

LEPROSY !

Leviticus 13: 1- 14: 57 ; Numbers 12: 1-16

Leprosy is a terrible disease. It is a chronic, infectious disease characterized by sores, scabs, and whitening spots beneath the skin. Wherever people get these spots, they lose feeling, and so it is common for them to get cuts and burns in the diseased areas and never know it. Consequently, the wounds are not taken care of and infection sets in. Often times people with leprosy are missing ears, noses, fingers, toes, and even arms and legs due to infections as well as to the disease itself. To be declared a leper and unclean was a most dreaded thing. For because the disease is contagious, those who had it were driven from their homes and families. People feared that they would catch the disease from their loved ones, so they drove the poor lepers from their homes. The lepers became the outcasts of society, and lived a very sad and lonely existence. In the book of Leviticus, God tells his people how to deal with those who had the disease in order to protect the rest of their society.

After the tabernacle was completed, it was dedicated and the worship that the Lord had ordained was begun. In the book of Leviticus the Lord tells the people all the laws and for worship and government as well as the dietary regulations. Once the laws were given, the Lord started the children of Israel on their way to the promised land. As had happened before, the people began to murmur and complain. They remembered only the good things from their time of enslavement in Egypt, but they forgot how hard and difficult their lives had been. Once again the Lord had to discipline them for their disobedience.

About this time, Miriam and Aaron, Moses' sister and brother, spoke against Moses because he had married an Ethiopian woman. They said, "Has the Lord really spoken only by Moses? Hasn't he also spoken by us?" The Lord heard their complaints. Miriam and Aaron were jealous of Moses' authority and wished more power and recognition for themselves. Remember the tenth commandment that the Lord gave, saying that we should not covet what belongs to our neighbor? Well, Aaron and Miriam were coveting what the Lord had given to Moses, and the Lord was greatly displeased.

The Bible tells us that the man Moses was very meek, more than any other person on the earth. He would not have fought Miriam or Aaron for his position. But, suddenly, the Lord spoke to Moses, and Aaron, and Miriam. He said, "Come out you three to the tabernacle of the congregation." The three of them went to the tabernacle as God commanded.

Then to the Lord came down in the pillar of the cloud and stood in the door of the tabernacle. He called to Miriam and Aaron and they came before him. The Lord said, "Listen now to my words. If there is a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known to him in a vision, and I will speak to him in a dream. But with my servant Moses this is not the way that I speak to him. He is faithful in all my house. With him I will speak mouth to mouth, openly, and without hidden meanings. He alone is allowed to see the similitude of the Lord. Why were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?"

Because of what they had done the anger of the Lord was great against Miriam and Aaron. The cloud left from off the tabernacle, and as it left, Miriam became leprous, white as snow. Aaron looked at his sister Miriam and saw that she had become a leper.

Aaron said to Moses, "Oh no, my lord, I beg you do not lay our sin upon us, because we have done foolishly and we have sinned. Do not let Miriam be as a person that is dead with half of her flesh consumed away by this leprosy!"

Then Moses cried to the Lord, saying, "Heal her now, O God, I beseech you."

The Lord answered Moses, "If her father had humbled her, would she not be ashamed for seven days? Let her be shut out of the camp for seven days, and after that she may return to the camp."

So Miriam was shut out of the camp for seven days, and the people did not travel until Miriam was brought back into the camp.

After that they traveled from Hazeroth, and pitched their tents in the wilderness of Paran.

I'm sure by the time that all this was over, Miriam and Aaron wished that they had never complained. The Lord was teaching all the people some powerful lessons by bringing the leprosy on Miriam for their sin. They learned that the Lord does not overlook complaining. He is serious when tells us to be content with what he gives us and where he puts us. He also wanted all the people to see that a position of leadership is not something to be grabbed at. The Lord puts who he wants in leadership and authority, it is not our place to question him and desire what he does not give. He has his plan and we are to accept it.

The people also saw the mark of a true leader. Moses was meek and did not fight his sister and brother for threatening his leadership. Instead, he left the situation to the Lord to take care of. When the Lord had punished the sin, Moses was forgiving and kind, praying for his sister, in spite of the hurt that she had caused him. Moses truly had a heart to serve the Lord and that is what made him such a great leader.

LEARN : Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.

