

A Leader Sins

Psalm 106:24-33 says,

24 Then they despised the pleasant land; they did not believe His promise.

25 They grumbled in their tents and did not obey the LORD.

26 So He swore to them with uplifted hand that He would make them fall in the desert,

27 make their descendants fall among the nations and scatter them throughout the lands.

28 They yoked themselves to the Baal of Peor and ate sacrifices offered to lifeless gods;

29 they provoked the LORD to anger by their wicked deeds, and a plague broke out among them.

30 But Phinehas stood up and intervened, and the plague was checked.

31 This was credited to him as righteousness for endless generations to come.

32 By the waters of Meribah they angered the LORD, and trouble came to Moses because of them;

33 for they rebelled against the Spirit of God, and rash words came from Moses' lips.

Moses wanted one thing that God would not give him: the privilege of entering the Promised Land. You'll remember that Moses had sinned against the Lord and therefore was not permitted to go into Canaan (Numbers 20). He brought the nation right up to the border and then had to go up on the mountain and die.

The Israelites were partly to blame for Moses' sin. ***“By the waters of Meribah they angered the LORD, and trouble came to Moses because of them; for they rebelled against the Spirit of God, and rash words came from Moses' lips.”*** (verses 32-33). Moses and Aaron asked God for water for the thirsty people, and He said, "Speak to the rock, and the water will come out." But Moses lost his temper – the people provoked him – and he struck the rock. He added to what God had commanded him to do. God gave them the water, but He said to Moses, ***"You have not sanctified me before the people in what you said or in what you did."***

Leaders sin, and sometimes God's people encourage them to sin. If only the Israelites had gone to Moses and said, "Moses, we are praying for you," "Moses, we love you," or, "Thank you, Moses, for interceding for us. Thank you for all that you've done for us." But instead they complained and criticized. My heart goes out to elders and Christian workers who are surrounded by people who cannot say thank you but constantly criticize and complain.

Many people don't realize the costs of being a spiritual leader. The higher one is in leadership, the greater becomes one's discipline. If Moses had been an ordinary citizen of Israel, God might not have stopped him from going into the Promised Land. But Moses was a leader. When leaders sin, they pay dearly for it. Let's not cause anyone else to sin today. Be an encouragement to the people of God.

The sin of a leader can cause widespread damage. Take special measures to avoid compromising situations and don't let others cause you to take your eyes off the Lord. Also, always pray for, encourage and support your leaders.