

The Danger of Criticism and the Power of Humility

The Sin of Criticism

In this chapter, Miriam and Aaron, Moses' own sister and brother, begin to criticize him. Their complaint? His Ethiopian wife. But beneath the surface, their real issue wasn't about his marriage—it was about his leadership. **“Has the Lord only spoken through Moses? Hasn't He also spoken through us?”** (Numbers 12:2).

Their jealousy and pride led them to challenge Moses' authority. They didn't like that he had a special relationship with God, one that set him apart. But they weren't just questioning Moses—they were questioning God's choice.

Personal Application:

Criticism and jealousy are dangerous. When we speak against someone God has called, we aren't just criticizing them—we are challenging God's decision. Have we ever torn someone down because we felt overlooked or underappreciated? Have we ever questioned why God is using someone else instead of us?

Instead of comparing ourselves to others, we should trust God's plan for our lives. **Envy blinds us to our own calling.** If Miriam and Aaron had focused on their own God-given roles instead of resenting Moses, they would have avoided judgment.

God's Response: Defending His Servant

God immediately calls Miriam and Aaron to the Tabernacle. He makes it clear that Moses is unlike any other prophet—God speaks to him face-to-face, not in dreams or riddles. Then God asks a sobering question:

“Why then were you not afraid to speak against My servant Moses?” (Numbers 12:8).

God is serious about how we treat His anointed. He hears every word we say. **When we gossip, criticize, or tear others down, God takes it personally.**

Personal Application:

We live in a culture where criticism is common. Social media thrives on tearing people down. But as followers of Christ, we are called to a higher standard. Instead of speaking against others, we should honor them. Instead of criticizing, we should pray.

David refused to harm King Saul, even when Saul was trying to kill him. Why? Because he respected the fact that Saul had been anointed by God. Do we show that same respect for the people God has placed in leadership—whether in church, at work, or even in our families?

The Consequence of Pride

Immediately, Miriam is struck with leprosy, a disease that symbolized impurity and separation. Aaron, seeing her condition, pleads with Moses, admitting their foolishness. Moses, in turn, intercedes for his sister: **“O God, I beg You, please heal her!”** (Numbers 12:13).

God responds with mercy but requires Miriam to remain outside the camp for seven days before being restored.

Personal Application:

Pride isolates us. Criticism and jealousy don’t just hurt others—they distance us from God’s presence and community. Like Miriam, unchecked pride can lead to painful consequences.

But there’s hope. **Moses didn’t hold a grudge—he prayed for his sister’s healing.** That’s a picture of Christ, who intercedes for us even when we fail. **Are we willing to pray for those who have wronged us?** Are we quick to seek forgiveness when we realize we’ve been wrong?

Final Thoughts:

This chapter reminds us to:

- **Guard our words**—Criticism and jealousy lead to consequences.
- **Trust God’s calling**—Instead of envying others, focus on our own purpose.
- **Pray for those who hurt us**—Like Moses, we should intercede rather than retaliate.
- **Seek restoration**—When we mess up, humility leads to healing.

Miriam’s story teaches us that **pride leads to separation, but humility leads to restoration.** Let’s choose humility, honoring those God has called, and trusting Him to use us in His perfect way.