So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

Hebrews 13:5,6

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Hebrews 13: 5,6

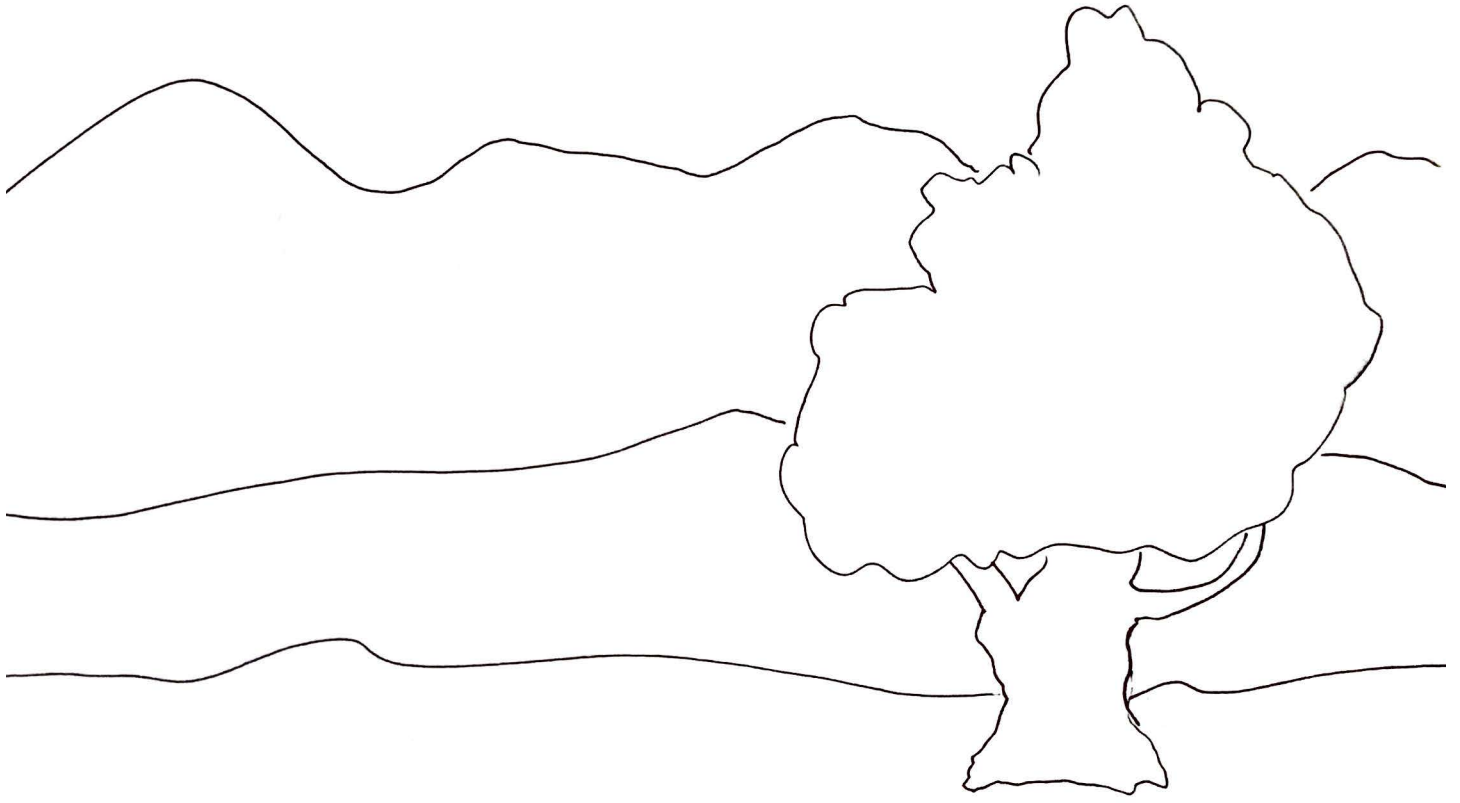
3. Cut them out - Be sure to leave tabs on crying Miriam.

4. Paste angry Miriam + Aaron on scene -
Put paste only down center of Miriam -
so the edges are left loose.

5. Paste leprosy on Miriam - (white construction paper torn in small pieces.)

6. Use tabs to put leprous Miriam over angry Miriam + tell story.







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