



December 5

Gentle Men!

Reading: Numbers 12:1-16

***"Let your gentleness be known to all men;
the Lord is near" (Phil 4:5)***

Gentleness or meekness and patience have often made a couplet in the Scriptures (Col 3:12; 1 Tim 6:11). Among the word pictures for "gentleness" in the Bible, two are prominent: One is that of a shepherd "gently leading the mother sheep with their young" (Isa 40:11c); the other is that of a mother "gently feeding and caring for her own children" (1 Thess 2:7b). When we decide to follow Jesus, He enrolls us in the School of Gentleness. He does not teach us from textbooks. As a role model He stands before us beckoning us, "Learn from Me, because I am humble and gentle" (Mt 11:29).

Isaac exemplified in gentleness in his patience with those who quarrelled with him over the wells (Gen 26:15-22). He kept yielding until there was no more quarrel. Gentleness does not fight for rights. Later Jesus taught, "If anyone takes away your shirt, give him your coat, too!" (Mt 5:40).

Without a spirit of gentleness we cannot be patient with the faults of others. Apostle Paul admonished the Galatian Christians, "Dear brothers and sisters, if another Christian is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path" (Gal 6:1). David had to pay heavily for his sin (Prov 6:29), but God's generosity to him is seen in the choice of Bathsheba, among the wives of David, to be Solomon's mother (2 Sam 12:24), even though centuries later Matthew wanted to still call her as Uriah's wife (Mt 1:6). Jesus does not break a bruised reed or quench a smoking flax (Mt 12:20).

Gentleness is indispensable to those in leadership responsibilities. The temptation to crush the opposers with authority and power will always be there. Moses was a great leader. Matthew Henry (1662-1714) comments, "When God's honour was affected, as in the case of the golden calf, Moses acted as a lion. When his own honour was touched, as in the matter of Aaron and Miriam backbiting him, he was mild as a lamb" (Num 12:3).



*Friend of sinners! Lord of Glory! Lowly, Mighty, Brother, King!
Musing o'er Thy wondrous story; grateful we Thy praises sing!
Friend to help us, cheer us, save us, in whom power and pity blend—
Praise we must the grace which gave us Jesus Christ, the sinner's friend!*

(Rev. Newman Hall)
