

Tuesday 24th November

Numbers 16: 1-15

Key Verse 16:15

In this verse Moses reacts in an uncharacteristic way.

I've already told the story of Luke continually undoing his baby seat belts in the car despite ongoing reproach from Mum, Dad and even siblings! Eventually I got angry, stopped the car and well, let's just say I didn't spare the rod!

'Then Moses became very angry.'(v15) What was it that tipped the balance for this humble man who previously had remained silent when Aaron and Miriam opposed him until when he eventually did speak; it was to pray for Miriam's healing!!

Leadership means having responsibility for those being led! Something Moses never felt up to in the first place but he was God's man for the job. Here he shows he is just flesh and blood like the rest of us and he explodes with anger!

Moses is blamed personally that they had not entered the Promised Land though the choice had been the people's!! Then he is accused of 'lording it over them'. The last time he was accused of this was in Ex 2: 14 after he'd killed the Egyptian slave driver. It resulted in Moses spending 40 years in the wilderness (see Acts 7:27) and here he was again facing another 40 years!! No wonder he was angry. Moses had been careful not to 'lord it over them' but was doing his best to discharge his God given duties.

Peter, no doubt, had Moses in mind when he outlined God's style of leadership in his letter to the church (1Peter 5:1-4 esp. v 3)

Moses would also have been annoyed that Dathan and Abiram refused his offer to come to meet with him.

Such leadership is tough. Moses had displayed so much patience with the people in his care that clearly didn't see that the situation they found themselves in was of their own making!

There is no case here to justify a kind of tyrannical leadership demanding unquestioning submission. Neither is there prohibition against ever questioning our leaders. Whatever we do, whether those leading or those being led, must be done in accordance with God's word and in a manner befitting Christ.

Along with Moses, consider Abraham, David, Peter and Paul. In fact, think of any leader in the Bible and we will find human failure. We are all familiar with failure but with God failure isn't final! Repentance and a new spirit offers a fresh opportunity to live for him in love and obedience.

'Success is stumbling from failure to failure with no loss of enthusiasm.' Winston Churchill.

James Dyson had 5,126 attempts to invent a bag less vacuum cleaner. (i.e. 5,125 failures!)