

~MIRIAM 1 (250)

(Mir'i-am) [possibly, Rebellious]

· Leads Israel's Women In Song

· Complains Against Moses

- Daughter of Amram and his wife Jochebed, both of the tribe of Levi, sister of Moses and Aaron.
- And the name of Amram's wife was Jochebed, Levis daughter, whom his wife bore to Levi in Egypt. In time she bore to Amram Aaron and Moses and **Miriam** their sister. (**Numbers 26:59**)
- The sons of Levi were Gershon, Kohath and Merari. (**1 Chronicles 6:1**)
- And the sons of Kohath were Amram, Izhar and Hebron and Uzziel. (**1 Chronicles 6:2**)
- And the sons of Amram were Aaron and Moses, and there was **Miriam**. And the sons of Aaron were Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. (**1 Chronicles 6:3**)
- Though not specifically named in the account, she was undoubtedly the one termed **his sister** who watched to see what would become of the infant Moses as he lay in an ark placed among the reeds of the river Nile.
- When she was no longer able to conceal him, she then took for him an ark of papyrus and coated it with bitumen and pitch and put the child in it and put it among the reeds by the bank of the river Nile. (**Exodus 2:3**)
- Further, his sister stationed herself at a distance to find out what would be done with him. (**Exodus 2:4**)
- After Pharaoh's daughter discovered the babe, felt compassion for it, and recognized that it was one of the children of the Hebrews, **Miriam** asked if she should summon a Hebrew woman to nurse the child.

- Being told to do so by Pharaoh's daughter, the maiden went and called the child's mother, Jochebed, who was thereafter employed to care for Moses until he grew up.
- After a while Pharaoh's daughter came down to bathe in the Nile River, and her female attendants were walking by the side of the Nile River. And she caught sight of the ark in the middle of the reeds. Immediately she sent her slave girl that she might get it. (Exodus 2:5)
- When she opened it she got to see the child, and here the boy was weeping. At that she felt compassion for him, although she said; This is one of the children of the Hebrews. (Exodus 2:6)
- Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter; Shall I go and specially call for you a nursing woman from the Hebrew women that she may nurse the child for you? (Exodus 2:7)
- So Pharaoh's daughter said to her; Go! At once the maiden went and called the child's mother. (Exodus 2:8)
- Pharaoh's daughter then said to her; Take this child with you and nurse him for me, and I myself shall give you your wages. Accordingly the woman took the child and nursed him. (Exodus 2:9)
- And the child grew up. Then she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, so that he became a son to her, and she proceeded to call his name Moses and to say; It is because I have drawn him out of the water. (Exodus 2:10)

·· Leads Israel's Women In Song

- Years later, after witnessing Yehowah's triumph over Pharaoh's military forces at the Red Sea and upon hearing the song of Moses and the men of Israel, **Miriam** the prophetess led the women of Israel in joyful tambourine playing and in dancing.
- Responding to the song led by Moses, Miriam sang; Sing to Yehowah, for he has become highly exalted. The horse and its rider he has pitched into the sea.
- At that time Moses and the sons of Israel proceeded to sing this song to Yehowah and to say the following; Let me sing to

Yehowah, for he has become highly exalted the horse and its rider he has pitched into the sea. (**Exodus 15:1**)

- And **Miriam** the prophetess, Aaron's sister, proceeded to take a tambourine in her hand, and all the women began going out with her with tambourines and in dances. (**Exodus 15:20**)
- And **Miriam** kept responding to the men; Sing to Yehowah, for he has become highly exalted. The horse and its rider he has pitched into the sea. (**Exodus 15:21**)

•• **Complains Against Moses**

- While the Israelites were in the wilderness, **Miriam** and Aaron began to speak against Moses because of his Cushite wife. Moses prominence and influence with the people may have created in Miriam and Aaron a jealous desire for more authority, so that they kept saying; Is it just by Moses alone that Yehowah has spoken?

- Is it not by us also that he has spoken? But Yehowah was listening and suddenly instructed Moses, Miriam, and Aaron to go to the tent of meeting. There God reminded the murmurers that their brother Moses was His servant, the one with whom God spoke, not indirectly, but mouth to mouth.

- Yehowah next asked Miriam and Aaron; Why, then, did you not fear to speak against my servant, against Moses? God's anger got to be hot against them and, as the cloud over the tent moved away, Miriam was struck with leprosy as white as snow.

- Aaron made a plea for mercy, Moses interceded for her, and Yehowah allowed **Miriam** to return to the camp after a humiliating seven-day quarantine.

