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LESSON TITLE: MIRIAM- MOSES AND AARON'S SISTER

Miriam is mentioned by name 13 times in the Bible. I say by name because **Exodus 2: 1-8** says: (1) *And there went a man of the house of Levi, and took to wife a daughter of Levi. (2) And the woman conceived and bare a son; and when she saw him that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months. (3) And when she could not longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein; and she laid it in the flags by the river's brink. (4) And his sister stood afar off, to wit what would be done to him. (5) And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash herself at the river; and her maidens walked along by the rivers side; and when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent her maid to fetch it. (6) And when she had opened it, she saw the child; and, behold, the babe wept. And she had compassion on him, and said, this is one of the Hebrews children. (7) Then said his sister to Pharaoh's daughter, Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee? (8) And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Go. And the maid went and called the child's mother.* This was likely in reference to Miriam, however, to the best of my knowledge in all the other places the Bible speaks of Moses' sister she is spoken of by name.

**Numbers 26:59-60** tells us the father of Aaron, Moses and Miriam was Amram, and their mother's name was Jochebed. (You can also find in 1<sup>st</sup> Chronicles 6:3 that Amran was the father of Aaron, Moses, and Miriam.) Were told that Aaron had sons named Nadab, Abihu, Eleazer, and Ithamar. **Exodus 6:23** tells us Aaron's wife was named Elisheba, the daughter of Amminadab. In **Exodus 2: 21- Exodus 3:1 & Exodus 18:4**, we find that Jethro, the priest of Midian gave his daughter Zipporah to Moses, with whom he had two sons, Gershom and Eliezer. As for Miriam, to the best of my knowledge the Bible says nothing about her ever being a wife or mother, so either she wasn't, or she was, and the scriptures don't mention it.

Miriam was a prophetess. In fact, she was the first of about 6 women in the Bible known as such. According to Strong's Concordance, prophetess was taken from a word in the Hebrew language which can mean an inspired woman, or the wife of a prophet. In consideration of the few times the scriptures speak of the women who were a prophetess, I can't find one place where the Bible makes it plain that any of them were called a prophetess only because they were a prophet's wife. In Webster's 1828 dictionary he defined a prophetess as a female prophet, a woman who foretells future events. In the New Testament, Luke 2: 25-38 reads: (25) *And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. (26)*

*And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. (27) And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, (28) Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, (29) Lord, now lettest thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: (30) For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, (31) Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people: (32) A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. (33) And Joseph and his mother marvelled those things which were spoken of him. (34) And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; (35) (Yea, A sword shall also pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. (36) And there was one Anna, **a prophetess**, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity; (38) And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. (39) And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them who looked for redemption in Jerusalem.*

Note: Here the word prophetess comes from a Greek word meaning a female foreteller or an inspired woman.

In Judges 4:4 we read; *And Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, she judged Israel at that time.* The Bible calls Deborah a prophetess but says nothing about her husband Lapidoth being a prophet. If you read through the 4<sup>th</sup> chapter of Judges, you cannot deny the fact that Deborah foretold of future events, and what she foretold came to pass, which is what the prophets did, which is also true of Huldah in 2<sup>nd</sup> Kings 22:14-20.

In Exodus 4, when Moses was giving God his excuses why he shouldn't be the one sent to the Pharaoh, he told God he was slow of speech and of a slow tongue, and God told him he would send Aaron his brother with him to be his spokesman. **Exodus 5:1** says Moses and Aaron went in and told Pharaoh God had said let my people go. In **Exodus 7:10**, it was Moses and Aaron who went before the Pharaoh when Aaron cast the rod down before him and it became a serpent. In **Exodus 9:8** the Lord told Aaron and Moses to take a handful of ashes from the furnace and for Moses to sprinkle it toward the heaven in the sight of Pharaoh. It was Moses and Aaron over and over whom God would send to Pharaoh. There was never any mention of Miriam. However, in **Micah 6:4**, when God was reminding them of His deliverance, it says; *For I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt and redeemed thee out of the house of servants; and I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.* Now when they God had parted the waters and given them safe passage across the Red Sea and had drown the Egyptians when they tried to pursue them, **Exodus 15: 1 reads**; *Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and the rider hath he thrown into the sea. **Verses 20-21** tells us; And Miriam the **prophetess**, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel (tambourine) in her hand; and all the women went out after her*

*with timbrels and with dances. And Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.*

**Numbers 12:1-16;** (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 the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses? Hath he not spoken also by us? And the Lord heard it.* (3) *(Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.)* (4) *And the Lord spake suddenly unto Moses, and unto Aaron, and unto Miriam, Come out ye three unto the tabernacle of the congregation. And they three came out.* (5) *And the Lord came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth.* (6) *And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.* (7) *My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all my house.* (8) *With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches: and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?* (9) *And the anger of the Lord was kindled against them; and he departed.* (10) *And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle; and behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow: and Aaron looked upon Miriam, and, behold, she was leprous.* (11) *And Aaron said unto Moses, Alas, my lord, I beseech thee, lay not the sin upon us, wherein we have done foolishly, and wherein we have sinned.* (12) *Let her not be as one dead, of whom the flesh is half consumed when he cometh out of his mother's womb.* (13) *And Moses cried unto the Lord, saying, Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee.* (14) *And the Lord said unto Moses, If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven days? Let her be shut out from the camp seven days, and after that let her be received in again.* (15) *And Miriam was shut out from the camp seven days: and the people journeyed not till Miriam was brought in again.* (16) *And afterward the people removed from the Hazeroth, and pitched in the wilderness of Paran.*

Miriam, Aaron, and Moses seemed to have had a bad family trait, they had a tendency to anger the Lord. They all got in trouble with the Lord for doing things they should not have done. I'm not the judge, but with what we are told in the scriptures, it seems that perhaps Moses and Aaron were guilty of committing greater sins than Miriam their sister.

When Moses was up on the mountain with God receiving the two tables of stone, **Exodus 32:1-4** tells us what Aaron did. (1) *And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.* (2) *And Aaron said unto them, Break off the golden earrings, which are in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring them to me.* (3) *And all the people brake off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them unto Aaron.* (4) *And he received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.*

In **Numbers 20: 1-12** we find this; (1) Then came the children of Israel, even the whole congregation, into the desert of Zin in the first month: and the people abode in Kadesh; and Miriam died there and was buried. (2) And there was no water for the congregation: and they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron. (3) And the people chode with Moses, and spake, saying, Would God that we had died when our brethren died before the Lord! (4) And why have ye brought up the congregation of the Lord into this wilderness, that we and our cattle should die there? (5) And wherefore have ye made us to come up out of Egypt, to bring us in unto this evil place? It is no place of seed, or of figs, or of vines, or of pomegranates; neither is there any water to drink. (6) 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 there. (7) And the Lord spake unto Moses saying, (8) Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou, and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock: so thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink. ( And Moses took the rod from before the Lord, as he commanded him. (10) And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels: must we fetch you water out of this rock? (11) And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also. (12) And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.

Conclusion: **Deuteronomy 24: 8-9**; (8) Take heed in the plague of leprosy, that thou observe diligently, and do according to all that the priests the Levites shall teach you: as I commanded them, so shall ye observe to do. (9) remember what the Lord thy God did unto Miriam by the way, after that ye were come forth out of Egypt. I believe in this lesson I have used all the scriptures that speak of Miriam, the sister of Moses.