

## Miriam's Jealousy

*Miriam and Aaron criticized Moses because of the Cushite woman he married (for he had married a Cushite woman). They said, "Does the LORD speak only through Moses? Does He not also speak through us?" And the LORD heard it. - Numbers 12:1-2 HCSB*



Moses owed his sister Miriam. She watched over him as floated in the reed basket his mom had made. She rescued him and reunited him with their mom when he was discovered. She stuck it out in Egypt under horrific conditions after he took off and hung out in the desert for forty years.<sup>1</sup>

She was equally used and called of God to help lead the nation of Israel out of its bondage and was considered an equal by Yahweh. Didn't He say, "Indeed, I brought you up from the land of Egypt and redeemed you from that place of slavery. I sent Moses, Aaron, and Miriam ahead of you."<sup>2</sup>

When Moses (reluctantly) stepped up to the Pharaoh, his older sister Miriam was obviously still very much in the mix. She was called a prophetess and she acted as the nation's principle worship leader when the Lord overthrew the Egyptian army.

Josephus tells us<sup>3</sup> that she had married Hur of the tribe of Judah – you know the one who, along with Aaron, had supported Moses' arms during the Amalakite Battle?<sup>4</sup>

Unfortunately, like many leaders do, she stepped across the line. She went too far. She began to think that she deserved her recognition rather than being humbly surprised that God would deign to use her. She took her authority and privilege for granted and started wanting more.

She criticized Moses, using his marriage to a black Cushite<sup>5</sup> woman as a pretext. I say a pretext because everything she said afterwards leads us to believe her words were completely motivated by jealousy. "Does the Lord speak only through Moses? Does He not also speak through us?" she said. Unfortunately for her, the Lord heard those words. "The mouth speaks from the overflow of the heart."<sup>6</sup> "On the day of judgment people will have to account for every careless word they speak." For by our words we will be acquitted, and by our words we will be condemned.<sup>7</sup>

It doesn't matter how much good we have done for the Lord or for others. Each day is a new day. Each opportunity is fresh and new. Yesterday's works apply to yesterday's accounts. Today we must maintain a sweet and humble spirit for today's account. Each day must be dealt with on its own terms.<sup>8</sup> Let us not start thinking that God is pretty lucky to have us on His team and that we really should be the captains. Let Him choose the leadership. If it happens to be us then let us also accept the greater degree of judgment that goes along with it. If it happens to be someone else, then let's sigh in relief and help them shoulder their burden joyfully.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Exodus 2:15; cp 7:7

<sup>2</sup> Micah 6:4 HCSB

<sup>3</sup> "Ant." iii. 2, § 4

<sup>4</sup> Exodus 17:11-13

<sup>5</sup> Jeremiah 13:23

<sup>6</sup> Matthew 12:34; Luke 6:45

<sup>7</sup> Matthew 12:36-37

<sup>8</sup> Matthew 6:34; Ephesians 4:26

<sup>9</sup> Hebrews 13:17; Philippians 2:29