

Moses ■ The Man Who Knew God Face to Face

by Zac Poonen

This sermon delves into the life of Moses, highlighting how he exemplified living with a new covenant spirit in an old covenant time. It emphasizes the importance of seeking God's ways, humility, forgiveness, and discipline to avoid disqualification despite being mightily used by God. The sermon draws parallels between Moses' experiences and the need for believers today to have a heart that longs after God, disciplined in body, and reverent in fear of God's goodness and severity.

Scripture: Numbers 12:7, Zechariah 3:6, Philippians 2:3, Psalms 106:32, Psalms 25:14, 1 Corinthians 9:27

Topics: "Living with a New Covenant Spirit", "Humility and Discipline in Faith"

Description

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Transcript

So, we've been considering about how godly people in Old Testament times could live by a number of new covenant standards and that's quite a challenge to us. As I've observed many people who have even heard about the new covenant in many of our churches, I find that many, many people they have understood the theory of the new covenant in their minds where their life is old covenant. Many in fact most people who understand the new covenant in their heads, their home life is an old covenant life, the financial transactions, money matters is old covenant standards.

So, in such a situation it's quite a challenge to see people who lived under the old covenant rise up to new covenant standards, it's amazing. Without the Holy Spirit dwelling within, without the example of Christ in front of them, without a Bible, how they could come to such a life, it's really amazing, which shows that God looks at the heart and it's amazing what he does for help people and how he honors people when they seek to honor him. So, we want to see another example of a man who lived under the old covenant but who rose up beyond the old covenant to new covenant standards and it'll be an amazing challenge to all of us, Moses.

And I want you to see what God says about Moses here in Numbers 12 and verse 7 first of all, my servant Moses is faithful in all my house, Numbers 12, 7, with him I speak mouth to mouth openly and he beholds

the form of the Lord and he says he's not like the other prophets, if there's a prophet, verse 6, I make known myself to him in a vision or speak to him in a dream, I won't speak to him face to face in a vision or a dream but with Moses, I speak face to face. So Moses stood out even in that time in Israel, it's completely different from all the other prophets because he was faithful, verse 7, in God's house. You know, it's amazing the privileges God gives to those who seek to be faithful in the little things.

If you can hear God say something like that about us, all of us are called to serve in God's house, the church. I don't know when you read something like that whether you have a passion, say Lord, make me like Moses, not like these other prophets who speak about their dreams and visions today. Christendom is full of people who speak about dreams and visions and whatnot as if that is the greatest thing.

You know, the far greater thing is to speak to God face to face. In my younger days, in the early days of CFC, I used to also have dreams, occasional vision but I don't have that much nowadays. Nowadays I speak to God face to face and I see from this passage that this is far superior.

Don't be deceived by all these people who say that they had a dream or a vision and then somebody else is tempted to imagine a dream or a vision to force themselves to have a dream or vision. It's amazing how Christians are so blind to the ways of God, so clear. Moses is a way above these other prophets.

I want to show you a verse in Zechariah chapter 3. In Zechariah chapter 3, the Lord told Joshua the high priest, verse 6 and 7, thus says the angel of the Lord to Joshua, thus says the Lord of hosts, Zechariah 3 verse 7, if you will walk in my ways and if you will perform my service faithfully, you will rule over my house and you will have charge of my courts and listen to this, I will grant you free access into my presence with these angels who are here, you will be able to come in and out of my presence. Wow, what a privilege. The Lord says you won't be all like all those other people whom I just sent a message to, you will be able to come right up to my throne like these angels, walk in and out of my presence whenever you want to.

This is what it means to speak to the Lord mouth to mouth, face to face. And how did Moses get there? It was not something without testing. In fact, it says in Deuteronomy 34, Deuteronomy 34 verse 10, Deuteronomy 34 verse 10 it says that there was never a prophet since that time whom the Lord knew face to face like Moses.

No prophet has arisen in Israel like Moses. In a time, an old covenant time, he spoke face to face with God and new covenant privilege which millions of believers today don't have. Do you have it? Do you speak to the Lord face to face? Or do you just read the scriptures? Yeah, it's good to read the scriptures and God speaks to us through his word.

But if Moses could speak to God face to face, why can't we? The scriptures are given to challenge us. So like the Lord, I told you in the very first message how Jesus quoted the Old Testament examples and said, Queen of Sheba came to travel so much to listen to Solomon. Here, Jesus has come right up to you.

She will rise up in judgment. Someone greater than Solomon is here, he said about himself. So these examples in the Old Testament are meant to challenge us saying we are coming short, many of us are coming short of the privilege we have as sons and daughters of God to be able to live and speak with him face to face.

