

COMMUNITY CONTENDER

I TIMOTHY 2:15

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GOD'S KIND OF LEADER

EXODUS 32

PASTOR JON STOCKTON

Leading the Hebrews was arduous, to say the least, and being a spiritual leader for Christ has many similarities. Exodus 32 recounts a rough time for Moses, the leader of God's people. After receiving the Law of God, he was sent down to deal with the people, who had "corrupted themselves" (v. 7). Moses recognized the great paradox that was occurring: in the very hours God entrusted the Tables, the "work of God" and "the writing of God" to His people, they were violating it! Moses threw down the Tables in disgust, for they were of no effect to this crowd! How he must have despised this sin, and perhaps, the sinners! The intense distaste that Moses held for the wickedness of God's people was manifest in his response: he "ground to powder" the golden idol, and fed it to the transgressors (v. 20). Moses famously asked, "Who is on the Lord's side? Let him come unto me." He separated the clean from the unclean, and made no concessions for sin. He openly declared to the people that they had "sinned a great sin" (vv. 30-31).

In the midst of all the personal betrayal and spiritual rebellion that Moses experienced, he exhibited a spiritual character trait necessary in leaders of churches and homes today. Was it this facet of Moses' character, more than all the others, which endeared him to the very heart of God the Father, and caused Him to speak to Moses "face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend?" (Exodus 33:11). This heavenly attribute is "selflessness."

The selflessness of Moses is first seen by his humble intercession. When the people had done their worst, Moses went to the Lord on their behalf. Their sin was against the Lord, but it also was a personal affront to Moses, their leader. They had gone against his earthly leadership, and questioned him personally: "As for this Moses . . . we wot not

what is become of him" (v. 1). While many leaders might wallow in self-pity, or become indignant, Moses interceded on behalf of those who were an offense to him. This is a Christ-like quality: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).

Dwell a little on the man Moses as he toiled back up that steep mountain. He must have wondered in dismay at the events he'd just witnessed. He began, in v. 31, to make atonement for the people. Notice, it was "their" sin, for which Moses would plead. A selfless intercessor must have a clear conscience before the Holy God. In v. 30, Moses' use of "per-adventure" indicates that he was hesitant to even venture such a plea, guilty as they were! He was not quite sure that the merciful Lord would forgive so severe a transgression. But, perhaps in the very place where Moses had received the Tables engraved by the finger of God, he entreated the Lord for the sinners below: "Yet now, if Thou wilt forgive their sin-" (v. 32). Two "dashes" are recorded in Scripture, showing the incompleteness of Moses' question. He paused. The length of his pause is unknown – but it tells of the spirit of Moses being so overcome that he could not go on. He left his plea unfinished. Then he began to consider the people, and of the penalty that must accompany their sin. Moses realized that the Lord might not forgive! He might bring judgment on the people, and He would be just to do so!

Second, Moses' selflessness was demonstrated by his identification. He changed his focus from "their sin," to the removal of his own name from God's "book" (vv. 32-33). Moses was willing to identify with a people who had turned their back on God. This was not to throw in with their rebellion, but to be an advocate before the Judge. This is "advanced intercession." Though Moses was righteous as he descended from

Mount Sinai, he was willing to condescend to their level, not putting himself above their base position (v. 32 – "blot me"). Moses was willing to lose the freedom he had because of his righteousness, because of his great love for others. Does this sound familiar? It should! The Lord Jesus condescended for all of mankind. "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men" (Philippians 2:6-7). Of course, Moses did not limit his own power in the same way that the Lord Jesus did, for he never possessed that power, nor did he own "equality with God." But Moses did lovingly offer to lose a free and clear standing to identify with a sinful, needy people. He could have stood above them in judgment, but instead he stooped with them in jeopardy. Just as Moses' intercession, this identification is ineffectual when not proceeding from a righteous life. Are you living a righteous life? Would your selfless identification with those in sin cause the Lord to withhold His hand of judgment?

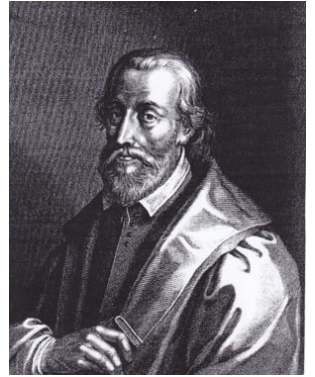
Sin is not to be excused, and Moses did not, but in fact exposed and punished it. He decried sin publicly, but privately, before the Lord, he identified with the sinners. Here are some final assertions about "God's kind of leader:"

- I. He must lead a righteous life.
- II. He must be humble when opposed, whether or not the opposition is legitimate.
- III. He must not take to heart wrong attitudes against himself.
- IV. He must not hesitate to condemn sin.
- V. He must recognize that the Lord dispenses judgment and mercy in equal amounts.
- VI. He must have sacrificial love for others, especially those in his immediate care.

