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“Taste and See That Jehovah Is Good”

(Psalm 34:8)

1. Our service to God we cherish;
We value our priv’lege to preach.
We buy out the time and give God our best,
For many we still need to reach.

(CHORUS)

*God’s Word invites us: ‘Come taste and see—
See that Jehovah is good.’
Godly devotion brings greatest gain,
We know we’ve done all we could.*

2. For those in the full-time service,
Rich blessings and treasures abound.
By trusting in God to care for our needs,
In all things contentment is found.

(Chorus)

Seek Meekness and Please Jehovah

“Seek Jehovah, all you meek ones of the earth . . . Seek meekness.”—ZEPH. 2:3.

SONG 80

“Taste and See That Jehovah Is Good”

PREVIEW

None of us are born meek. We must develop meekness. We may find that we can be meek when dealing with peaceful people, but we may find it difficult to remain meek when confronted by proud individuals. This article will discuss some challenges we may have to overcome in order to develop the beautiful quality of meekness.

THE Bible describes Moses as being “by far the meekest of all the men on the face of the earth.” (Num. 12:3) Does this mean that he was weak, indecisive, and afraid of confrontations? That is how some might describe a meek person. But such an idea is far from the truth. Moses was a strong, decisive, and courageous servant of God. With Jehovah’s help, he confronted the mighty ruler of Egypt, led perhaps 3,000,000 people through a desert, and helped the nation of Israel conquer their enemies.

² We do not face the challenges that Moses overcame, but each day we must deal with people or situations that make it difficult to be meek. However, we have a powerful incentive to develop this quality. Jehovah promises that “the meek will possess the earth.” (Ps. 37:11) Would you describe yourself as being meek? Would others describe you that way? Before we can answer those important questions, we need to know what it means to be meek.

1-2. (a) How is Moses described, and what did he do? (b) What incentive do we have to develop meekness?

WHAT IS MEEKNESS?

³ Meekness* is like a beautiful painting. In what way? Just as an artist combines a number of appealing colors to produce a painting, we must combine a number of appealing qualities to be meek. Prominent among those qualities are humility, submissiveness, mildness, and inner strength. Why do we need those particular qualities if we want to please Jehovah?

⁴ Only **humble** people will submit to God's will. Part of God's will is that we be **mild**. (Matt. 5:5; Gal. 5:23) When we do God's will, we make Satan furious. So even though we are humble and mild, many people who are part of Satan's world hate us. (John 15:18, 19) As a result, we need **inner strength** to resist Satan.

⁵ The opposite of a meek person is someone who is haughty, shows uncontrolled anger, and does not obey Jehovah. That describes Satan perfectly. No wonder

* **EXPRESSIONS EXPLAINED: Meekness.** People who are meek are gentle when dealing with others and remain mild-tempered even when provoked. **Humility.** People who are humble are free of pride or arrogance; they view others as being superior to them. When referring to Jehovah, humility means that he deals with those who are inferior to him in a loving and merciful manner.

3-4. (a) To what can meekness be likened? (b) What four qualities do we need if we are to be meek, and why?

5-6. (a) Why does Satan hate meek people? (b) What questions will we answer?

he hates meek people! They expose the flaws in his personality. And even worse for Satan, they prove that he is a liar. Why? Because no matter what he says or does, he cannot stop meek people from serving Jehovah!—Job 2:3-5.

⁶ When might we find it a challenge to be meek? And why should we continue to seek meekness? To answer those questions, we will review the example set by Moses, three Hebrew captives in Babylon, and Jesus.

WHEN IS IT A CHALLENGE TO BE MEEK?

⁷ **When given authority:** It can be a challenge for those who have authority to remain meek, especially when someone they oversee treats them disrespectfully or questions their judgment. Has that ever happened to you? What if a family member acted that way? How would you respond? Consider how Moses dealt with that situation.

⁸ Jehovah appointed Moses as leader of Israel and allowed him to record the laws that governed that nation. There was no doubt that Jehovah was backing Moses. Even so, Moses' own sister and brother, Miriam and Aaron, spoke against him and questioned his judgment in choosing his wife. Some men in Moses' position might have become angry and vengeful—but

7-8. How did Moses respond when he was treated without respect?

not Moses. He did not become offended easily. He even pleaded with Jehovah to end the punishment of Miriam. (Num. 12:1-13) Why did Moses react that way?