So I want to share with you a few things concerning Moses. First of all, you know, he was taken to Pharaoh's house when he was very young, probably seven or eight years old. I don't know what age he

was taken there.

But I think when he was able to take care of himself, till then his mother took care of him and his mother taught him so well about the ways of God in those first seven or eight years that it says here when Moses became 40 years old, Hebrews chapter 11, this is where we begin. When Moses came, when he was grown up, was 24, Hebrews 11, 24, by faith, Moses, when he was grown up, he acted in faith. This is the example of these men in Old Covenant times.

Though he was under the law, he lived by faith, by faith, even when he was in Pharaoh's palace, he made three decisions in faith. An example for all of us to follow. Number one, I will not seek the honor of this world.

To be in Pharaoh's palace and in line for the throne to be the next Pharaoh one year sometime later, that wasn't any greater honor on earth at that time. It's not even like being the president of a country. It's like being ruler of the most powerful country in the world, which was Egypt in those days.

And he gave it up. How many people would give it up? How many Christians would give up an opportunity to get honor in the world? Say, no, I don't want it. God's called me for something else.

In the history of Christian church, there have been some godly men like that, who gave up what they could have got in the world in order to fulfill God's purpose of their life. Every child of God should be like that, Lord, I don't want the honor of this world. To be Pharaoh's grandson is one of the greatest honors.

He said, no. The second thing he rejected, verse 25, was the pleasure of sin. The honor of this world and the pleasure of sin.

And if there was one place on earth at that time, 1500 years before Christ, where you could indulge in every single pleasure of sin, it was Pharaoh's palace. There are no morals and plenty of opportunity to commit whatever sin you want. Indulge yourself.

He said, no. All the others around him were indulging in those pleasures. He said, no, I will not do it.

I will not do it. And God was watching that by faith. He said no to the pleasures of sin.

And the third thing you read in verse 26, he rejected the treasures of Egypt. That's another thing that attracts so many believers, treasures and opportunity to get treasure. And here, he didn't have to earn it, he didn't have to fight for it.

He was born into it. There it was at his feet, he had to just pick it up. The treasures of Egypt.

He said no. So notice the three things that Moses rejected, the honor of the world, the pleasures of the world, and the wealth of the world. That's it.

The pride of life, that's the honor of the world. The lust of the flesh, that's the pleasures of the world. And the lust of the eyes, the desire to buy everything you see, that's what that lust of the eyes means.

The riches of this world. So what Moses rejected were the three things which 1 John 2 16 says is the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Moses was tempted like us.

And he said no. And what did he choose instead? That's interesting to see. He chose, verse 25, to suffer ill treatment with the people of God.

The people of God were slaves. He joined up with them. And he chose, verse 26, the reproach of the future Messiah coming up, the Christ.

Because the people of Israel were known as those who were being prepared for the coming of the Messiah. Because that was prophesied even in Genesis. And he said I'm living for that.

I'm living for the Messiah, the Christ that's going to come out of these people. So what he chose was something invisible. The Christ was to come in the future.

What he chose was reproach, which was right then. And this is our example. We choose the reproach of Christ.

We are told in Hebrews 13 that we should be willing to go outside the camp bearing his reproach in Hebrews 13 and verse 13. And we look forward to the reward in the future, the reward that is to come, the reproach of Christ until then, and willing to suffer ill treatment because we stand with God's people to be rejected, despised. I want to ask you, you know, you're living in a day when so many preachers are famous and well-known and they're considered the most popular person in their country and very famous.

And so many of those people mingle with presidents and rulers and all that. You desire all that? Jesus was rejected by every ruler of his day. So was Paul.

Not like today's preachers who are hanging around with the big shots of the world, who are all ungodly, by the way. So we're not here to judge them. The question is, do you want to be like that? Moses had the opportunity given to him and he rejected it.

He says, no, I'll stand with God's people. And when we stand with God's people, it says here, if we want to follow Christ, we saw that in Hebrews 13, we had to go outside the camp of this world, outside the wealth, honor and pleasure of this world and say, I don't want any of that. So it's because he made those choices that God took him out from Egypt and made him spend 40 years in the wilderness to break him.

Even a man like Moses had to be broken. And because he had a great ministry, he had to be prepared over a long period of time. 40 years it took for Moses to be broken.

And the end result was, like it says in Deuteronomy, there was no prophet that ever arose that was equal to Moses. But what was God trying to drive out of Moses? All the wisdom of Egypt that he had in his mind, he'd been trained in the best academies of Egypt. He'd learned how to build pyramids and all that had to be thrown out of his mind.