- Now **Miriam** and Aaron began to speak against Moses on account of the Cushite wife whom he had taken, because it was a Cushite wife he had taken. (**Numbers 12:1**)

- And they kept saying; Is it just by Moses alone that Yehowah has spoken? Is it not by us also that he has spoken? And Yehowah was listening. (**Numbers 12:2**)

- And the man Moses was by far the meekest of all the men who were upon the surface of the ground. (**Numbers 12:3**)

- Then Yehowah suddenly said to Moses and Aaron and **Miriam**; Go out, the three of you, to the tent of meeting. So the three of them went out. (**Numbers 12:4**)
- After that Yehowah came down in the pillar of cloud and stood at the entrance of the tent and called Aaron and **Miriam**. At this both of them went out. (**Numbers 12:5**)
- And he went on to say; Hear my words, please. If there came to be a prophet of yours for Yehowah, it would be in a vision I would make myself known to him. In a dream I would speak to him. (**Numbers 12:6**)
- Not so my servant Moses! He is being entrusted with all my house. (**Numbers 12:7**)
- Mouth to mouth I speak to him, thus showing him, and not by riddles, and the appearance of Yehowah is what he beholds. Why, then, did you not fear to speak against my servant, against Moses? (**Numbers 12:8**)
- And Yehowah's anger got to be hot against them, and he went his way. (**Numbers 12:9**)
- And the cloud turned away from over the tent, and, look! **Miriam** was struck with leprosy as white as snow. Then Aaron turned toward Miriam, and, look! She was struck with leprosy. (**Numbers 12:10**)
- Immediately Aaron said to Moses; Excuse me, my lord! Do not, please, attribute to us the sin in which we have acted foolishly and which we have committed! (**Numbers 12:11**)
- Please, do not let her continue like someone dead, whose flesh at the time of his coming out of his mother's womb is half eaten off! (**Numbers 12:12**)
- And Moses began to cry out to Yehowah, saying; O God, please! Heal her, please! (**Numbers 12:13**)
- Then Yehowah said to Moses; Were her father to spit directly in her face, would she not be humiliated seven days? Let her be quarantined seven days outside the camp, and afterward let her

be received in. (**Numbers 12:14**)

- Accordingly **Miriam** was quarantined outside the camp seven days, and the people did not pull away until **Miriam** was received in. (**Numbers 12:15**)
- The fact that only **Miriam** was stricken with leprosy may suggest that she was the instigator of wrong conduct on that occasion. Her sin in murmuring against Moses may have been greater than Aaron's, possibly even being a case of jealousy of a woman against another woman, since they began to speak against Moses on account of his Cushite wife, with Aaron siding in with his sister rather than his sister-in-law.
- Since **Miriam** was viewed as a prophetess, she may have enjoyed being the most prominent woman in Israel. So **Miriam** perhaps feared that Moses wife would eclipse her.
- Regardless of such possibilities, however, and while it was grossly improper for both **Miriam** and Aaron to murmur against Moses, it was especially wrong for **Miriam** to do so because of woman's God-assigned place of subjection to the man.
- But I want you to know that the head of every man is the Christ. In turn the head of a woman is the man. In turn the head of the Christ is God. (**1 Corinthians 11:3**)
- Let a woman learn in silence with full submissiveness. (**1 Timothy 2:11**)
- I do not permit a woman to teach, or to exercise authority over a man, but to be in silence. (**1 Timothy 2:12**)
- For Adam was formed first, then Eve. (**1 Timothy 2:13**)
- Also, Adam was not deceived, but the woman was thoroughly deceived and came to be in transgression. (**1 Timothy 2:14**)
- **Miriam's** sinful conduct was later used as a warning example, for at the end of the wilderness trek Moses told the people to comply with priestly instructions regarding leprosy and urged them to remember what Yehowah had done to **Miriam** when they were coming out of Egypt.

- Be on your guard in the plague of leprosy to take good care and do according to all that the priests, the Levites, will instruct you. Just as I have commanded them, you should be careful to do. (**Deuteronomy 24:8**)
- There should be a remembering of what Yehowah your God did to **Miriam** in the way when you were coming out of Egypt. (**Deuteronomy 24:9**)

See Also AARON

- **Miriam** died and was buried at Kadesh in the Wilderness of Zin, shortly before Aaron's death.
- And the sons of Israel, the entire assembly, proceeded to come into the wilderness of Zin in the first month, and the people took up dwelling in Kadesh. It was there that **Miriam** died and there that she was buried. (**Numbers 20:1**)
- Then Moses stripped Aaron of his garments and clothed Eleazar his son with them, after which Aaron died there on the top of the mountain. And Moses and Eleazar came on down from the mountain. (**Numbers 20:28**)
- Centuries later, through his prophet Micah, Yehowah called to remembrance the privilege **Miriam** enjoyed in association with her brothers when Israel came out of Egypt, saying,
- For I brought you up out of the land of Egypt, and from the house of slaves I redeemed you, and I proceeded to send before you Moses, Aaron and **Miriam**. (**Micah 6:4**)