A GOODLY HERITAGE:

Consider the perspective of **John Rogers** who translated and compiled the Matthew's Bible (1537). He was martyred for his open testimony by the Catholic church. His ten children and wife stood by to comfort him as he was burned at the stake. He penned these words in the dungeon before his burning for a tribute to his family:

Give ear my children to my words, Whom God hath dearly bought,
Lay up his laws within your heart and print them in your thoughts.
I leave you here a little book for you to look upon,
That you may see your father's face when he is dead and gone:
Who for the hope of heavenly things, While he did here remain,
Gave over all his golden years to prison and to pain.
Where I, among my iron bands, inclosed [sic] in the dark,
Not many days before my death, I did compose this work:
And for example to your youth, to whom I wish all good,
I send you here God's perfect truth and seal it with my blood. ...
Abhor that arrant whore of ROME and all her blasphemies,
And drink not of her cursed cup, obey not her decrees.
Give honor to your mother dear, remember well her pain,
And recompence [sic] her in her age with the like love again. ...
Beware of foul and filthy lust, let such things have no place,
Keep clean your vessels in the LORD, that he may you embrace.
Ye are the temples of the LORD, for you are dearly bought,
And they that do defile the same, shall surely come to nought [sic].
Be never proud by any means, build not your house too high,
But always have before your eyes, that you are born to die. ...
Seek first, I say, the living GOD, and always him adore,
And then be sure that he will bless, your basket and your store.
And I beseech Almighty GOD, replenish you with grace,
That I may meet you in the heavens, and see you face to face. ...
Though here my body be adjudg'd in flaming fire to fry,
My soul I trust, will straight ascend to live with GOD on high.
What though this carcass [sic] smart awhile, that though this life decay,
My soul I hope will be with GOD, and live with him for aye.
I know I am a sinner born, from the original,
And that I do deserve to die by my fore-father's fall:
But by our SAVIOUR'S precious blood, which on the cross was spilt,
Who freely offer'd up his life, to save our souls from guilt;
I hope redemption I shall have and all who in him trust,
When I shall see him face to face, and live among the just.
Why then should I fear death's grim look since CHRIST for me did die,
For King and Caesar, rich and poor, the force of death must try.
When I am chained to the stake, and fagots girt me round,
Then pray the LORD my soul in heaven may be with glory crown'd.
Come welcome death the end of fears, I am prepar'd to die:
Those earthly flames will send my soul up to the Lord on high.
Farewell my children to the world, where you must yet remain;
The LORD of hosts be your defence [sic], 'till we do meet again.
Farewell my true and loving wife, my children and my friends,
I hope in heaven to see you all when all things have their end.
If you go on to serve the LORD, as you have now begun,
You shall walk safely all your days, until your life be done.
GOD grant you so to end your days, as he shall think it best,
That I may meet you in the heavens, where I do hope to rest.



HIS EYE IS ON THE SPARROW:

Early in the **spring of 1905**, my husband and I were sojourning in Elmira, New York. We contracted a deep friendship for a couple by the name of Mr. and Mrs. Doolittle—true saints of God. Mrs. Doolittle had been bedridden for nigh twenty years. Her husband was an incurable cripple who had to propel himself to and from his business in a wheel chair. Despite their afflictions, they lived happy Christian lives, bringing inspiration and comfort to all who knew them. One day while we were visiting with the Doolittles, my husband commented on their bright hopefulness and asked them for the secret of it. Mrs. Doolittle's reply was simple: "His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me." The beauty of this simple expression of boundless faith gripped the hearts and fired the imagination of Dr. Martin and me. The hymn "His Eye Is on the Sparrow" was the outcome of that experience.

Dr. and Mrs. Civilla Martin

Why should I feel discouraged, why should the shadows come,
Why should my heart be lonely, and long for heaven and home,
When Jesus is my portion? My constant friend is He:
His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me;
His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me.

I sing because I'm happy,
I sing because I'm free,
For His eye is on the sparrow,
And I know He watches me.

"Let not your heart be troubled," His tender word I hear,
And resting on His goodness, I lose my doubts and fears;
Though by the path He leadeth, but one step I may see;
His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me;
His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me.

Whenever I am tempted, whenever clouds arise,
When songs give place to sighing, when hope within me dies,
I draw the closer to Him, from care He sets me free;
His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me;
His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me.