And the values of the world, and God took him to such a lowly task, the prince of Egypt ends up looking after sheep. God has his ways of training, which are very different from man's. Today people say, if you want to serve God, go to a Bible school.

God didn't send Moses to a Bible school, he sent him to be a shepherd, because what was needed for Moses to become a zero in his own eyes? He was an eloquent man, you know that? You read very clearly, let me show you that passage, it says in Acts chapter 7, that Moses was eloquent. Turn with me to Acts of the Apostles, chapter 7, Moses was educated, verse 22, in all the learning of the Egyptians, Acts 7,

22. In all, 100% of the learning of the Egyptians, Moses got that education, the best academies and universities of Egypt.

And that was the top place to study those days, it's like Harvard today. And he was on top of that, he was a very eloquent man, a powerful speaker, man of power and words, and also in action. Whatever action it was in those days, he could ride chariots and he could lead people into battle and all that.

He was learned and a man of power in words and in deeds. But one day when he saw one of the Israelites being ill-treated, he stood with him and said, I belong to these people. And God saw that decision he took, and God said, I know I have to take out all this wisdom of Egypt from you, all the things you've learned in Egypt have to go, I have to teach you my ways.

And that will not be in a Bible school, that will be by humbling you, making you look after sheep and breaking your strength. This is one of the big mistakes that Christendom has made, training people for God's service by sending them to a Bible school. Jesus never sent any of his disciples to a Bible school.

There was a strong Bible school in Jerusalem those days, run by a wonderful professor called Gamaliel. He seemed to be some type of godly Jew, read about him in Acts chapter five, chapter four and five. But he did not know the Lord.

There was a great scholar in his academy, his Bible college called Paul, Saul of Tarsus. He spent three years under Gamaliel. And when the Lord converted him, the Lord told him, I have to now send you for three years into the deserts of Arabia, read that in Galatians one, to take out all the chaff that Gamaliel has put into your head.

All that you learned in Bible school has to be taken out. Then you will come to the level of my other disciples who never went to a Bible school. So people who go to Bible school have to get all that chaff taken out of their head before they can serve the Lord.

That's the tragedy of Christendom today, that people come with all that education and intelligence to serve God. None of Jesus' disciples would have ever qualified to be a pastor today in most churches because they don't have any degrees. They never went to a Bible school.

You see how different it was in Jesus' day, how he trained his disciples to serve him compared to today and how foolish today's Christians are to think that to serve God, you go to a Bible school and get a degree. I thank God with all my heart that I never went to a Bible school or got any Bible college degree. So in the wilderness, God trained him and he meets with him face to face.

It begins in Exodus chapter three, where in the burning bush, he meets with Moses and he tells Moses, I'm choosing you to go out and serve me. And Moses says, Lord, I can't speak. You read that in Exodus chapter four, verse 10.

I'm slow of speech and slow of tongue, Exodus 4.10. What did we read in Acts 7, a man mighty in words, how did he suddenly become slow of speech and slow of tongue? Because 40 years in the wilderness, we're looking after sheep, 40 years of living with his father-in-law. I mean, one year living with your father-in-law is enough to humble most people. And God kept Moses 40 years living with his father-in-law.

And then he was thoroughly broken and says, now Moses, you're ready for my service. You've become a zero in your own eyes. Once you were mighty in words, now you feel you can't even speak.

In fact, he was so eager not to be the leader, it's one of the great qualities of truly godly men. They have no desire to be the leader. He said, Lois, please send somebody else.

That's what he says in Exodus 4.13. Please Lord, send somebody else. Don't send me. I'm not fit.

It's so different from many preachers today think, surely I'm the most qualified to be the leader and I'm most qualified to be the elder. And all the others are dumb people compared to me. I'm perfectly qualified.

Such people are totally unfit to serve God. They despise people like Moses. And yet Moses was the one who was truly qualified to serve God.

But I want you to see something here. God's told him, no, you're the one, you've got to go to Egypt. And on his way to Egypt, remember, this is the man who's been trained for 80 years.

The only man on earth available to deliver God's people from bondage. There was only one man. And on his way to Egypt, as he about to begin his ministry, you see these amazing words.

Exodus 4.24. On his way, the Lord met with Moses and tried to kill him as if the Lord takes as any problem killing anyone. It says the Lord sought to kill Moses. Amazing.

The one man on earth. The only man on earth who was fit to serve God at that time for that ministry. God puts him to death.

