

WOMEN IN
THE BIBLE:
MIRIAM
AND ME

SERVICE AND
FORGIVENESS



5
LESSON

WOMEN IN THE BIBLE: MIRIAM AND ME

INTRODUCTION

Miriam's story offers an extraordinary example of God's willingness to offer forgiveness to those who sin. Miriam loved the Lord. But she allowed a bad attitude to grow, and this got her into trouble. God punished her but later restored her.

Such liberating forgiveness is available to us as well as to Miriam.

DISCOVER

- * Her Faithfulness to Duty
- * Her Leadership Abilities
- * Her Need of Forgiveness

GOING DEEPER

1. Pharaoh was fearful that the Hebrew slaves would become too numerous and thereby be so strong they would rebel, so what did he do to make sure that wouldn't happen? (Exodus 1:29)

2. Miriam was asked to do an unusual task for a young girl. What was it? (Exodus 2:1-4)

3. When the daughter of Pharaoh came to bathe in the river, what did she see? What did she instruct her maids to do? (Verse 5)

4. What did Miriam suggest to Pharaoh's daughter? With what result? (Verse 6-8)

5. What specific instructions did Pharaoh's daughter give for the mother as to how to care for the child? (Verses 9-10)

6. The next mention of Miriam, where she is identified by name, is found in Exodus 15:20-21. How is she identified in the first part of verse 20?

7. What feelings developed between the three siblings? What two causes are mentioned? (Numbers 12:1-3)

8. How did God handle this situation? (Verses 4-10)

MIRIAM

HER NAME MEANS "BITTERNESS"

KEY SCRIPTURE: EXODUS 2:1-10; EXODUS 15:20; NUMBERS 12; NUMBERS 26:59

9. How did the brothers address God and beg for their sister? With what result? (Verses 11-15)

2. What was Miriam's sin? How common is this sin now? What are its effects on those who commit it? On others involved?

WORDS FOR TODAY

10. We have a wonderful lesson in the faithfulness of Miriam in watching the basket holding her baby brother. Is it possible for each one of us to be as faithful to our duties, no matter how wearisome and small they may seem in our estimation? What is a mundane task I don't enjoy? How can the young Miriam's story help me?

11. When we are jealous and critical, who is harmed most—the person we are critical/jealous of, or ourselves? Explain.

WORDS OF WISDOM

The story of Miriam is a beautiful portrayal of a loving sister and obedient daughter who was willing to stay in the heat and to endure long hours of loneliness watching over her baby brother. As she grew to adulthood and was entrusted with the role of a prophetess, she served God as a faithful servant. The tragedy of her life is that she allowed envy to enter her mind until full-blown jealousy overtook her heart. When she developed leprosy, the loving concern of her brothers and their desire to save her from such a fate, also was demonstrated. Envy/jealousy is one of the most satanic traits that can exist in the hearts of humans. It always has dire results. Where there is envy, there is strife; and where strife is present, confusion and other evils are at work.

Notes:

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How can we be literally "our brother's keeper" in the family circle? In the community of believers?

MY PRAYER FOR TODAY

Dear God, in my life today chase away all feelings of envy and jealousy. Keep me faithful as I serve You. Help me to appreciate the talents and abilities of others. May I be encouraging of others rather than critical.

SHARING

When the conversations around you initiate thoughts of envy, do all you can to squash such evil words and feelings. Seek out those who have been maligned because of a jealous person, and do all you can to encourage them and to lift their spirits. Be a true sister to them.

Model a noncritical, nonjudgmental attitude. Focus on Jesus' life of service and humility. Invite the Holy Spirit to remove envy from your heart, and encourage others by sharing your experience.



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