

A BROTHER AND SISTER MURMUR

Numbers 12:1-16

LESSON 37 – Primary Course

MEMORY VERSE: “Do all things without murmurings” (Philippians 2:14).

Moses’ Brother and Sister

We remember the story of the baby Moses who was hidden in the little ark by the river’s bank. His sister, who stood afar off to watch, no doubt was Miriam about whom we are now studying. Moses also had a brother, named Aaron.

Moses had been called of God to be the leader of the Children of Israel. Aaron and Miriam had been very helpful to Moses many times. We know that God loved Aaron, for at the time that God came down upon the mountain He called Moses and Aaron up into the mountain so that He could talk to them. However, sometimes Aaron and Miriam did things that displeased God very much and must have made Moses feel very bad.

We remember how displeased Moses was at the time that he came down out of the mountain and found that his brother Aaron had sinned and made golden calf for the people to worship. They should have kept right on worshipping the true God, even though their leader Moses was up in the mountain for a time. These people knew that Moses had prayed for them many times, and God had answered his prayers.

Brothers and sisters can be a great deal of help to one another if they love one another and love Jesus. But if they are not saved and quarrel and are unkind to one another, they can bring much trouble and sorrow into their lives.

God Hears Murmurings

The Lord had told the people at one time that when they murmured, it was not against Moses and Aaron, but against God. Just so it was now. Aaron and Miriam murmured against their brother Moses – so they thought. But it was really against God, and He heard it, too.

When a child murmurs against a minister of the Gospel or even against his Sunday School teacher, it actually is against God. We should be careful always to obey those who are trying to teach us how to follow the Lord. A child is also murmuring against God when he murmurs against his parents. God said, “Do all things without murmurings and disputings” (Philippians 2:14). Sometimes a parent will tell a child to do something and the child will ask, “Why?” We should go at once and do what we are told to do by our parents, without having to know the reason: “Children, obey your parents in all things.”

The Punishment

We read that a terrible thing happened to Aaron and Miriam as punishment for their sin. The Lord came down in a cloud and stood in the door of the Tabernacle and called Aaron and Miriam. He rebuked them for the wrong they had done; He also asked them if they were not afraid to speak against Moses. Then Miriam became a leper.

Leprosy is a very bad sickness, and in many instances in the Bible the Lord punished people with leprosy when they sinned. The skin becomes white, and sometimes there are spots or sores all over the body. However, the stains of sin on a heart are even worse than the spots of leprosy on the skin. It takes the Blood of Jesus to heal the leper and it also takes the Blood of Jesus to save the sinner.

Moses prayed for Miriam to be healed; but she had to be shut out of the camp for seven days. Then she was brought back into the camp and the people could go on their journey. This was a good lesson for Miriam and Aaron as well as for all the people in the camp. It is also a good lesson for us to remember. God does not like murmuring.

QUESTIONS

1. Why was it wrong for Aaron and Miriam to murmur against Moses? Numbers 12:6-8; Hebrews 13:17.
2. How was Miriam punished for murmuring? Numbers 12:10.
3. Who prayed for Miriam to be healed? Numbers 12:13.
4. How long was she shut out from the camp? Numbers 12:15.
5. Is Jesus displeased when we murmur? Philippians 2:14.
6. When we murmur, against whom is it? Exodus 16:8.