Wherever you get another man, you have to train another man for another 80 years. Why did God do that? Why does God deal like this with his servants? He calls him one moment and gives him supernatural power as he did all those miracles to him earlier on in the chapter. And then says, I'll kill you.

Why? Because Moses had not obeyed the law that God gave Abraham, that all your children must be circumcised. It's a small thing. Moses had two sons and he did not circumcise that one.

And his wife, who was not a Jew, not a descendant of Abraham, she obviously objected to this. We don't believe in circumcision. And he listened to his wife.

And that's why his son was not circumcised. And when Zipporah, his wife, Exodus 4, 25, saw her husband dying, maybe suffocating for breath and dying, she knew he was dying and she knew immediately why it was. Because I'm sure Moses and Zipporah had had many arguments.

We have to circumcise our son. We've got to circumcise our son. He said, no.

She said, no. No, nothing doing. And he yielded.

And finally, Zipporah herself took a flint, cut off her son's foreskin, and threw it at Moses' feet and said, you're a bridegroom of blood to me. See, like Job's wife, Zipporah was another very difficult woman. Moses was married to a difficult wife, just like Job.

But yet, he triumphed over it all. Not everybody has a wonderful life like Sarah, who called Abraham Lord. Some of these men had very difficult wives.

God uses both. And then it says in verse 26 of Exodus 4, God left him alone. So okay, now you can go.

What does that teach us? Early on, God meeting with him at the burning bush, the goodness of God, God's strictness here, the severity of God. Some people think God has met with me, he's anointed me, he's filled me with the Holy Spirit. He will not treat me.

He will not kill me now. Yes, he will. Behold, the goodness and the severity of God, you can't play the fool with him.

You can't take advantage of the fact that he's used you so much or he's anointed you so powerfully that now you can take it easy and relax and be careless in your conduct or careless in your attitude to sin or careless in your relationship with your fellow believers or become rude or arrogant. Oh, oh, it's happened to so many people, and they've lost the anointing of God. God hasn't killed them.

He just killed the anointing. And that's worse than dying. I'll tell you.

Many times I prayed to God, Lord, you take away anything from me, but don't take away my anointing of the Holy Spirit. I don't mind being paralyzed head to foot, but I will not give up the anointing of the Holy Spirit. And Moses didn't lose it because he was willing to pay the price.

He must have told Zipporah, come on, circumcise that boy immediately. So that's what we see here. He had made those decisions at the age of 40, but he also had to deal with disobedience in his own home.

And the other thing I want you to see here is that when Moses went on from there and became a leader, turn with me to Exodus chapter 32, you see a wonderful character of Moses here. Moses had been up in the mountain face to face with God for 40 days. Wonderful man of God.

And he came down here, we read in Exodus 32, and he saw these people worshiping the golden calf, and he burned with anger, and he broke that golden calf, and he was very strict. He broke the gold into, put it into the water and said, come on, you fellows, drink it now. And when God told him, I'm going to destroy these people, Exodus 32, the Lord said, I've seen this people, in Exodus 32, the Lord said to Moses in verse 7, go down at once, because your people have corrupted themselves.

Before he saw what actually happened, God told him, they made a golden calf, molten calf, and they made it their God, and they're worshiping that. God told that Moses to that, God told Moses that in the mountain. The Lord said, I've seen this people, and he says, let me alone, I will, my anger will burn against them, Exodus 32, 10, and I will make you a great nation.

It will not be the seed of Abraham anymore, it will be the seed of Moses. The nation of Israel will come from the seed of Moses, the seed of Abraham will be completely destroyed for worshiping the golden calf. And look at Moses' attitude, oh Lord, don't do that, the Egyptians will dishonor your name then.

Remember, verse 13, remember Isaac, Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, and verse 14, the Lord changed his mind. You see that Moses is a person who did not seek his own. If he was seeking his own, and Moses, God told him, you're going to be the head of the nation of Israel.

He said, well, Lord, that's fine, if you want to do that, you know, all people have this false humility, which is, oh, well, if you want me to take that task, I'll take it. They don't really, they're not really humble, acting humble, a lot of false humility among elders, among many of God's people, when they take a responsibility, they feel, yeah, yeah, I'm really qualified for this. Others are not qualified, but I am.

And that's the reason why God's anointing departs from so many of his people. I've seen with my own eyes, wonderful elder brothers started off so well, the anointing has gone from their life. Because they began to think that they were somebody, they thought, because I've been anointed for so long, God will continue to anoint me.

No, he will not, he will withdraw it. If you seek honor for yourself, if you esteem yourself as more important than other people, the Bible says very clearly in Philippians 2, verse 3 and 4, we are to esteem others as more important than ourselves, like Jesus, who washed the disciples' feet. He esteemed them as more important because that was the job of a slave.