MEMORY CORNER:

"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in the time of need."
Hebrews 4:16

"Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food."
Job 23:12

"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver."
Proverbs 25:11

FROM THE KITCHEN OF PASTOR DAVID:

HOMEMADE CHILI*

- 1 can black beans
- 1 large can kidney beans
- 2 cans tomato sauce
- 2 cans diced tomatoes
- 1 chopped yellow onion
- 3 tablespoons minced garlic
- 2 tablespoons chili powder
- 1 1/2 teaspoons ground cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 2 pounds browned pork sausage (mild or spicy)

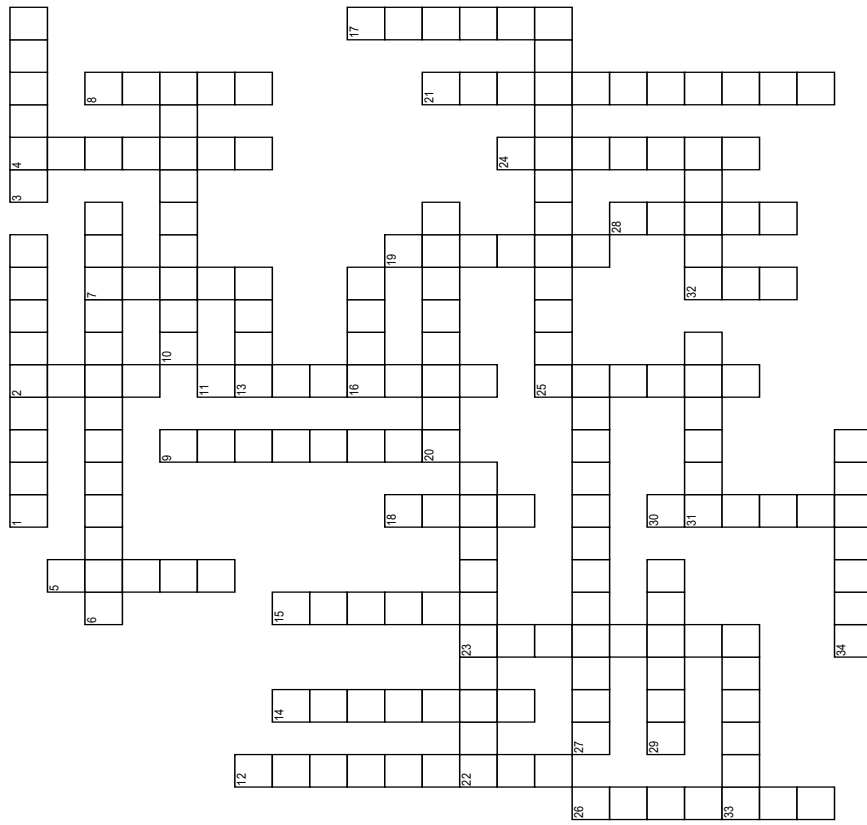
Combine ingredients in crock pot.
Cook on medium heat for four hours.
Serve with shredded cheddar cheese.

*Adapted from Betty Crocker

MARCH BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES:

- Chad and Lisa Love-1
- Dave Bartholomew-2
- Levi Oman-5
- Dan Wargo-7
- Rick and Peggy Hendricks-8
- Abigail Narvaez-8
- Jarod Parise-11
- Marion Henderson-12
- Kathryn Schlosser-16
- Dana Palermo-16
- Tamar Oman-17
- Jessica Love-17
- Jim Makin-18
- Bill and Nancy Gotwals-18
- Josie Gonzales-18
- Rich and Kristen Prue-20
- Ed and Nancy Kerver-21
- Chloe Parise-22
- Amanda Stockton-23
- Joshua Rowland-24
- Joy Vail-24
- Laura McGonigal-27
- KC Stoddard-28
- Elias Bell-30

Old Testament Books



Make your own crossword puzzles! Try a free demo at www.CrosswordWeaver.com

ACROSS

- 1 Begins with Z, ends with H, but has an "F" in it
- 3 Israelite prophet after Moses
- 6 Musical tune of David's son
- 10 Haggai contemporary
- 13 Married Boaz
- 16 Brought back exiles from Captivity
- 20 Three K's in this name
- 22 After Kings
- 25 Middle book of Old Testament
- 27 Mournings
- 29 Played with lions in a den
- 31 Prophet that found David
- 32 Swallowed by a whale

DOWN

- 2 Prophesied of famine to hear God's word
- 4 Only one chapter; means servant of the Lord
- 5 In the days of King Uzziah
- 7 A Jonah and Nahum sandwich
- 8 Consoler
- 9 Right before book of mournings
- 11 Wise sayings
- 12 Third book in the Bible
- 14 1,2,3,4,5,6,7
- 15 Sounds like Haggai
- 17 Exit (Leave)
- 18 Rhymes with coal
- 19 Preside over a court (pl.)
- 21 Book of the Law of Moses
- 23 Name means comfort of the Lord; sequel to Ezra
- 24 Last O.T. book
- 25 Mordecai's daughter
- 26 Visions of bones book; name means God will strengthen
- 28 Monarchical rulers of nations
- 30 Songs of David
- 32 Lord took all he had, cursed him, then gave everything back

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