

Call to Obedience #253
PO Box 299 Kokomo, IN 46903 USA
www.schultze.org

“Would God that all the Lord’s people were prophets...”

The Making of a Prophet

By Reimar Schultze

“Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of Horeb. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush...” (Exodus 3:1–2).

I believe most scholars would concur that if there is any Old Testament character who excelled all others in his influence on both religious and secular institutions in Western culture, it is Moses. If Abraham was a Kilimanjaro, Isaiah a Mont Blanc, then Moses would be a Mount Everest.

Through Abraham, God gave birth to a nation whose only purpose was and is spiritual. But through Moses, God delivered this nation from Egypt and consolidated her twelve tribes under the institution of the tabernacle, making it an emblem of God’s divine presence among them. Through Moses, God shaped the major body of divine writing. Through Moses, God revealed the eternal principles reflecting his justice, holiness, and mercy.

It is by virtue of the Mosaic Law that the incarnate Son of God expressed his intimacy with his Father, and it is through that Law that Jesus fulfilled the ultimate desire of God to have a perfect sacrifice for the salvation of the world. Is there any wonder that Jesus wanted Moses with him on the Mount of Transfiguration? And is it any wonder that of all the songs of humankind that could have been sung in heaven, it is the song of Moses with the song of the Lamb that take preeminence in the royal, celestial halls (Rev. 15:3)?

How did Moses get to this place of exceptional prominence? Let us go on a journey of discovery together.

“Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro...And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire.”

I believe that before Moses came to his burning-bush experience, before he received his call to be a prophet and lawgiver, Moses had to demonstrate the one supreme virtue in this life that is the foundation for all other spiritual virtues:

Meekness.

Meekness is the first quality that God looks for in any man to decide his worth in the fields of his great vineyard. The deeper we go down into humility, the higher our spiritual branches spring upward. As pride was the primordial sin manifested by Lucifer in heaven, so meekness is the first virtue, even as we see Jesus giving it prominence in two of his Beatitudes, “Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their’s is the kingdom of heaven...Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth” (Matt. 5:3, 5). So, you get both earth and heaven with a spirit of meekness. What else is there left to get?

But God resists the proud. He gives no favor to them on earth, nor does he have a place for them in heaven. It was meekness, saturated in holy obedience, that God looked for in the days of Ezekiel when he said, “And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found

none” (Ezek. 22:30). Today, it is meekness that he looks for in all of us before he can make us deliverers.

What was lacking in Ezekiel and his contemporary, religious brethren? It was this meekness. Here God looked for the similar quality—and quantity—of meekness that he saw in Moses who, in his generation, was the meekest man on the face of the earth (Num. 12:3). Yes, the meek shall inherit the earth. Forty years of sheep-herding in the wilderness had brought Moses a meekness that satisfied God and that qualified him to be the deliverer of God’s covenant people.

I am talking to you today about the making of a prophet, a spokesman for God, and the first qualification for that office is meekness. The second and third qualifications of a prophet are:

Intimacy and Holiness.

Meekness brings us to intimacy with God. The meekness of Moses led to his divine election from God; it then brought him to an intimacy with God which is most beautifully expressed in Exodus 33:11, “And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend.”

All those who are meek are the called ones, they are the people of the inner circle. They experience God in the interior life. God reveals his secrets to them, and he speaks to them as he did to Moses, as a friend would speak to a friend. Again meekness leads to intimacy which then leads to a clear perception of the holiness of God. And the clearer our perception of the holiness of God, the more we become strangers to this world.

Moses came to the burning bush. He so much wanted to investigate, but the Lord spoke to him, “Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground” (Ex. 3:5). You cannot draw nigh to God without being overwhelmed by his holiness. And all those who are intimate with God live holy lives.

