

Moses Wasn't Complaining

To our modern sensibilities, it just does not seem fair. Moses had been a great leader. Then one day, he let his temper get the better of him and did one wrong thing. In **Numbers 20**, the Israelites were complaining again. They had been delivered by the Lord repeatedly, but still they complained, "Would that we had perished when our brothers perished before the Lord!" (**vs. 3**, ESV).

In **vs. 8**, God told Moses to take his rod and Aaron and go "tell the rock before their eyes to yield its water" (ESV).

Despite God's clear instruction, Moses did not speak to the rock, he struck it. God responded in **vs. 12**, "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" (ESV).

We know the rest of the story. In **Deuteronomy 34**, Moses went to the mountaintop, was allowed to see the Promised Land, and then died before the Lord without entering Canaan or enjoying its fruit.

That does not seem fair. One mistake and no Promised Land. However, though Moses faced consequences for his sin, he did not face eternal damnation. He was forgiven. Moses learned from God's chastening and clearly repented.

Fast forward about 1500 years to the next time we see Moses. In **Matthew 17:3**, Moses appeared to Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration. Do you think he was complaining about never living in Canaan? Keep in mind, he had spent the previous 1500 years in the presence of God in paradise. I do not think Moses was complaining.

We often have a skewed view of what is fair and what is important on this side of death. However, when we enter eternity our perception will clear up.

On this side of death, we get upset about facing consequences of sin, thinking it is somehow not fair. We are upset for the person who has to remain single or get out of an unlawful marriage because of past sin. We think it is unfair when someone got pregnant or caught a disease the one time they committed immorality. We wonder why God lets the one who got drunk only once have a car wreck and lose their legs. To us it just does not seem fair. We especially have trouble seeing someone who was forgiven but is still facing sin's consequences.

What we must remember is the one who learns from God's chastening instead of complaining about how unfair it is will live through eternity with God. I venture to say no matter how unfair we thought things were here, when we enter heaven, we will not be complaining anymore. As **Romans 8:18** says, we will learn that heaven is worth it all.

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