The Power–Love Asymmetry

Why the Desire to Exert Power Is a Moral Risk Signal — and Why Meekness Qualifies the Few Who Should Hold It

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Introduction

The pursuit of power is often defended as benevolent: power is sought, it is said, in order to protect others, correct injustice, or improve society. This defense is emotionally compelling and frequently sincere. Yet history, psychology, and theology converge on a sobering insight: the desire to exert power over others is a moral risk signal, not evidence of moral fitness.

This argument does not claim that all power is evil. It claims something more precise: that intent alone cannot justify authority, and that without love and restraint, even the most well-intentioned power becomes coercive.

Premise I — Benevolent Intent Is Not a Moral Safeguard

There was once a man who believed with absolute conviction that he was cleansing his people of evil forces, restoring dignity, and building a superior nation for the good of humanity. His intent, by his own account, was benevolent. His certainty was complete. His desire to reshape society was unwavering.

His name was **Adolf Hitler**.

If the desire to improve humanity, purify society, or eliminate perceived evil were sufficient to establish moral legitimacy, then history would demand our support for him as well. It does not — and for good reason.

This historical boundary case demonstrates a critical point: moral certainty combined with power is not protection against evil; it is often its catalyst.

Premise II — The Crocodile Dilemma

To expose why intent fails as a safeguard, consider the Crocodile Dilemma. A crocodile can always say to its prey:

> “It is better for you to be swallowed by me. I know what is best for you.”

The crocodile’s certainty does not reduce the violence of the act. This dilemma reveals a structural truth: the claim “this is for your own good” cannot distinguish love from domination. Without additional constraints, moral language becomes camouflage for coercion.

Premise III — Love as an Operational Constraint

To distinguish moral authority from predation, love must be defined operationally, not sentimentally. In this framework, love manifests as:

- respect for agency;
- voluntary self-restraint;
- preference for reversible action;
- humility regarding one’s own fallibility;
- willingness to consider dissent.

Absent these traits, the desire to “improve others” predictably slides into control rather than care.

Premise IV — The Psychological Risk of Power-Seeking

Modern psychology supports this caution. Environments of power reduce external constraint and amplify self-referential reasoning. Individuals who seek authority are statistically more prone to overconfidence in moral judgment, discounting opposing perspectives, and rationalizing coercion as necessity. Thus, even sincere motives are insufficient: the very act of seeking power increases the probability of moral error.

Synthesis — Meekness as the Qualification for Power

The phrase “meeker than a whisper” is not a poetic flourish. In Michael’s account, it is a phrase he heard from **Yahweh** when reflecting on how the forty heads of the proposed *Cyber Sanhedrin Commonwealth* should be qualified. The source of this insight is stated plainly to respect it. The claim is not that all readers must accept its divine origin — but that its wisdom can be examined on its merits.

Scripture itself reinforces this qualification:

> “Now Moses was the most humble man in all the earth.”

This is not incidental. Moses — lawgiver, leader, judge, and prophet — is described not as powerful, charismatic, or dominant, but as supremely humble. From a psychological standpoint, meek individuals are less likely to privilege their own viewpoint, more likely to engage in reflective and integrative reasoning, and less susceptible to self-justifying certainty. These traits reduce the likelihood that authority will be exercised impulsively or egocentrically.

From an ethical standpoint, meekness aligns with love understood not as sentiment, but as restraint — the willingness to limit one’s own authority for the sake of others’ dignity and agency.

From a systems perspective, meekness functions as a selection filter. Those who are “meeker than a whisper” are, by definition, not parading themselves before power. Because they lack appetite for dominance, they are statistically less likely to weaponize authority for ego, ideology, or self-affirmation.

Thus theology, philosophy, psychology, and systems theory converge on the same conclusion: **the safest hands for power are often those least eager to grasp it**.

Conclusion

Seeking power is not proof of moral fitness. In many cases, it is evidence that deeper scrutiny is required.

A just system does not elevate those who wish to rule. It entrusts responsibility to those who would rather serve — and who are humble enough to fear the harm they might cause if they are wrong.

When faith is honest and philosophy is disciplined, they converge rather than compete. The modern split between them is cultural, not logical. What is demanded here is harmony: rigor without sterility, reverence without surrender of reason.