

Awaken From Resentment

استيقظ من الاستياء



God's Dealings with Miriam

Heart Diseases

- Medical/Physical – Acute/Chronic
- Spiritual: Resentment (الاستياء)
- Tests:
 - Take your pulse:
 - Can you rejoice when the truth prevails and Christ is honored even though you don't receive your share of the benefits and prominence?
 - Can you rejoice when the name of the Lord is praised even though the credit that might be deserved by you is given to someone else?
- Numbers 12:
 - Moses, Aaron, and Miriam
 - One of them had a heart condition!



Meeting Miriam

- Moses' older sister
- Two incidents in Scripture
- First: during Moses's infancy (Exodus 2)
 - Played an instrumental part in the plan
 - *“Although it was her mother who had engineered the scheme..., the success of the rescue mission depended heavily on the girl's poise, charm and articulate self-expression. She had to be in the right place at the right time, using the right words and manner to impress the princess. God delivered Israel's future deliverer through Miriam's perfect delivery of his message.” (Sara Buwell, "The Challenge of Old Testament Women")*
 - Courageous, charming, and effective servant.



Meeting Miriam

- Second: Leading the praises (Exodus 15)
 - *²⁰ Then Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took the timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances.²¹ And Miriam answered them: “Sing to the LORD, For He has triumphed gloriously...”*
- She lead, and the women in camp followed her, dancing with music and energy.
 - Her enthusiasm, charisma, and natural leadership made Moses' praises come alive.
 - She was a vital, gifted woman who was capable and charismatic in her leadership.



Meeting Miriam

- She was a prophetess (before Moses appeared)
 - *“For I brought you up from the land of Egypt, I redeemed you from the house of bondage; And I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.” (Micah 6:4)*
- She conveyed God’s word, encouraging the Israelites to be courageous under hardship and to trust the Lord.
 - She may have periodically had dreams or visions from God and explained them to the people.
 - *“If there is a prophet among you, I, the Lord, make Myself known to him in a vision...” (Num 12)*

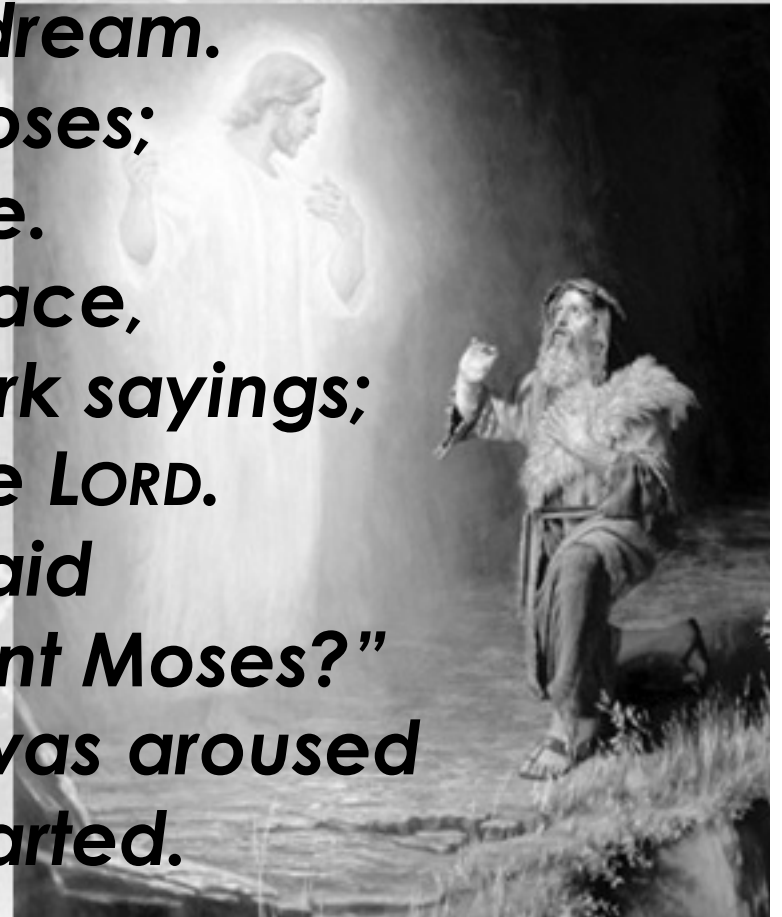


Miriam's Murmuring: Numbers 12

- ***Then Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married; for he had married an Ethiopian woman. ² So they said, “Has the LORD indeed spoken only through Moses? Has He not spoken through us also?” And the LORD heard it. ³ (Now the man Moses was very humble, more than all men who were on the face of the earth.) ⁴ Suddenly the LORD said to Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, “Come out, you three, to the tabernacle of meeting!” So the three came out. ⁵ Then the LORD came down in the pillar of cloud and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam. And they both went forward.***

