

Humility (XVI): Circumstances That Make You Humble

I. Deuteronomy 8:2-6, God led His people in the wilderness for forty years to humble His people

- ◆ In this passage, God guided His people in the wilderness for forty years to humble them. The phrase “*humble you*” in English corresponds to “苦煉你” in Chinese. God stated that these forty years were a trial and a test to reveal whether the people would keep His commandments.

Although God could have swiftly led the Israelites into the promised land after crossing the Red Sea, He chose to lead them slowly. The purpose behind these forty years was to work in them, to humble them, and to prepare them for entering the promised land.

- ◆ In verse 3, it mentions that God humbled them by letting them hunger and providing no meat at times, and even made the way difficult, but “*fed [them] with manna, which [they] did not know, nor did [their] fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.*”
- ◆ Because when people live, they have certain habits, such as eating meat, green onions, ginger, garlic—things with strong flavors. However, in these forty years, God wanted them to know that **whether or not they eat these things doesn’t matter. The only thing that matters is the manna that comes down from heaven, the most important food for their lives.** And this food can satisfy all their needs. Jesus spoke of Himself as the manna that came down from heaven, the true bread. **Jesus wants us to know that the most important thing for us as humans living on earth is to continually partake of Him—eating and drinking of Him is enough.**
- ◆ Deuteronomy 8:16 says, “*He gave you manna to eat in the wilderness, something your ancestors had never known, to humble and test you so that in the end it might go well with you.*” Why did He give such good manna to eat? It was to test you. Often, we feel that only God Himself is not enough. “Lord, I have nothing. Only Your presence matters. Look, all my good friends have left me.” “What I want most is to quickly find a job.” “What I want most is to have children soon.” “What I want most is to be promoted, and my salary to increase.” The presence of God is not sufficient. **Sometimes God takes away all these things and only gives you Himself. He says this is to confirm what is in your heart.** When He removes these things, He can then make heavenly interests, hobbies, and His life in you. **The purpose is to enable you to enjoy lasting blessings.**
- ◆ What causes us the most suffering is our self. A single word or a glance from someone else can hurt us. When others are praised, or when we see the numbers on someone else’s paycheck are higher than ours, or when someone stands on the platform to lead worship or preach, our self becomes uncomfortable. Our self is so

easily wounded, causing us pain. Our God knows that our self makes us suffer too much, so from the beginning, He established an eternal covenant with us—that we must deny ourselves and daily take up our cross to follow Him. To be His disciple means to deny self every day, to nail self to the cross, not acknowledging it, not indulging it, but following Him.

God wants to replace our self with His abundance because our self not only causes us to suffer but also inflicts great pain on those around us whom we love and who love us.

II. 1 Corinthians 13, Jesus was so full of love that He humbled Himself

- ♦ 1 Corinthians 13 speaks of love being patient, not jealous, not boastful. In reality, no natural person can achieve this kind of love, even with the most determined efforts. In fact, the love described in 1 Corinthians 13 is Jesus Himself. You can replace the word “love” with another term: “humility.” Humility is patient and kind, just as love is because humility and love are the embodiment of Jesus. **Look at the wheat in the field: the fuller it becomes, the more it bows down. The Lord is like this; filled with abundant love, He humbled Himself, allowing His rich love to surrender, willingly becoming lowly even unto death, and died on the cross.**
- ♦ There is a hymn called “Love Found a Way,” which can be replaced with “Humility Found a Way.” Jesus’ humility has found a way to come upon us. Similarly, when we humble ourselves, every path opens up. That’s why the Bible says, *“God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”* **When you are proud, every path is blocked.** If you are not humble in a company, feel unappreciated by the boss, or find the boss too harsh, and then you switch to another company. If you are still proud, you still won’t be able to stay long at the new company, because God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. With humility, every path is opened.

When your path is rough, and God hasn’t opened the way for you, you should ask God: “Lord, is it my pride blocking the way? Lord Jesus, please nail my old self on the cross so that I can humble myself!”

- ♦ Some very proud individuals may seem to have smooth and accessible paths, and it’s true, but the time has not come. You will find that some arrogantly assert themselves for a while, but suddenly they lose everything, and there is nothing left. So, there’s nothing to boast about. Especially when someone talks about building some kingdoms using their own strength, God does not like to hear such words but Satan loves hearing them. Those who speak arrogantly are under the influence of Satan, who loves getting close to the arrogant and making things miserable.
- ♦ We should seize every trial and every environment that provokes us, every brother or sister who causes us trouble. We should see them as tools that God wants to use to give grace to us, to refine us, and to provide us with an opportunity to practice humility.

The proud self cannot enter the Promised Land. If you bring a proud self into the Promised Land, you still won't be able to inherit the inheritance. Only the humble self can inherit all the abundance of the Promised Land, which is the abundance of God Himself. Therefore, we should seize every opportunity that brings humility to us and thank God for it.

III. Ephesians 4:1-3, Colossians 3:12, Humility is shown in your everyday life

- ♦ In the Bible, "humility" is often mentioned in connection with "compassion," "kindness," "meekness," "gentleness," "patience," and it is also linked to being "called," which means we are called to obtain God's humility, allowing God's humility to be manifested in us.
- ♦ Humility will always manifest in our interactions with others, associated with patience, gentleness, kindness, compassion. A humble person will have genuine love and gentleness and will show compassion to others.
- ♦ God wants us, wherever we go, to put on the robe of humility, gird ourselves with the belt of humility, so that every breath and action is in the spirit of humility. This is called putting on Christ, and it is also called inner life. Inner life is not just sitting there with your eyes closed; it is a life that manifests in your practical, day-to-day life.

