

From Egypt to the Promised Land!

Part 3

Prejudice or sibling rivalry?

Numbers 12

Numbers 12:1-2

When they were in Hazeroth, Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of

the Cushite woman he had married: “He married a Cushite woman!”

They said, “has the Lord spoken only through Moses?”



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The origin of the name Cush is unknown. Usually the word is related to Ethiopia and to those who were of dark skin.

The prophet Jeremiah rhetorically asks, "***Can the Cushite change his skin?***" (Jeremiah 13:23).

Moses killed an Egyptian (Exodus 2: 12) which resulted in Moses escaping to land of Midian.

Not certain where Midian is. Midian was a son of Abraham by Abraham's 2nd wife Keturah.

In Midian, Moses married a daughter of Jethro, named Zipporah.
2 sons were born: Gershom and Eliezer.

After the story of the burning bush, Moses is directed to return to Egypt to lead the Israelites to freedom.

In route, Moses is suddenly struck down with illness which looked like he was going to die. G-D was displeased that Moses had not circumcised his son(s).
Close to death (Ex 4:25) Zipporah performed the rite of circumcision.

What is the significance of Circumcision?

Did Moses have 2 Wives?

Zipporah and the 2 sons accompany Moses (Ex. 4:20) as he traveled back to Egypt.

Exodus 18:2 indicates that Zipporah and her sons were sent back to Jethro before Moses returned to Egypt.

They are again reunited after the Exodus.

From that point on, we read nothing more about Zipporah.

Moses remarries

“When they were in Hazeroth, Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Cushite woman he had married: ‘He married a Cushite woman!’” (Numbers 12”1).

Interracial marriage among the Israelites

Abraham married Keturah (Genesis 25).

Joseph married Asenath, daughter of Potiphera, priest of On (Genesis 41:45).

Moses married Zipporah, daughter of the Midian priest Jethro, and the Cushite woman!

The only prohibition was the one mentioned in Deuteronomy 7:3 where the Israelites were not to marry anyone from the following nations: Perizzites, Hivites, Jebusites, Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites!



Miriam's punishment - Numbers 12:10!



Miriam is afflicted with Leprosy.

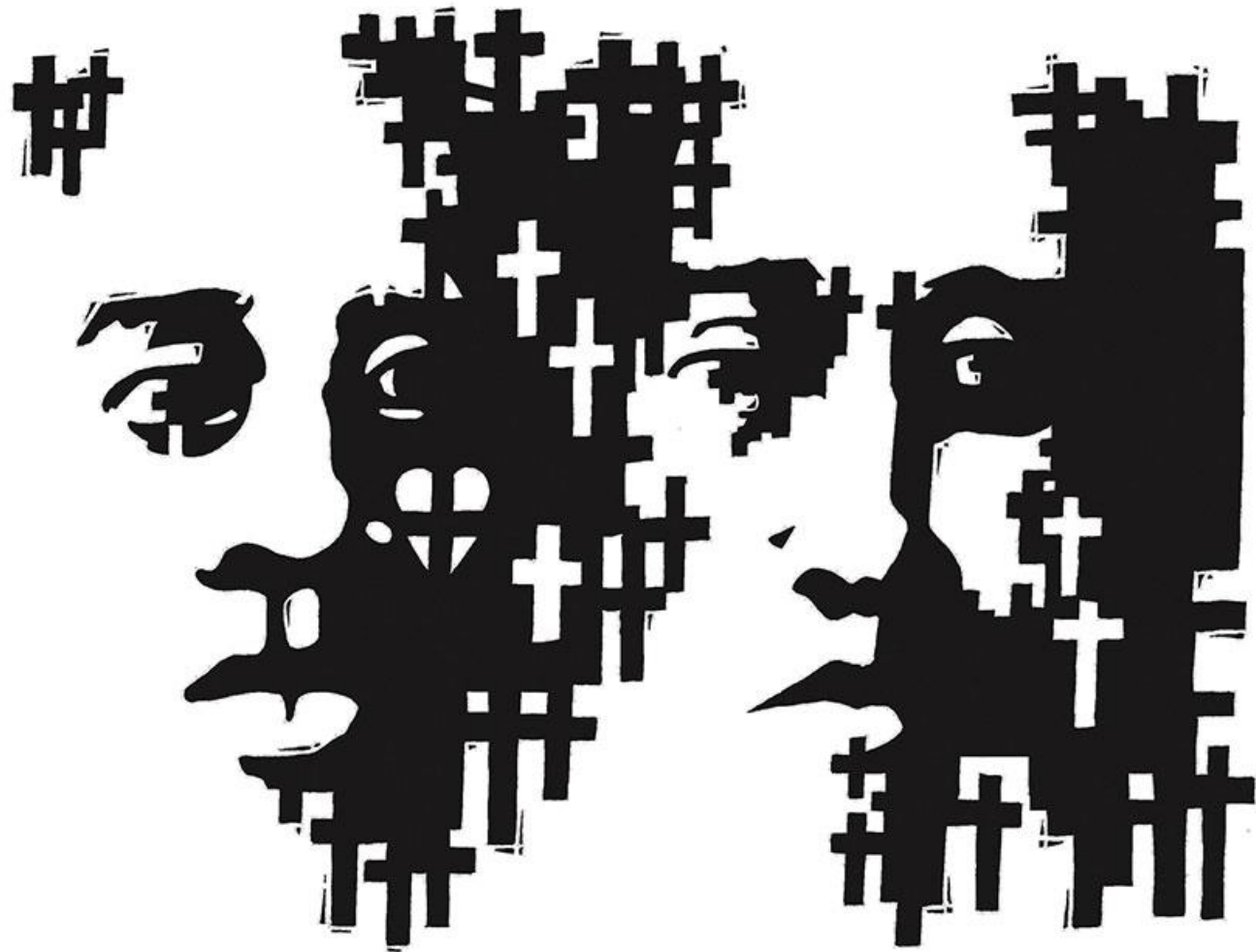
Why only Miriam and not Aaron?

Why Leprosy?

Was this punishment God's subtle way of dealing with sibling rivalry and, perhaps, prejudice?



Proof that you are a racist!



Pray - Pray for forgiveness, understanding and knowledge

Listen - engage in dialog with others who have different experiences than you have (talk only after listening!)

Learn - Be open to change in your life; seek God's guidance as to how you can make a difference! (How is the world a better place because of your presence?)