He didn't consider them more spiritual, but he esteemed them as more important. And so Moses took that attitude, and I believe that's something very important to see that. You know, in Paul's time, you see something similar, if you turn with me to Philippians and chapter 2, Paul says about his co-workers, he says in Philippians 2, 19 to 21, I'm going to send Timothy shortly to you, Philippians.

The reason is, among all my co-workers who are here with me at the moment, I don't have anyone else, not even one, who will genuinely be concerned for your welfare, because Philippians 2, 21, everybody seeks their own interests, not those of Christ Jesus. Don't be so quick, my brother, sister, to say that you're seeking the interests of Christ. It may look like that.

People who don't have discernment in your church also think like that. That's fine. But you're fooling yourself.

God is not fooled, and the devil is not fooled either. And that's why you see that you're living in the anointing of the past. Anointing is not there today.

God's Word and His anointing and His freshness is not there in your life today. The reason, somewhere along the line, you shifted from seeking only Christ to seek your own. You wanted to promote yourself.

You wanted to be big in the eyes of others yourself. You wanted to be considered more important than your fellow elders or more important than some other brothers or some others. You wanted your church to be considered better than other churches, and God saw that.

You were not interested in making Christ preeminent. You were interested in making yourself preeminent. And if somebody appreciated you and said something good about you, and you gloried in that, wow, people appreciate me.

Godly people appreciate me, so I'm a great man. God sees that, and slowly the anointing departs. You know, the anointing doesn't depart suddenly, it's very important to see.

To be in Paul's team itself was such a wonderful privilege. I mean, if you were living in the first century, and Paul selected you to be in his team, he said, boy, I would have thought that's the greatest honor of all. And yet, in that team, there was only one man whom Paul could say, he does not seek his own.

Turn with me for a moment to the book of Ezekiel, where we read of the anointing departing slowly. Little by little, we read the anointing departed. It's Ezekiel chapter 10.

The cherubim was standing on the right side of the temple, verse three, and the glory of the Lord, Ezekiel 10, 4, went from the cherub to the gate threshold of the temple. And from there, it moved out, and slowly,

you read later on, moved completely away and went away. It was a glory slowly departing from Israel.

You read that in chapter 10, 11 and on. So I've seen that happen with some wonderful servants of God, some wonderful elder brothers in our churches. There was a time, there was an anointing upon them, but it went to their heads because God had used them or blessed them or given them great liberty in the preaching and leadership in the church.

And the anointing slowly, but they were not aware of it, the anointing departed. Others could see it. Maybe some of the understanding people in their church couldn't see it.

I could see it clearly. So I want to give you a warning that if you don't seek Christ's interest alone, that anointing can depart. Why did the anointing remain upon Moses? Because he did not seek his own.

God tested him. I'll make you the leader. He said, no, I want Israel to continue.

Don't let your name be dishonored. So join further with me and see, again, the same thing happened a second time in Numbers in chapter 14. This was another time where we read all the congregation of Israel, Numbers 14 and verse 1, were weeping and saying, why did the Lord bring us here, verse 3, to die here in verse 4? Let us appoint a leader and go back to Egypt.

And the Lord was angry with them and said in Numbers 14, verse 11, I want you to see Numbers 14, verse 11. How long will these people spurn me, the Lord said. They don't believe me in spite of all the miracles I've done for them.

I will smite them. And Moses, I'll make you into a nation greater than them. The second time, the Lord is saying, this is after about 40 years, the first time was earlier where we saw that.

Now the second time, and again, Moses said, no, Lord, please don't. The Egyptians will hear it. I don't want to be the great man of God here.

So please forgive them. It says, you know, Lord, it says in 18, the Lord is slow to anger, abundant in loving kindness. Please pardon the iniquity of your people, Lord, as you have forgiven them up until now.

Please pardon them. You know, Moses, Moses was so humble, he didn't want anything for himself. At one time, he said, Lord, you can block me out of your book if you like, but don't block them out.

Something like Paul saying in Romans 9, I'm willing to be a curse for the sake of God's people. See, these great men like Moses and Paul, they had the spirit of Christ. Christ was willing to go to hell on the cross for three hours to save people.

And imagine Moses in the Old Testament and Paul in the New Testament had that same spirit. What they were saying is, I'm willing to go to hell if your people can be saved. Block me out of your book.

I think you read that in Exodus 32 and Paul in Numbers chapter 9. Remove me, Lord, send me to hell, save these people. That's a height, which is very difficult, it's very easy for us to say it. I search my heart and say, Lord, I can't honestly say that.