Suddenly, the ordinary patch of ground where Moses stood became holy ground. And when God reveals his holiness to us—a revelation through intimacy—everything about us takes on a new perspective. Our spouses, our churches, our friends, our enemies, and the very ground we walk upon. And now, in the case of Moses, the meekest man on earth most probably became the holiest man of his generation. Yet, divine holiness never has the slightest tinge of pharisaical legalism. It is always connected to meekness, to deep humility, and divine love.

Yes, we are observing the making of a prophet. Oh, how we are in need of prophets who speak out of meekness and holiness the very words of God. So then, the inevitable consequences of a man who is meek, intimate, and holy is that he becomes a:

Mouthpiece of God.

A prophet has the word **from** God and not just the Word **of** God. The Word of God is the written word—the word from God is the spoken word.

The Pharisees had the Word of God. They had it all from Moses to Malachi, but they did not have the word from God. The Pharisees killed Jesus with the Word of God. The crusaders killed Jews and Moslems with the Word of God. Christians have killed each other with the Word of God.

The Word of God is good, but when it is abused, it can be a killer (2 Cor. 3:6). Moses knew that, so when God called him to lead Israel out of Egypt, he said, “Who am I?” (Ex. 3:11). The “Who am I?” included humility, meekness, and an awareness that God had to give him the exact words to convince his Hebrew brethren and Pharaoh. It was a response that said, “I can say many good things, but I lack knowledge and wisdom to say the right things. I need a dictation of my message directly from the throne of God.” At the precise moment when Moses said “Who

am I?," he was born a prophet, because there he declared his utter dependence upon God for everything.

A prophet is a spokesman for God. A prophet is the mouthpiece of God. When you hear a prophet, you hear God! When you reject a prophet, you reject God. This prophetic element is first made clear in Holy Scripture where God said to Moses, "Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say" (4:12). This is repeated again in Deuteronomy 18:18–20 where God is speaking to Moses:

"I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him. But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die."

Moses knew that unless God would speak through him, he would fail. I wish we all would know that! Unless God speaks through us, we will fail—even with the Word of God in our hands. When we witness or teach or preach, we can use all kinds of Scripture. But how do we know what exact Scripture, or what exact words are the ones Jesus would speak if he were on earth?

The Pharisees taught the Word of God, as do most preachers today. And their teaching left the people famished. But Jesus spoke the word from God, and he filled the spiritual bellies of multitudes to the extent that they wanted to stay with him even as much as three days without food. Oh, how often we speak out of our brains and out of the letter when God wants for us to speak out of his dear heart.

Moses wanted to be a mouthpiece of God, and so he responds: Lord, you tell me what to say. Even Jesus said later on, "...I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him" (John 8:26).

What would happen if all of God's people would become mouthpieces for God? What would happen if God could put into the preacher's mouth his exact words as he did even with Jesus? How would we all be fed if that preacher could tell by the voice of Jesus what songs were to be sung, who was to pray, and when to do what? What would be the blessings to the church? Can you fathom it, can you imagine it? Is this possible? Is this the will of God? Yes, this is the will of God! All of us are called to be prophets! All of us are to speak the exact words that God wants us to speak at any time. And how do we know that? We know that from the Scriptures. In the days of Moses, some of the "non-prophetic" servants began to prophesy, and some people got concerned. But Moses said, "...would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit upon them!" (Num. 11:29).

Moses was a lawgiver, but he was also a prophet. It says in Hebrews that he was faithful even as Jesus was in all his house (Heb. 3:1–2). Will you aspire to be a prophet and be as faithful today as those divines were in their day?

Friend, remember the formula: MEEKNESS—INTIMACY—HOLINESS—and UTTER DEPENDANCE upon God for every word you speak; that each word would be fresh from the throne of God—nothing less and nothing more—none from you and all from him. It is the vision that Frances Havergal expressed in the first and third stanzas of her hymn: "Lord, speak to me, that I may speak in living echoes of Thy tone; as Thou hast sought, so let me seek Thy erring children lost and lone. / O teach me, Lord, that I may teach the precious things Thou dost impart; and wing my words, that they may reach the hidden depths of many a heart."