⁹ Moses had allowed himself to be trained by Jehovah. Some 40 years earlier, when he was a member of the Egyptian royal family, Moses was not meek. In fact, he had been so quick-tempered that he killed a man who he judged was acting unfairly. Moses assumed that Jehovah would agree with his actions. Jehovah spent 40 years helping Moses to understand

9-10. (a) What did Jehovah help Moses to understand? (b) What can family heads and elders learn from Moses?

Moses pleaded with Jehovah to end the punishment of Miriam
(See paragraph 8)



that he needed more than courage to lead the Israelites; he needed to be meek. And to be meek, he also needed to be humble, submissive, and mild. He learned that lesson well and became an excellent overseer.—Ex. 2:11, 12; Acts 7:21-30, 36.

¹⁰ Today, family heads and elders do well to imitate Moses. When treated disrespectfully, do not become easily offended. Humbly acknowledge any faults you have. (Eccl. 7:9, 20) Submissively follow Jehovah’s direction on how to handle problems. And always answer mildly. (Prov. 15:1) Family heads and overseers who respond that way please Jehovah, promote peace, and set an example of how to be meek.

¹¹ **When persecuted:** Throughout history, human rulers have persecuted Jehovah’s people. They may charge us with various “crimes,” but the real issue is that we choose to “obey God as ruler rather than men.” (Acts 5:29) We might be ridiculed, imprisoned, or even physically mistreated. With Jehovah’s help, however, we will not retaliate but will remain mild throughout the test.

¹² Consider the example that three Hebrew exiles—Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah—set for us.* The

* The Babylonians gave these three Hebrews the names Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.—Dan. 1:7.

11-13. What example did three Hebrews set for us?

king of Babylon commanded them to bow down to a large image of gold. Mildly, they explained to the king why they would not worship the image. They remained submissive to God despite the king's threat to burn them in a blazing furnace. Jehovah chose to save those men immediately, but they did not presume that he would do that for them. Rather, they were willing to accept whatever outcome Jehovah would permit. (Dan. 3:1, 8-28) They proved that meek people are truly courageous—no king, no threat, and no punishment can break our resolve to give Jehovah our “exclusive devotion.”—Ex. 20:4, 5.

¹³ When our loyalty to God is tested, how can we imitate the three Hebrews? We humbly trust that Jehovah will care for us. (Ps. 118:6, 7) We answer those who accuse us of wrongdoing in a mild, respectful manner. (1 Pet. 3:15) And we absolutely refuse to compromise our friendship with our loving Father.

¹⁴ **When dealing with stress:** All of us feel stress for a variety of reasons. We may have felt it before taking a test at school or performing a particular task at work. Or we become stressed just thinking about a medical procedure we might need. When we are under stress, it is difficult to be meek. Incidents that normal-

14-15. (a) What can happen when we are under stress? (b) According to Isaiah 53:7, 10, why can we say that Jesus is the most outstanding example of someone showing meekness under stress?



When others oppose us, we answer in a respectful manner
(See paragraph 13)

ly do not trouble us might begin to irritate us. Our words may become harsh and our tone cold. If you have ever felt stressed, consider the example of Jesus.

¹⁵ During the final months of his life on earth, Jesus was under intense stress. He knew that he would be executed and that he would suffer terribly. (John 3:14, 15; Gal. 3:13) Some months before his death, he said that he was distressed. (Luke 12:50) And just days before his death, Jesus said: “I am troubled.” We can sense his humility and his submissiveness to God as he poured out his feelings in prayer: “Father, save me out of this hour. Nevertheless, this is why I have come to

this hour. Father, glorify your name.” (John 12:27, 28) When the time came, Jesus courageously handed himself over to God’s enemies, who executed him in the most agonizing and humiliating way possible. Despite the stress, despite the suffering, Jesus meekly did God’s will. Without a doubt, we can say that Jesus is the most outstanding example of someone showing meekness under stress!—Read Isaiah 53:7, 10.

¹⁶ On the final night of Jesus’ earthly life, his closest friends tested his meekness. Imagine the stress Jesus felt that night. Would he remain perfectly faithful until death? The lives of billions of people hung in the balance. (Rom. 5:18, 19) Even more important, his Father’s reputation was involved. (Job 2:4) Then, during his last meal with his closest friends, the apostles, their conversation degenerated into “a heated dispute” over “which one of them was considered to be the greatest.” Jesus had corrected his friends on this matter a number of times, including earlier that same evening! Remarkably, Jesus did not become irritated. Instead, he responded with mildness. Kindly, but firmly, Jesus explained—again—the attitude they should have. And he then commended his friends for loyally sticking with him.—Luke 22:24-28; John 13:1-5, 12-15.