I haven't come there yet to say, I'm willing to go to hell to save your people. Jesus had that spirit, Moses had that spirit, Paul had that spirit. It's a great height, but that is the height, you know, which we have to press on, not just to be a great preacher, my brother, not just to be well-known and accepted or a great

singer or a great preacher.

These are not the things that make, but likeness to Christ and likeness to Christ is to be willing to be cut off so that other people can be saved. It's an amazing height that Moses reached, and that's why God met with him. Turn back with me to that passage.

It says in Exodus 33, Exodus 33, Moses' prayer is in verse 18. I pray, Lord, you know, it says here, first of all, in verse 11, the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, like a man speaks to his friend. And then it says in verse 18, Moses said, Lord, I want to see your glory.

It's like the Lord asking Moses, can you tell me one thing you want? What do you ask? Greater anointing. No, he says, Lord, I want to see your glory. I want to see more of yourself.

And the Lord says, OK, you can't see my face and live, verse 20, but I will let my goodness pass before you. There you can see a little bit of a part of me, but you can't see my face because you can't see my face and live. He was quite a man, Moses, and I see that God was so delighted to have a servant like that at that time to serve him.

The other thing I want you to see in Moses' life, why he became, I'm showing you examples of a man who lived with a new covenant spirit in an old covenant time. The passage that we were looking at earlier, where he said, I want to please forgive them a second time. It was Numbers 14 when the congregation again wept.

We see something here, his reaction to criticism. Two examples. First of all, here in Numbers 14, when they said, let us go back to Egypt, it says here in Numbers 14, verse 5, Moses fell on his face.

You know, the people came up to him and said to him, Moses, you're a useless leader. You brought us out of Egypt and look at the condition today. He didn't reply.

He would not defend himself. He would let God defend him. It's a mark of a godly man.

Jesus was like that. He would not, when he was accused in the court, Pilate and the high priest and all, he didn't say anything. Moses was like that in the old covenant.

He just fell on his face and says, Lord, you deal with them. I want to show you one more example of that. You know, when Miriam, his sister, criticized him because he had married this non-Israeli woman in Numbers 12, verse 1. And said, Miriam and Aaron, these are the two brother and sister of Moses.

Sometimes, you know, you can despise someone who is your own relative whom God may be using more than you. Miriam and Aaron despised Moses, their own brother, and said, you think the Lord has only spoken through Moses, verse 2? Hasn't he spoken through the rest of us as well? And listen to these words. Never forget these words.

Numbers 12, verse 2, the last five words there. And the Lord heard it. Every time you speak against a called out servant of God, remember these words.

The Lord hears it. And he will deal with it. It says in Numbers 12, 3, Moses was very humble, more than any man on the face of the earth.

The humblest man on the face of the earth, they dared to speak against him. And Miriam was stricken with leprosy immediately. And how did she get healed? Moses pleads with the Lord and says in verse 13, oh, Lord, forgive her for speaking against me.

I forgive her. Heal her, I pray. What a spirit of forgiveness.

I find Christians today don't have this spirit of forgiveness when they hear somebody has spoken against them or done something against them. What I'm trying to say is some of these Old Testament people had far more of a new covenant spirit than thousands of believers today. What do I learn? What do we learn from that? Don't think that you've entered into the new covenant just because you understood the doctrine.

If you have the spirit of forgiveness, the spirit of humility, the spirit of seeking God's glory and not your own, then you've entered the new covenant, not otherwise. The other example, again, is number 16. Again, you find, you know, Moses faced a lot of rebellion in his ministry from the people of Israel.

And just like a true servant of God, just like Jesus faced a lot of opposition, and any true servant of God will face opposition and rebellion because God's people are the same. Even today, Paul says at the end of his life, all those who are in Asia have forsaken me. There are only a few are left because Paul stood so strongly for the truth that many people got offended with him.

And a true servant of God will stand for the truth in such a strong way that many will get offended with his strong standards. Well, so people got offended with Moses. And here we read in number 16 about Korah.

Now, Korah was a relative of Moses because he was the son of Israel, the son of Kohath from the same tribe of Levi. Moses was also from the tribe of Levi. And here was a person who was the grandson of Kohath, the great grandson of Levi.

And a close relative of Moses who was also a descendant of Levi. And this person, like Moses, like Aaron and Miriam earlier, they hadn't learned a lesson from what happened to Miriam. It's amazing how quickly God's people forget the way God judges other children of his.

