

4. Verses 13-16: Moses as the _____ for the sinners.

Moses, whose person and character and status and authority has been called into question by his brother and sister, is now going to the Lord crying out for their forgiveness for a sin they committed against him.

Jesus in Luke 23:34: "*Father forgive them. For they have no idea what they are doing.*"

Another look at the background info:

- Aaron and Miriam are older than Moses. Moses was 80; Aaron was 83; this would make Miriam likely in her 90's, as she was old enough to watch over Moses when floating in the Nile.
- Exodus 15:20-21: Miriam was a prophetess.
- Micah 6:4: God says He delivered Israel by Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.
- Miriam saved Moses as a baby. She made it possible for his true mother to become his nurse.

They couldn't see that God was in the process of using them (as well as Moses) over a lot of years.

Giving them some slack:

It appears they were complaining in a somewhat private scene. It appears they were not attempting to gain support from a group. It appears they just wanted more recognition. God was giving someone else more acclaim. They were jealous.

What did God develop in you today? As you are walking with God, consider:

- ✓ Are you finding fault with someone?
- ✓ Is your fault-finding based on pride?
- ✓ Does your fault-finding build you up while tearing down others?
- ✓ Do you speak and act with integrity?
- ✓ Does God need to have a meeting with you?

Series: The Life and Times of Moses
Text: Numbers 12

Title: Who Said What?
Topic: Fault finding

Review:

Two weeks ago in chapter 11 we saw: Grumbling

- ✓ Whenever we complain about our circumstances, we deny God's providence over us.
- ✓ When we complain we tend to spread a spirit of complaint amongst brethren.
- ✓ When we complain we undervalue the rich provisions of God.
- ✓ Moses complained very boldly to God.

In the previous chapter, all was going well...and abruptly in 11 they are grumbling openly about God. Sin is contagious.

Lesson:

Background info:

- Aaron and Miriam are older than Moses. Moses was 80; Aaron was 83; this would make Miriam likely in her 90's, as she was old enough to watch over Moses when floating in the Nile.
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1. Verses 1-4: _____ against Moses from his own family.

A priest and a prophetess speak out against God's chosen leader.

They begin by grumbling about Moses' wife. She is called an Ethiopian (Cushite). This could have been Zipporah, because Midianite and Cushite mean the same thing. Or she could have died and he married another.

The point is she is not of Hebrew blood. However, that is not the real issue....

Two points of interest:

- A. Did the LORD indeed only speak through Moses? No and yes. Of course, the LORD had spoken through many in the Book of Exodus already: The LORD spoke to the people through Aaron in Exodus 4:30; He spoke to Aaron in Exodus 12:1; Miriam herself spoke words inspired by God in Exodus 15:21. But in the sense of there being one leader for Israel, there was only one. Moses, under God's hand, had the authority and the accountability to lead the people.

- B. • *Anav: Humble, meek, poor, lowly.*
"I think the word is not rightly understood; *anav*, which we translate *meek*, comes from *anah*, to *act upon*, to *humble*, *depress*, *afflict*, and is translated so in many places in the Old Testament; and in this sense it should be understood here: 'Now this man Moses was *depressed* or *afflicted* more than any man of that land.'" (Clarke)

It seems like the siblings maybe had been grumbling in secret, but... *And the Lord heard it!!!!!!* He sees everything and hears everything and knows all of our thoughts....

2. Verses 5-8: God's _____ to the rebellion/complaining/envy.

God defends Moses. This is a dramatic appearance of God. This is an important occasion. God calls a meeting to vindicate His mediator. He calls the meeting to teach of the necessity of the mediator.

Why Moses got to have direct and intimate conversations with God:

- Because God _____ to have a man this intimate with Him, to be a vessel of revelation and a proper leader for the nation through this remarkable time of the Exodus.
- Because Moses, according to God, is *faithful in all My house*. His walk of righteousness and purity, demonstrated over forty years in obscure service of God in the smallest things, revealed the faithful heart God saw in Moses.

Point made by God: Moses is My specifically appointed servant.

3. Verses 9-12: God's _____.

Aaron has an immediate and dramatic change of heart from the threat that he might be the next victim of God's judgment.

Aaron seems a man easily swayed; swayed by a crowd wanting an idol, swayed by his sister (who seemed to be the instigator, because she is named first and was first struck with leprosy), and now swayed quickly back to a humble submission before Moses.

The judgment against Miriam is physical. The anger of the Lord was against them both, yet He only zaps Miriam. Why?

- She is mentioned first.
 - The verb "*spoke*" in verse 1 is "feminine."
 - She is the one that will be punished most severely as we will see.
 - Aaron, by nature, was not a leader. He was easily influenced by others.
- The golden calf incident reveals this truth

Aaron's job was to be a type of mediator for Israel in the ceremonies. Now Aaron is the guilty party. Aaron is unable to intercede for her because he is the accomplice in the very thing that brought this judgment on her. He can see why a mediator is necessary in the form of Moses. So, Aaron turns to Moses and begs him to intercede for them.