

## **THE FAILURES OF THE LEADER**

### **PSALM 106:32-33 (Numbers 20:1-13)**

Introduction:

The psalmist provides this inspired commentary on a strange Old Testament incident—the fall of Moses and Aaron. It comes in a psalm where the sins of the nation are confessed and the mercy of the Lord is sought. This psalm is identified as one of the penitential psalms—one used to seek the saving mercy of the Lord when you have sinned.

Since we occupy places of leadership, this fall of the Moses and his brother should be of interest to us. Without doubt it is included in the sacred record for our warning. Each of us should feel our vulnerability before the Lord.

You are probably familiar with the incident. It happened in the first month of the year—a time when the people should have been focused on their great deliverance from Egypt. They rearranged their calendars so that the New Year began with their deliverance from the bondage of Pharaoh. However, it was in this same month that Moses suffered a great personal loss—the death of Miriam. She had not only been there for him as a child when she hid him in the Nile; she had also borne some of the burden of the leading the people. She and Aaron and Moses had been a trusted trio of leaders for forty years,

even though Moses was always viewed as the appointed leader. It must have brought grief and a sense of loss to Moses.

The failure came in the midst of an attempt to obey the Lord and meet the needs of the people. It did not happen like the failure of David who failed while taking a reprieve from the pressures of leading the nation. Moses and Aaron failed on the job.

We probably would not spend so much time on the incident if God had not taken it so seriously. It blocked Moses and Aaron from ever realizing the dream of their lives, from finishing the task God had entrusted to them. We must gain a better understanding of this incident.

## I. LEADERS ARE VULNERABLE TO FAILURE.

### 1. Because they are still human.

To be human means that grief still hurts. To suffer such a loss is to lose some of your inner spiritual strength.

To be human means that you have severe limitations.

### 2. Because of the drain the spiritual condition of the people makes on them.

### 3. Because of the power of indwelling sin.

## II. LEADERS ARE ACCOUNTABLE FOR FAILURES.

1. They are held to a higher standard.

2. Their failures do more harm.

### III. LEADERS ARE THE GREATEST LOOSERS WHEN THEY FAIL.

1. God blesses the people in spite of the leader's failure.

2. God withdraws privileges because of the leader's failure.

The fall of a leader should humble all of us. "Let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall."

How can I prevent such a record of failure?

1. Always be aware of my vulnerability.

2. Always be careful in my obedience.

3. Always guard against the expressions of my fallen human nature.

4. Always remember the congregation belongs to God—not me.

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