

Numbers 12:3 and the parenthetical translation that Moses was very meek

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Introduction

ToDo: This article needs to be reviewed

Consider these verses (especially the last one).

Num 12:1-3

¹ And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married: for he had married an Ethiopian woman. ² And they said, Hath YHVH indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us? And YHVH heard *it*. ³ (Now the man Moses *was* very meek, above all the men which *were* upon the face of the earth.)

To get the ball rolling, here is some commentary by Glenn McWilliams which seems reasonable

“Let us note here how the Torah contrasts the talk of Miriam and Aaron with the description of Moses as being meek, humble, or lowly. Implied in Miriam and Aaron’s words is that Moses thinks himself superior to them.”

An ode to Cassius Clay “I am the humblest man of all time”.

Personally I like to brag about how humble I am 😊

On a more serious note, is being meek (*anav*)¹ always a good thing? I’ve always assumed it was, but one could argue at least in this case that being to meek may have got Moshe in trouble by not standing up to people (the Midianites) that he should be standing up to.

Juxtaposed against the conversation of his siblings, this verse describing Moses reveals more about the attitudes of Miriam and Aaron than about the personality of Moses. The Hebrew word *anav* (*ayin, nun, vav*), according

¹ See below “Word Study H6035 *anam*^{KJC 18} meek¹³, poor⁵”

to Jacob Milgrom, should not be translated as “meek” in the sense of weak and quiet but in the sense of devout or trusting.

Humble—Hebrew 'anav ([Zep 2:3](#)). This is the only instance of the singular in the Bible. Its meaning is clarified by its synonymous parallel “who seek the Lord”

[Psa 22:27-8](#), hence “devout, trusting.” It also applies to the weak and exploited

([Amo 2:7](#); [Isa 11:4](#)). However, it never means “meek.”

Various Translation of Numbers 12:3

WLC

וְהָאִישׁ מֹשֶׁה עָנָו מְאֹד מִכָּל הָאָדָם אֲשֶׁר עַל-פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה

HSB

וְהָאִישׁ (H376 ve ha 'Ish (Now the man מֹשֶׁה (H4872 mo Sheh Moses [עָנָו] (a nav חָמֹד (H6035 a Nav humble אֲשֶׁר (H834 'a Sher who מְאֹד (H3966 me 'Od; [was] very מִכָּל (H3605 mik Kol any הָאָדָם (H120 ha 'a Dam, above all the men עַל- (H5921 'al- was on פְּנֵי (H6440 pe Nei which [were] upon the face הָאֲדָמָה (H127 ha 'a da Mah. land

Mechon Mamre

ג וְהָאִישׁ מֹשֶׁה, עָנָו מְאֹד--מִכָּל, הָאָדָם, 3 Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men that were upon the face of the earth.-- {S} אֲשֶׁר, עַל-פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה. {ס}

Zep 2:1-3

¹ Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation not desired; ² Before the decree bring forth, *before* the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of YHVH come upon you, before the day of YHVH'S anger come upon you. ³ Seek ye YHVH, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of YHVH'S anger.

ToDo: comment on why I included this verse.

Word Study H6035 *anam*^{KJC 18} meek¹³, poor⁵

עָנָו / עָנִי

Strong's The second form is by intermixture with [H6041](#); from [H6031](#); *depressed* (figuratively), in mind (*gentle*) or circumstances (*needy*, especially *saintly*): - humble, lowly, meek, poor`. Compare [H6041](#).

LXX [G4235](#) *praus*, [G3993](#) *penes*

KJC Occurrences: 18

meek, 13 [Num 12:3](#), [Psa 22:26](#), [Psa 25:9](#) (2), [Psa 37:11](#), [Psa 76:9](#), [Psa 147:6](#), [Isa 11:4](#) (2), [Isa 29:19](#), [Isa 61:1](#), [Amo 2:7](#), [Zep 2:3](#)

poor, 5 [Job 24:3-4](#) (2), [Psa 9:18](#), [Pro 14:21](#), [Isa 32:7](#), [Amo 8:4](#)

Yeshua and the Sermon on the Mount

Mat 5:5 KJV Blessed *are* the meek [G4239 praus](#) : for they shall inherit the earth.

Word Study G4239 *praus*

πραύς

Apparently a primary word; *mild*, that is, (by implication) *humble*: - meek. See also [G4235](#).

KJV Occurrences: 3 meek, 3 [Mat 21:5](#) (2), [1Pe 3:4](#)

LXX: [H6035](#) *anav* [H6041](#) *ani*