Miriam's Murmuring: Numbers 12

- ***6 Then He said, "Hear now My words:
If there is a prophet among you,
I, the LORD, make Myself known to him in a
vision; I speak to him in a dream.
7 Not so with My servant Moses;
He is faithful in all My house.
8 I speak with him face to face,
Even plainly, and not in dark sayings;
And he sees the form of the LORD.
Why then were you not afraid
To speak against My servant Moses?"
9 So the anger of the LORD was aroused
against them, and He departed.***



Miriam's Murmuring: Numbers 12

- ***¹⁰ And when the cloud departed from above the tabernacle, suddenly Miriam became leprous, as white as snow. Then Aaron turned toward Miriam, and there she was, a leper. ¹¹ So Aaron said to Moses, "Oh, my lord! Please do not lay this sin on us, in which we have done foolishly and in which we have sinned. ¹² Please do not let her be as one dead, whose flesh is half consumed when he comes out of his mother's womb!" ¹³ So Moses cried out to the LORD, saying, "Please heal her, O God, I pray!"***



Miriam's Murmuring: Numbers 12

- ***¹⁴ Then the LORD said to Moses, "If her father had but spit in her face, would she not be shamed seven days? Let her be shut out of the camp seven days, and afterward she may be received again." ¹⁵ So Miriam was shut out of the camp seven days, and the people did not journey till Miriam was brought in again.***



Why Wasn't Aaron Punished?



- Aaron was a man who “blew where the wind blew”.
 - Easily influenced by the circumstances around him, afraid to take responsibility
 - Golden calf: “So they gave it to me, and I cast it into the fire, and **this calf came out.**” (Exodus 32:24)
 - Good speaker, but only spoke what he was told:
 - “Is not Aaron the Levite your brother? I know that he can speak well... ¹⁵ Now you shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth. ” (Exodus 4)
- Influenced by Miriam’s murmuring, but apparently she’s the instigator.
 - She had an untreated heart condition!

A New Ministry



- At the Exodus something new began:
 - “So the LORD **spoke to Moses face to face**, as a man speaks to his friend.” (Exodus 33:11)
 - Moses became the lawgiver on Mount Sinai
 - God began to explain himself in the written law so that everyone could grow in His knowledge .
- *Result:* People like Miriam were less needed
 - It wasn't her fault that God's changed His method
 - It was a perfectly good that her role should diminish.
 - “He must increase, but I must decrease.” (John 3:30)
 - As change takes place the need for certain kinds of gifts or talents may change also
 - Gift of Prophecy? Interpretation of tongues?

Character Assassins

- Instead of appreciating that God was using another, being thankful; she grew to resent it.
 - Her heart became progressively sicker.
- She fooled herself: *Ethiopian wife*
 - *Has nothing to do with the issue*
 - *A “smoke-screen” to hide what really angers us*
- Real problem: *“Has the LORD indeed spoken only through Moses? Has He not spoken through us also?”*
 - *They chose to assassinate his character and gossip about him instead.*



