

Doctrine of Meekness

1. Definition: It means to be mild in the sense of being humble because you know that God is in charge and you belong to Him and His plan is perfect.

1.1 Etymology - There are two Greek words **PRAUS** and **PRAUTES** from which we get various translations and derivatives. In the Hebrew most of our translations come from **ANAV** a verb meaning "to be gentle of mind and saintly."

1.2 The Etymology is not as important as the categorical use because secular uses leave much to be desired as we shall see.

2. **MEEKNESS** - Nave has outlined an interesting study of several Old Testament and New Testament characters who were uniquely meek.

2.1 Abraham

Gen 13:8 And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdsmen and thy herdsmen; for we be brethren.

2.2 Moses

Exo 14:13 And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will show to you today: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them again no more forever.

Exo 14:14 The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.

Num 12:2 And they said, Hath the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us? And the LORD heard it.

Num 12:3 (Now the man Moses was very meek, (**ANAV**) meaning gentle of mind and saintly above all the men who were upon the face of the earth.)

2.3 King Saul

1Sa 10:26 And Saul also went home to Gibeah; and there went with him a band of men, whose hearts God had touched.

1Sa 10:27 But many of those who had rejected his authority said, How shall this man save us? And they despised him, and brought no presents. But he held his peace.

2.4 David

Psa 121:1 I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.

Psa 121:2 My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth.

1Sa 24:4 And the men of David said unto him, Behold the day of which the LORD said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee. Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily.

1Sa 24:5 And it came to pass afterward, that David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt.

1Sa 24:6 And he said unto his men, The LORD forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the LORD'S anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the LORD.

2.5 Paul

2.5.1 At Thessalonica

1Th 2:7 But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children:

1Th 2:8 So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.

1Th 2:9 For ye remember, brethren, our labor and travail: for laboring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.

2.5.2 At Corinth

2Co 12:21 And lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed.

2Co 10:2 I beg you that when I come I may not have to be as bold as I expect to be toward some people who think that we live by the standards of this world.

2Co 10:3 For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does.

2Co 10:4 The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.

2Co 10:5 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

2Co 10:6 And we will be ready to punish every act of disobedience, once your obedience is complete.

2Co 10:7 You are looking only on the surface of things. If anyone is confident that he belongs to Christ, he should consider again that we belong to Christ just as much as he.

2Co 10:8 For even if I boast somewhat freely about the authority the Lord gave us for building you up rather than pulling you down, I will not be ashamed of it.

2Co 10:9 I do not want to seem to be trying to frighten you with my letters.

2Co 10:10 For some say, "His letters are weighty and forceful, but in person he is unimpressive and his speaking amounts to nothing."

2Co 10:11 Such people should realize that what we are in our letters when we are absent, we will be in our actions when we are present.

3. Vines has written of meekness.

3.1 "The adjectival use of **PRAUS** denotes "gentle, mild and/or meek;" for its significance see the corresponding noun **PRAUTES**."

3.1.1 Christ uses it of His own kingdom protocol, Mat 11:29;

Mat 11:29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am "**meek**" and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

3.1.2 He gives it in the third of His Beatitudes, Mat 5:5;

Mat 5:5 "**Blessed**" are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

3.1.3 It is said of Him as the King Messiah, Mat 21:5, a quote from Zec 9:9;

Mat 21:5 "Say to the Daughter of Zion, 'See, your king comes to you, "**gentle**" and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.'"

Zec 9:9 Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, "**gentle**" and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

3.1.4 It is an adornment of the Christian profession, 1Pe 3:4-11;

1Pe 3:4 But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a "meek" and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

1Pe 3:5 For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands:

1Pe 3:6 Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.

1Pe 3:7 "Likewise" ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.

1Pe 3:8 Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be compassionate and sympathetic, be courteous:

1Pe 3:9 Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.

1Pe 3:10 For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile:

1Pe 3:11 Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it.

