

Numbers 20:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and they fell upon their faces: and the glory of the LORD appeared unto them.

Analysis

The phrase 'And Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly' indicates they left the complaining crowd to seek God. Rather than arguing with the people or defending themselves, they brought the crisis to God. This pattern— withdrawing from human conflict to divine presence—characterizes godly leadership. The 'door of the tabernacle of the congregation' was the place of meeting with God (Exodus 29:42-43), where divine glory appeared and God spoke with Moses.

The action 'and they fell upon their faces' expresses both humility before God and desperation in crisis. Prostration was a posture of worship, submission, and intercession. Moses and Aaron didn't come to God with demands or accusations but with humble dependence. This contrasts sharply with the people's response to crisis: they gathered against leadership in rebellion, while leadership gathered before God in prayer. The difference between these responses illustrates the distinction between flesh and spirit, unbelief and faith.

The result 'and the glory of the LORD appeared unto them' shows God's response to humble prayer. When leaders bring congregational crisis to God rather than trying to resolve it through human wisdom, God manifests His presence and power. The appearing glory indicates God's readiness to intervene, provide, and guide. This pattern appears throughout Scripture: crisis drives the faithful to

prayer, which brings divine presence and provision (Exodus 33:7-11; 1 Kings 8:10-11; Acts 4:23-31).

Historical Context

The tabernacle of congregation was the tent of meeting where God's presence dwelt among Israel. The glory of the LORD (Hebrew *kavod YHWH*, כָּבוֹד יְהוָה) represented the visible manifestation of divine presence—likely a bright, luminous cloud (compare Exodus 24:16-17; 40:34-38; 1 Kings 8:10-11). This theophanic appearance demonstrated God's accessibility to leaders who sought Him and His readiness to address the people's needs despite their rebellion. The contrast between the people's hostile gathering and the leaders' humble prayer set the stage for God's intervention.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does Moses and Aaron's response to congregational crisis—going to God rather than arguing with people—model the priority of prayer over human defense in ministry?
2. What does the appearance of God's glory in response to humble prayer teach about how God meets those who seek Him in dependence rather than self-sufficiency?

Interlinear Text

אֶל פְּנֵי לְפָנֶיךָ מִשְׁה וְאַהֲרֹן וְפְנֵי מִשְׁה הַיָּבָא
went And Moses and Aaron from the presence of the assembly H413
H935 H4872 H175 H6440 H6951

עַל יְפָלָל מִזְעַד אֶל פְּנֵי תְּחַנֵּן
unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation and they fell H5921
H6607 H168 H4150 H5307

אֶלְיָהוּ מִפְּנֵי כְּבוֹד יְהָה וְאֶלְיָהוּ
from the presence appeared and the glory of the LORD H413
H6440 H7200 H3519 H3068

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 14:5 (References Moses): Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel.

Numbers 16:22 (Parallel theme): And they fell upon their faces, and said, O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, shall one man sin, and wilt thou be wroth with all the congregation?

Numbers 16:4 (References Moses): And when Moses heard it, he fell upon his face:

Numbers 16:19 (Glory): And Korah gathered all the congregation against them unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: and the glory of the LORD appeared unto all the congregation.

Numbers 16:45 (Parallel theme): Get you up from among this congregation, that I may consume them as in a moment. And they fell upon their faces.