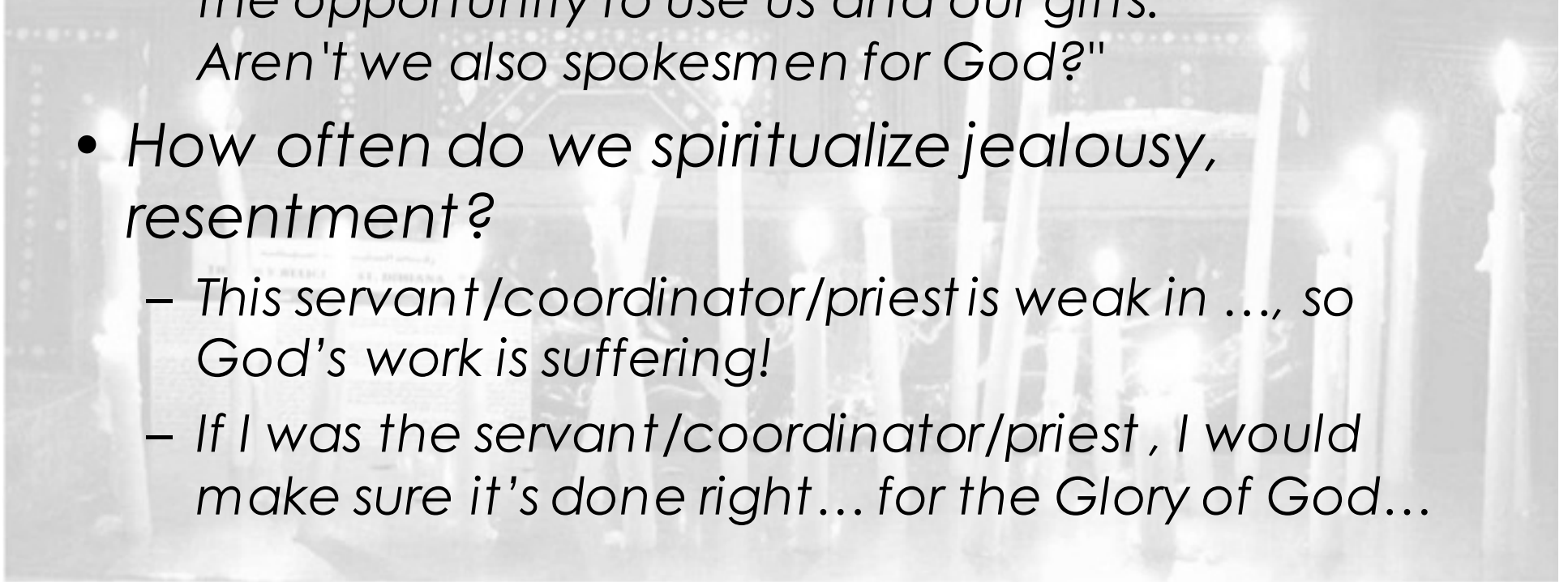
Character Assassins

- Character assassination always goes hand in hand with resentment (الاستياء).
 - Divorced parents point out their ex-spouse's faults in order to diminish them in the eyes of their children.
 - *"This Man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner."* (Luke 7:39)



Spiritualizing the Problem

- Ethiopian wife wasn't the problem!
- *Problem*: bitterness and jealousy
- They spiritualized it:
 - "Maybe with Moses in the spotlight, God is denied the opportunity to use us and our gifts. Aren't we also spokesmen for God?"
- How often do we spiritualize jealousy, resentment?
 - This servant/coordinator/priest is weak in ..., so God's work is suffering!
 - If I was the servant/coordinator/priest, I would make sure it's done right... for the Glory of God...



The Most Humble Man



- *“Now the man Moses was very humble, more than all men who were on the face of the earth.”*
 - Moses didn't push Miriam or Aaron out of spotlight
 - God begun a new work
 - Their services were less required
- *“So the anger of the LORD was aroused against them, and He departed”*
 - Most terrifying – God departing, leaving us!
 - Doesn't want our service!
 - *“When you spread out your hands, I will hide My eyes from you” (Isa 1)*

The Subtle Sin

- “*Miriam became leprous, as white as snow*”
 - Most feared and hated human condition
 - Symbolic of sin
- Why did God storm upon them?
 - Miriam disgraced with painful disease
 - Exiled by herself into the wilderness
 - Whole nation detained for a week
- God was concerned with the attitude of her heart;
her infectious heart disease



The Subtle Sin

- Resentment takes place inside
- We justify it, hold onto it, and relish it.
- We use words like fairness and justice:
 - “It's not fair...”, “What about me...”, “I deserve...”
- *“Looking carefully... lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled” (Heb 12:15)*
 - Resentment impedes other people
 - It ruins the lives of other people
 - It is disfiguring and ugly: leprous

Resentment is like drinking poison and waiting for the other person to die.

Carrie Fisher

How Can We Get Over Resentment?

- Gratitude – الشكر – الامتنان
 - Look at what God has given us
 - Appreciate the lives that we have
 - Daily thanksgiving
- Humility
 - Humble ourselves under his hand;
 - Receive the gift from him without complaining about what he's doing in the lives of others.



Miriam and Aaron's Problem

- They had a little brother who was destined to have a greater name than they.
 - They had given themselves to making him successful
 - Aaron: spokesman without receiving equal credit.
 - Moses was the greater figure, Aaron was his servant
 - Miriam saved Moses's life as a baby.
 - She gave life to his song, inspired the people to sing
- It was difficult to see their little brother succeed:
 - In the tent of God, talking face to face with him, giving the law and leading the people.
 - Moses had succeeded because they had served him well, and yet they felt that they had not been recognized for their efforts.

Serving Others' Success

- As servants, we are required to make someone else successful:
 - Students, fellow servants, coordinators, church
- The Lord has the right to require us to elevate others
- It is not wrong or unfair for Him to do that.
- It is wrong for us to resent it if He does!
- Gratitude and humility will help cure our resentful hearts.