IV. Zephaniah 2:3, God wanted us to seek humility

- ♦ You see, God instructed those who have already obeyed His statutes and ordinances to seek Him, to seek righteousness and humility. This shows how crucial humility is; it's not just mere words. Time and time again, God emphasized the importance of seeking humility, and this should become a consistent theme in our prayers.

V. Matthew 11:29 *"I am gentle and humble in heart; take my yoke upon you and learn from me, and in this way you will find rest in your hearts."*

- ♦ **The only thing Jesus wants us to learn from His example is to learn His gentleness and humility**, because only through gentleness and humility can we find rest.
- ♦ A humble person is willing to let God place the yoke of an ox around our necks. People generally don't like having a yoke on their necks, but God often uses people to become our yoke, making us humble. If the yoke is heavy and we are unwilling to bear it, we resist and defend ourselves. If someone belittles us, we belittle them back; if someone slanders us, we tell many others. The conflicts become endless, and we fall into the trap of strife and contention. Have you experienced this? We should quickly humble ourselves, take up this yoke, and recognize it as what God has given us. God wants to add the yoke so that the field can be plowed, fruit can grow, and there can be

a harvest. But we are unwilling to bear the yoke, unwilling to lower our heads, and end up with a broken and bleeding head.

Once the yoke is placed on you and you get used to it, you'll find that it's not too difficult. You will then experience rest, and that's why the deepest rest is found within a humble person.

- ♦ Hebrews 3 and 4 talk about how they could not enter into rest because of unbelief. If we believe that He is God and that what He arranges for us is the best, we can humble ourselves. It is because of unbelief that we cannot humble ourselves. When we are unwilling to accept the circumstances God gives us, we cannot cease from our own works to enter into rest.
- ♦ Brothers and sisters, when God is refining you, tell the Lord, "Lord, thank You. You want to refine my pride and grind down my old self, so that Your gentleness, humility, and love can take shape in me. Father, I thank You! You know I deserve it!" For those who are extremely weak, the Lord may not dare to refine them, just like a baby whom the Lord does not refine but holds close to His heart. However, you shouldn't always let the Lord hold you close to His heart. You should start learning to walk, run, serve others, and let the Lord refine you. When He tests you, you will still say, 'Dad, I know You love me. Thank You for leading me in every situation!' The Lord will eventually let us enjoy blessings. Such trust and love toward the Lord bring Him great comfort!
- ♦ In the book of Matthew, God tells you not to be afraid, for His yoke is easy, and His burden is light. As long as you don't keep struggling and learn from His example, you will surely find rest and the deepest joy and peace. God wants to do you good in the end. Moreover, God says that on the day of wrath, you can hide away, and humble people have the best hiding places. No storm can harm them.

VI. How To Let Humility Take Shape in Us

- ♦ How do we let humility take shape in us? The most important thing is to seek God more and spend more time drawing near to Him first, allowing His Spirit to replace us. Breathing in more of Him, so that our self gradually disappears.
- ♦ Andrew Murray has a prayer for seeking humility.

He suggests that, if possible, find an environment, withdraw for a month, refrain from writing, reading, or arguing with yourself. Just stop all activities of previous thoughts and fully concentrate. Continuously pray the following prayer, preferably kneeling, and even when you get up, whether sitting, standing, or walking, still earnestly desire to offer this prayer to God: "Father, because of Your Great Goodness would You make known to me and take from my heart, every kind and form and degree of Pride, whether it be from evil spirits, or my own corrupt nature; and that You would awaken in me the deepest depth and truth of that humility, which can make me capable of Your light and Holy Spirit." He says if you keep praying like this, as if a person in pain

praying earnestly, or like someone urgently praying after escaping from a doomed city, willingly praying with focused urgency, even if the evil spirits inside you are twice as many as those in Mary Magdalene, all of them will be driven out. Then you will find yourself, like Mary Magdalene, weeping at the feet of Jesus, shedding tears of love.

Maybe we don't have a month of vacation to hide away, but God looks at our hearts. You can pray like this every day in your current circumstances. If we seek more of the Lord's conviction, He will shine more on our blindness. If we don't seek, we will remain in blindness and not realize our pride.

- ◆ Waiting on God helps bring down our self, but these processes often involve trials, typically through various circumstances. Therefore, we cannot always stay indoors, away from the crowds. We might feel very peaceful, sweet, and humble indoors, but once we step out of the room and someone criticizes us, saying, "You're always hiding in the house; how can you be like this and that..." Wow! Your self starts rising again. That self must go through trials, and God says He will refine you, humble you, to test what is in your heart.

God doesn't want to mistreat you; He wants to refine you and to make you humble. To "mistreat you" is only about loving to see you suffer, but to "humble you" is for you to enjoy lasting blessings so that your self won't rise again.

Humility (XVI) Assignment

1. Deuteronomy 8:2-6, in the wilderness, God led His people for forty years. What was the purpose?
2. If God were to take away everything around you today and only give Himself to you, would you feel satisfied?
3. Have you ever experienced that 'humility found a way' or that every path is blocked due to pride?
4. How does humility manifest itself in practical life? What aspect do you lack the most?
5. What is the one thing that Jesus specifically wants us to learn from His example? Have you ever experienced taking His yoke? Did you find it light?
6. To let humility take shape in us, there are practical methods. Which ones are you currently paying attention to?
7. Scripture memorization: Deuteronomy 8:2-3, Colossians 3:12, Ephesians 4:1-3.