3.2 The nouns **PRAUTES** or **PRAOTES** an earlier form, denotes "meekness." In its use in Scripture it has a fuller, deeper significance than in non-scriptural Greek writings, it consists not in a person's "outward behavior only; nor yet in his relations to his fellowmen."

3.2.1 Rather it is grace coming from within the soul exercised chiefly towards God.

3.2.2 It is that temper of spirit in which we accept His dealings with us as good, and therefore without disputing or resisting;

3.2.3 It is closely linked with the word **TAPEINOPHROSUNE** which is the process of humility resulting from a transformed mind. The humble heart does not fight against, nor contend with God.

4. The meaning of **PRAUTES** is not readily expressed in English. The term meekness generally suggests weakness and cowardice, whereas the Greek **PRAUTES** does not.

4.1 Nevertheless, it is difficult to find a rendering less open to objection than meekness and/or gentleness.

4.2 It must be clearly understood, therefore, that the meekness manifested by the Lord and commended to the believer is the fruit of inherent power.

4.3 The common assumption is that when a man is meek it is because he cannot help himself; but the Lord was "meek" because he had the infinite resources of God at His command. We therefore are to become like our divine prototype.

4.4 Meekness is the opposite to self-assertiveness and self-interest; it is an equanimity of spirit that is neither elated nor cast down, simply because it is not occupied with self at all.

4.5 Christians are charged to show meekness toward all men. For example, we find in the epistles the following statements concerning meekness.

In 2Co 10:1, the apostle Paul appeals to the meekness of Christ while scolding the Corinthians concerning their misguided opinions of him.

2Co 10:1 By the **meekness** and gentleness of Christ, I appeal to you-- I, Paul, who am "**timid**" when face to face with you, but "**bold**" when away!

In Tit 3:2, Titus is encouraged to display meekness;

Tit 3:2 To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all **meekness** unto all men.

In Col 3:12, believers are exhorted to follow after meekness.

Col 3:12 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, **meekness**, longsuffering;

In 1Ti 6:11, Timothy is urged to exhibit a spirit of meekness.

1Ti 6:11 But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, **meekness**.

In 2Ti 2:25, Timothy is commanded to correct in meekness those who oppose the teaching of the Word.

2Ti 2:24 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient,

2Ti 2:25 In **meekness** instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

2Ti 2:26 And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

In Jam 1:21 James exhorts his beloved brethren to receive with meekness the pregnant Word of God.

Jam 1:21 Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and with **meekness** receive the word planted in you, which can save you.

5. Wycliffe writes of meekness in his encyclopedia.

"The OT noun "meekness" (**ANAWA**) comes from the verb (**ANAV**) stem meaning "to be bowed down, "afflicted," which in turn comes to mean "to be lowly, submissive."

5.1 The meek are the poor and afflicted persons who are often pushed aside by the rich and/or a nation's political leaders; these same afflicted ones are promised deliverance when the Messiah comes.

Amo 2:6 Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Israel, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they sold the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes;

Amo 2:7 That pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor, and turn aside the way of the **meek**: and a man and his father will go in unto the same maid, to profane my holy name:

Psa 147:6 The LORD lifteth up the **meek**: he casteth the wicked down to the ground.

Isa 11:4 But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the **meek** of the earth: and he shall smite the earth: with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

5.2 Wycliffe goes on to write "The use of this feminine noun in the Old Testament reflects a very similar meaning to that found in the New Testament; the concept of patient submission is included in both the Hebrew and Greek vocabularies.

5.3 Moses demonstrated great meekness in being attacked personally without resentment or counter-charge. (Num 12:1-3)

Miriam and Aaron Oppose Moses

Num 12:1 And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married: for he had married an Ethiopian woman.

Num 12:2 And they said, Hath the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us? And the LORD heard it.

Num 12:3 (Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.)

5.4 In the New Testament meekness carries the basic idea of an inward attitude of submission to God and His protocol.

5.5 While the meekness also conveys the idea of gentleness as an outward expression, it does not include timidity.

5.6 Meekness does not mean weakness: rather it suggests controlled and bridled strength. Other adjectives describing this quality are considerate, unassuming, courteous and humble.