They assembled together in number 16-3 and said to Moses, you've gone far enough. You think you're the only ones who are holy. We are all holy.

I find that attitude sometimes among Christians as well. The Lord is in our midst. You think the Lord is only with you.

Why do you exalt yourself? Number 16-3. What does Moses do? Standard procedure. Keep your mouth shut.

Fall on your face. I will not say anything. He says to Korah, tomorrow the Lord will show who's holy.

It's a very serious thing to speak against God's servants. Miriam got leprosy and got healed because Moses prayed for her. Here, because they opened their mouth and Korah, his whole family and the people who had joined with him in rebellion, it says the earth opened up in verse 32, number 16-32, and swallowed all of them up.

Moses had warned them, get away from there. Numbers 12, number 16, sorry, verse 23. Get back from the dwellings of Korah.

All of you don't stand with them. Don't stand with these rebels. And Dathan and Abiram did not listen to Moses.

But you know who listened to Moses? The sons of Korah. The sons of Korah, we read in numbers 26, did not die. Because they came out.

They listened to Moses and they came out. And later on, you read in the Psalms that these sons of Korah and their descendants wrote some of the Psalms. How thankful those people are that dad, the son of Korah, stood away, did not get swallowed up into hell, but stood with Moses.

That's a great example there of saying, I can imagine the sons of Korah telling their dad, Korah, dad, I'm not going to stand with you, sorry. I'm going to stand with God's man, Moses. You despise him because he's a relative of yours.

But he's the man I see the anointing on. I'll stand with him. And they saved their lives.

So we learned some wonderful lessons like this from the life of Moses, and I believe it's a great challenge to us. Now, I want to say one more thing here, and that's in the Numbers chapter 20. We read of a time when the children of Israel again started crying out for water.

And the glory of the Lord appeared there, it says in Numbers 20, verse 6. And the Lord said to Moses, OK, they're crying out for water. I'll give them water. Take your rod, Numbers 20, verse 8. And this time, don't smite the rod.

He didn't give them the reason. He didn't give. The Lord doesn't give us a reason sometimes why he tells us to do certain things.

We have a lust to know the reason. But sometimes he doesn't tell us the reason. There are times when he does.

There are many times he doesn't. But here he didn't tell the reason. Now we know the reason because the Holy Spirit reveals to us that the rock was a picture of Christ.

And in Exodus 17, the rock had to be smitten like Christ was smitten on the cross. But he does not have to be crucified a second time. So this time, the Lord told Moses, speak to the rock.

Don't hit it. Moses took the rod and he was angry. And it says here, in anger, he hit the rock not just once, but twice.

Verse 11. You know how the Holy Spirit describes that action of Moses? This great man of God who had already walked with God, with these Israelites for 40 years. It says in Psalm 106, God punished Moses and Psalm 106, verse 32 and 33.

Psalm 106, verse 32 and 33. It went hard with Moses because he spoke rashly with his lips. Psalm 106, 33.

And so because he spoke rashly, the water still came. The waters came out and God was merciful to those two million people who were thirsty. Even though his servant disobeyed him, the water came.

You know, sometimes people ask me this question. This preacher is disobeying God's word. This woman is not supposed to be a preacher, but she is preaching.

But I see God blessing the ministry. Does God bless disobedience? I say yes. He blesses the people who are to be blessed even though his servant is disobedient.

Did Moses obey God or not here? No, he disobeyed God outright disobedience. But did the waters flow? Sure. Not because God supported Moses, but because he loved the two million people.

But afterwards, he dealt with Moses. He said, Moses, come here. You will not enter the land of Canaan.

You read that further on when the Lord spoke to him. In the same chapter, because you're not believed in me, verse 12, you will not enter the land of Canaan immediately. As soon as he finished hitting the rock in verse 11, the Lord said, Moses, come here.

You and Aaron will not enter the land of Canaan. Moses had for 40 years, his greatest longing was to enter the promised land. And at the last minute, God stopped him.

Behold the goodness and the severity of God, to whom more is given, more is required. The children of Israel rebelled against God 10 times. And it was only the 10th time you read in Numbers chapter 14, you read there.

Nine times he forgave them, but the 10th time God said, you can't go in. But so he gave them nine chances. You read that in Numbers 14.

But Moses, God did not even give one chance. Did you get that? He gave the Israelites nine chances. The 10th time he said no.

Moses, he didn't even give one chance. When he disobeyed, he said, no, you're not going to enter the land of Canaan. And that's a warning to us, to whom more is given, more will be required.

