaron your brother, and tell the rock before their eyes to yield its water. So you shall bring water out of the rock for them and give drink to the congregation and their cattle.” **Numbers 2:2-8***

**Moses had led his people out of captivity & had been used by God to provide for their every need. Yet, a common complaint arose over and over again...**

- **By the Red Sea:** *“What have you done to us in bringing us out of Egypt? Is not this what we said to you in Egypt: ‘Leave us alone that we may serve the Egyptians’? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness.” **Exodus 14:11b-12***
- **Between Elim & Sinai:** *And the whole congregation of the people of Israel grumbled against Moses & Aaron in the wilderness, and the people of Israel said to them, ‘Would that we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the meat pots and ate bread to the full, for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.” **Exodus 16:2-3***

- **At Rephidim:** *“But the people thirsted there for water, & the people grumbled against Moses & said, ‘Why did you bring us up out of Egypt, to kill us & our children & our livestock with thirst?’ **Exodus 17:3***
- **At Kadesh:** *“And all the people of Israel grumbled against Moses & Aaron. The whole congregation said to them, ‘Would that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or would that we had died in this wilderness! Why is the LORD bringing us into this land, to fall by the sword? Our wives and our little ones will become a prey. Would it not be better for us to go back to Egypt?’ And they said to one another, ‘Let us choose a leader and go back to Egypt.” **Numbers 14:2-4***

*“And the LORD said to Moses, ‘How long will this people despise me? And how long will they not believe in me, in spite of all the signs that I have done among them? I will strike them with the pestilence and disinherit them, and I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they.” **Numbers 14:11-12***

##### **III. Overwhelmed by Consequences**

*“And Moses took the staff from before the LORD, as he commanded him. Then Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock, and he said to them, ‘Hear now, you rebels: shall we bring water for you out of this rock?’ And Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock with his staff twice, and water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their livestock. And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, ‘Because you did not believe in me, to uphold me as holy in the eyes of the people of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land that I have given them.’ These are the waters of Meribah, where the people of Israel quarreled with the LORD, and through them he showed himself holy.” **Numbers 2:9-13***

*“This failure to follow instructions, coupled with a rebellious and invective attitude against God’s people, was a violation of the holiness of God...The prophet who previously had been called ‘more humble than any other man on the face of the earth’ had acted haughtily; the servant of Yahweh who was exemplar of faithfulness had fallen; and the one who was said to have spoke with the Lord ‘face to face’ had brought defamation to his Lord.” **R.D. Cole***

*“And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him. So the people of Israel obeyed him and did as the LORD had commanded Moses. And there has not arisen a prophet since in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face, none like him for all the signs and the wonders that the LORD sent him to do in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and to all his servants and to all his land, and for all the mighty power and all the great deeds of terror that Moses did in the sight of all Israel.” **Deuteronomy 34:9-12***

*“Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” **Hebrews 4:14-16***

**If you are overwhelmed, please DON’T try to be like Moses; trust in God instead by following Jesus! Trust God!**

#### **Sources and Further Reading Opportunities:**

- *Strong’s Concordance* – James Strong (1890)
- *Tony Evans Book of Illustrations* – Tony Evans (2009)
- *Swindoll’s Ultimate Book of Illustrations & Quotes* – Charles Swindoll (1998)
- *Bible Exposition Commentary* – Warren Wiersbe (1996)
- *Wiersbe’s Expository Outlines on the Old Testament* – Warren Wiersbe (1993)
- *New Bible Commentary* – Carson, France, Motyer & Wenham (1994)
- *Bible Knowledge Commentary* – Walvoord & Zuck, (1985)
- *New American Commentary – Numbers* – Dennis Cole (2000)
- *Tyndale Bible Dictionary* – Comfort & Elwell (2001)