5.7 It has the idea of submission without struggle, a holy gentleness in the face of wrath or in situations where one is experiencing mistreatment or an injustice.

5.8 Thus the meek are extolled in the Beatitudes. (Mat 5:5)

Mat 5:5 Blessed are the "**meek**," for they will inherit the earth.

5.9 Our Lord obviously possessed great authority; yet when He experienced grave injustices He held His power in check. During His trial He stood before His accusers without a word of threat or self-justification.

6. Jesus made clear how all things had been delivered to Him by His Father. Jesus had an authority which distinguished Him from all other persons.

Mat 28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."

Mat 11:27 "All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."

6.1 Christ was the image of the invisible God and it is through the person of Christ and His Word that we can know Him.

Col 1:15 Christ is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

Col 1:16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

Col 1:17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

6.1.1 He is the **Logos**, the expression of the unseen God. (Joh 1:1-3 and 14)

Joh 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Joh 1:2 The same was in the beginning with God.

Joh 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made ...

Joh 1:14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

6.2 Matthew is in agreement with thoughts more frequently expressed by John and Paul. This shows that the Biblical writers were essentially of one mind regarding the truth that man is dependent upon God's grace in Christ for all spiritual knowledge.

Mat 11:27 "All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

Mat 11:28 "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Mat 11:29 "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

Mat 11:30 "For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

6.3 In view of the authority vested in Christ (verse 27), this invitation "Come unto me" vibrates with opportunity. Men whose wearisome efforts to achieve spiritual rest have not eased the burden of man-made obligations therefore the phrase "Ye that are heavy laden."

6.4 The phrase "take my yoke" is a Jewish metaphor for discipline and discipleship. "Put your neck under the yoke, and let your soul receive instruction."

6.4.1 Christ also said "My burden is light." The obligations involved in the kingdom are light, and strength to bear them is supplied with the yoke.

7. Summary:

7.1 Meekness is a characteristic demanded of a mature believer and must come from doctrine in the soul.

Jam 3:13 Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness (**PRAUTES**) of wisdom.

Expanded Translation James 3:13:

"Who is a wise and mature member of the royal family of God? It is most certainly he, who displays, out from his method of living, noble and honorable production, with gentleness and benevolence by means of doctrine cycled in his soul."

7.2 Meekness will be pervasive as a gift from God during the millennium.

Mat 5:5 "Blessed are the **"meek:"** for they shall inherit the earth."

7.3 When our Lord offered Himself publicly at the First Advent He came in **PRAUS** without hint of arrogance:

Mat 21:5 Tell ye the daughter of Zion, (the one with the donkey) Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, **"meek,"** and sitting upon an ass, even the young male offspring of a beast of burden.

7.4 Unfortunately Christians try to manufacture meekness without recognizing it must be a product of metabolized doctrine. You must stop striving for the production of meekness, or you will become a deformed hump shouldered Christian suffering for Jesus.

7.4.1 The suffering will in reality be for discipline.

Heb 12:6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

7.5 Doctrine in the soul will produce gentleness.

7.6 The manner of approaching the teaching of the Word of God must be characterized by **PRAUTES** - gentleness and meekness, without hint of arrogance.

Jam 1:19 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:

Jam 1:20 For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

Jam 1:21 Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the pregnant word, which is able to save your souls.

7.7 Our interactions with others must come from doctrine in the soul and reflect **PRAUS** or gentleness, without taking self seriously.

1Pe 3:15 But set-apart the Lord God in your right lobes: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asks you a reason of the guaranteed expectation that is in you with gentleness and respectful awe of God.

7.8 The characteristic of **PRAUS** must be manifest in the right woman.

1Pe 3:4 But in contrast to overt beauty let it be the inward reflection in the right lobe reflecting that which is not corruptible even the ornament of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is in God's eyes precious and of great price.

7.9 The translation "Likewise" from **HOMOIOS** in 1Pe 3:7 also instructs the right man to be kind and gentle.

1Pe 3:7 Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.