And but we see the mercy of God. I see something of the loving kindness of God to his faithful servant. That though he punished him there as a warning to all those Israelites, if God had spared Moses there, the people of Israel thought, oh, well, because he's a servant of God, God ignores this disobedience.

No, he doesn't. Behold the goodness and the severity of God. I want to say to you, if you're an elder in a church, God will judge you by a far higher standard than if you're just a member in that church.

To whom more is given, more is required. But I see the goodness of God here to Moses in the sense that finally, 1500 years later, 1500 years later, he allowed Moses to enter the land of Canaan and to stand with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration. Wonderful.

How good God is. There is severity and there is goodness. So God doesn't spare his servants, but he punishes them and then does good to them.

How many chances did he give to Moses? Not even one. To the Israelites, numbers 22 and 23, nine chances. The 10th time he said no.

I want to show you one more verse now. Psalm 103. It's a beautiful verse.

Psalm 103 and verse 7. This looks like an old covenant, new covenant difference. Psalm 103 verse 7. God made known his ways, his inner reasons and workings to Moses, but only his external actions to the children of Israel. The children of Israel could only see the manna falling down, the snake, the serpent, bronze serpent healing their snake bites, water coming out of the rock, all these external actions.

But God took Moses into his mind on the mountain. He revealed his ways. Moses, this is why, this is how I am.

You know, in Isaiah chapter 55, God says, my ways are not your ways. My thoughts are not your thoughts. But as the heavens are above the earth, so my ways are above your ways.

Isaiah chapter 55 and verse 8 and 9. God says, my ways are higher than your ways as the heavens are above the earth. And those ways God revealed to Moses, but he did not reveal it to the Israelites. The Israelites only saw the actions and they got excited with the miracles and so many wonderful things.

Today you find God, there are two types of people among God's people today. Some were only interested in the actions, dreams and visions and miracles and all these external actions of God. They know nothing about God's ways.

But if you're interested in knowing God's ways, he will reveal the new covenant to you. You see that beautiful verse in Psalm 25, which says, verse 14, the secret of the Lord is with those who fear him. Because Moses feared God, God revealed his secret to him.

He doesn't reveal his secrets to anybody. You know, we speak openly with everyone. But when we have a real secret, we whisper it to those who are very close to us.

And that's how Moses was. He was very close to God. He spent time alone with God.

In fact, it says his face shone as he spent time with God and God revealed his secrets. He made known his ways to Moses. Now, the reason I'm saying all this is there was a new covenant life in an old covenant man in his relationship with God.

Yeah, he made mistakes. God punished him for it. But he was such an outstanding servant of God.

Like we read, there was no prophet that arose. Since that time, like Moses, he experienced God's goodness and his severity. And I believe this is a challenge to us as we approach the end of time to be a true servant of God, not to take advantage of God's goodness.

Let me read one verse to you in closing. Please turn with me to 1 Corinthians in chapter 9. 1 Corinthians in chapter 9 and verse, Paul says in verse 27, I discipline my body and I make it my slave. Otherwise, after I have preached to others, I myself will be disqualified.

Say, Paul, are you going to be disqualified after serving the Lord so faithfully? Moses was not allowed in the 40 years of faithfulness in the wilderness, not allowed to enter Canaan. God is good and he's strict. He must never forget that.

And Paul knew that. So he says, I discipline my body. So if you want to avoid disqualification, follow Paul's example.

Discipline your eyes. Discipline your tongue, particularly eyes and tongue. Very, very important.

That's what we learned from Moses' example. Mightily used, yet slipping up at the last moment. He slipped up in the beginning, not circumcising his son.

God almost killed him there. Towards the end of his life, he slipped up and said, God said, you're not going to enter Canaan. Paul remembers that and he says, I discipline my body and make my body my slave.

I don't let my body run away with its passions. Passion for sex, uncontrolled eating, passion for food, undisciplined sleeping, passion, laziness. I do not allow my body to run my life.

I make my body my slave. I make my body do what it should do, not what it wants to do. Like it's paraphrased in the Living Bible.

Otherwise, I can be disqualified. And it doesn't matter who you are, my brother or sister. If you don't discipline your body, you can be disqualified too.

If Paul could be, you and I can be. But very important that we don't take advantage of God's goodness. Let's live in the fear of God.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, as we bow before you, we pray that you will give us a reverence for you, a hunger to have the type of life these godly men came into. Even though they didn't have the understanding of scripture that we have today.

They had a heart for you. Give us a heart like that, Lord. And help us not to deceive ourselves just because we know much more than them in head knowledge.

Give us a heart that longs after you like Moses had. We pray in Jesus name. Amen.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/tcNUk7QoZ1c.mp4>

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