16-17. (a) How did Jesus’ friends test his meekness? (b) How can we imitate Jesus?



Jesus is the greatest example of meekness
(See paragraphs 16-17)

17 How would you have responded if you had been in a similar situation? We can imitate Jesus and remain mild-tempered even when we are under stress. Submissively obey Jehovah’s command to “continue putting up with one another.” (Col. 3:13) We will obey this command if we remember that we all say and do things that irritate others. (Prov. 12:18; Jas. 3:2, 5) And try to mention the good that you see in others.—Eph. 4:29.

WHY CONTINUE TO SEEK MEEKNESS?

18 We will make better decisions. When we face difficult choices in life, Jehovah will help us make good decisions—but only if we are meek. He promises that he will hear “the request of the meek.” (Ps. 10:17) And he will do more than hear our request. The Bible promises: “He will guide the meek in what is right, and he will teach the meek ones his way.” (Ps. 25:9) Jehovah provides that guidance in the Bible and in publications* and through programs produced by “the faithful and discreet slave.” (Matt. 24:45-47) We must do our part by humbly acknowledging that we need help, by studying the material Jehovah supplies, and by submissively applying what we learn.

19 We will avoid making mistakes. Think again about Moses. For decades he remained meek and pleased Jehovah. Then, toward the end of the difficult 40-year journey in the wilderness, Moses failed to display meekness. His sister, most likely the one who helped save his life in Egypt, had just died and was bur-

* For example, see the article “Make Decisions That Honor God,” published in the April 15, 2011, issue of *The Watchtower*.

18. How does Jehovah help meek people make good decisions, but what must they do?

19-21. What mistake did Moses make at Kadesh, and what lessons can we learn from it?

ied at Kadesh. And now once again the Israelites were insisting that they were not being cared for properly. This time they were “quarreling with Moses” over a lack of water. Despite all the miracles that Jehovah had performed through Moses and despite Moses’ long record of unselfish leadership, the people complained. They complained not only about the lack of water but also about Moses, as if it were his fault that they were thirsty.—Num. 20:1-5, 9-11.

²⁰ In the heat of anger, Moses lost his mild disposition. Rather than speak in faith to the rock, as Jehovah had commanded, Moses spoke in bitterness to the people and gave credit to himself. Then, he struck the rock twice and much water gushed out. Pride and anger caused him to make a painful mistake. (Ps. 106:32, 33) For his temporary lack of meekness, Moses was not allowed to enter the Promised Land.—Num. 20:12.

²¹ From this incident, we learn valuable lessons. First, we must constantly work at maintaining our meek attitude. If we neglect it for a moment, pride may reassert itself and cause us to speak and act foolishly. Second, stress can weaken us, so we must strive to be meek, even when we are under pressure.

²² **We will be protected.** Soon, Jehovah will remove

22-23. (a) Why should we continue to seek meekness? (b) What does the statement at Zephaniah 2:3 indicate?

all wicked people from the earth, and only the meek will remain. Then the earth will truly be peaceful. (Ps. 37:10, 11) Will you be among those meek ones? You can be if you act on Jehovah’s warm invitation recorded by the prophet Zephaniah.—**Read Zephaniah 2:3.**

²³ Why does Zephaniah 2:3 say: “Probably you will be concealed”? That statement does not mean that Jehovah is incapable of protecting those who want to please him and whom he loves. Instead, it indicates that we have a part in determining the outcome. We have the possibility of surviving “the day of Jehovah’s anger” and of living forever if we make the effort now to seek meekness and please Jehovah.

PICTURE DESCRIPTION Page 23: Jesus remains mild-tempered and calmly corrects his disciples after they argued about who is greater.

WHAT DID YOU LEARN ABOUT MEEKNESS FROM . . .

- Moses?
- Hananiah, Michael, and Azariah?
- Jesus?

1. The greatest of men was our Lord Jesus Christ;
By pride or ambition, he was not enticed.
God's purpose gave Jesus the prominent role;
Yet, lowly in heart, he was always whole-souled.
2. To all who are toiling with troublesome cares,
He offers to carry the burdens they bear.
Refreshment they find as the Kingdom they seek.
With kindness and mildness, he favors the meek.
3. 'We all are just brothers,' our Lord Jesus said.
In humble submission, we look to our Head.
The mild and the meek ones to God have great worth;
He promises they will inherit the earth.

