

REMEMBER MIRIAM!
Follow Christ
Banská Štiavnica, 29th December 2019

<p>הַשְׁמֵר בְּנַעֲהֲצַרְעַת לְשֹׁמֵר מְאֹד וְלַעֲשׂוֹת כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר-יֹאמְרוּ אֲתָכֶם הַכֹּהֲנִים הַלְוִיִּם כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתֶם תִּשְׁמְרוּ לַעֲשׂוֹת זְכוֹר אֵת אֲשֶׁר-עָשָׂה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לַמִּרְיָם בְּדַרְךְ בְּצֵאתְכֶם מִמִּצְרַיִם</p>	<p>Dt 24:8-9 Take care, in a case of leprous disease, to be very careful to do according to all that the Levitical priests shall direct you. As I commanded them, so you shall be careful to do. ⁹ Remember what the LORD your God did to Miriam on the way as you came out of Egypt.</p>
<p>וַתְּדַבֵּר מִרְיָם וְאַהֲרֹן בְּמִנְשֵׁה עַל-אֲדוֹת הָאִשָּׁה הַכִּשִּׁית כִּי-אִשָּׁה כִּשִּׁית לָקַח וַיֹּאמְרוּ הֲרַק אֶךְ-בְּמִנְשֵׁה דְבַר יְהוָה הֲלֹא גַם-בָּנוּ דְבַר וַיִּשְׁמַע יְהוָה</p>	<p>Nu 12:1-2 Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Cushite woman whom he had married, for he had married a Cushite woman. ² And they said, "Has the LORD indeed spoken only through Moses? Has he not spoken through us also?" And the LORD heard it</p>
<p>כִּי הֵעֲלִיתִיךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וּמִבֵּית עֲבָדִים פָּדִיתִיךָ וְאֶשְׁלַח לְפָנֶיךָ אֶת-מֹשֶׁה אֹהֶרֶן וּמִרְיָם</p>	<p>Mic 6:4 For I brought you up from the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of slavery, and I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam</p>

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0. INTRODUCTION

0.1. MIRIAM, THE SISTER OF MOSES

- **Ex 2:1-8** Now a man from the house of Levi went and took as his wife a Levite woman. ² The woman conceived and bore a son, and when she saw that he was a fine child, she hid him three months. ³ When she could hide him no longer, she took for him a basket made of bulrushes and daubed it with bitumen and pitch. She put the child in it and placed it among the reeds by the river bank. ⁴ And his sister stood at a distance to know what would be done to him. ⁵ Now the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her young women walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her servant woman, and she took it. ⁶ When she opened it, she saw the child, and behold, the baby was crying. She took pity on him and said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children." ⁷ Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and call you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?" ⁸ And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go." So the girl went and called the child's mother.
- **Ex 15:20-21** Then Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women went out after her with tambourines and dancing. ²¹ And Miriam sang to them: "Sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea."

Nu 12:1-16 Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Cushite woman whom he had married, for he had married a Cushite woman. ² And they said, "Has the LORD indeed spoken only through Moses? Has he not spoken through us also?" And the LORD heard it. ³ Now the man Moses was very meek, more than all people who were on the face of the earth. ⁴ And suddenly the LORD said to Moses and to Aaron and Miriam, "Come out, you three, to the tent of meeting." And the three of them came out. ⁵ And the LORD came down in a pillar of cloud and stood at the entrance of the tent and called Aaron and Miriam, and they both came forward. ⁶ And he said, "Hear my words: If there is a prophet among you, I the LORD make myself known to him in a vision; I speak with him in a dream. ⁷ Not so with my servant Moses. He is faithful in all my house. ⁸ With him I speak mouth to mouth, clearly, and not in riddles, and he beholds the form of the LORD. Why then were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?" ⁹ And the anger of the LORD was kindled against them, and he departed. ¹⁰ When the cloud removed from over the tent, behold, Miriam was leprous, like snow. And Aaron turned toward Miriam, and behold, she was leprous. ¹¹ And Aaron said to Moses, "Oh, my lord, do not punish us because we have done foolishly and have sinned. ¹² Let her not be as one dead, whose flesh is half eaten away when he comes out of his mother's womb." ¹³ And Moses cried to the LORD, "O God, please heal her- please." ¹⁴ But the LORD said to Moses, "If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be shamed seven days? Let her be shut outside the camp seven days, and after that she may be brought in again." ¹⁵ So Miriam was shut outside the camp seven days, and the people did not set out on the march till Miriam was brought in again. ¹⁶ After that the people set out from Hazereth, and camped in the wilderness of Paran.

0.2. LEPROSY (SKIN DISEASE)

- **Lev 13:45-46** "The leprous person who has the disease shall wear torn clothes and let the hair of his head hang loose, and he shall cover his upper lip and cry out, 'Unclean, unclean.' ⁴⁶ He shall remain unclean as long as he has the disease. He is unclean. He shall live alone. His dwelling shall be outside the camp. (Malomocný, postihnutý touto chorobou, bude mať roztrhnuté šaty, vlasy na hlave neupravené, bradu zakrytú a bude volať: Nečistý, nečistý! Po celý čas zostane nečistý. Je nečistý, bude bývať oddelene, bydlisko bude mať mimo tábora)

For many, the first illness that springs to mind when discussing biblical Israel is leprosy. The Hebrew term *zara'at* is a catch-all for a variety of skin afflictions, such as **eczema** and **psoriasis**, rather than meaning a specific disease. The modern conception of leprosy as a disease that causes necrosis and loss of extremities is anachronistic. This type of leprosy is actually the ancient Greek term for what is **today** called **Hansen's disease**, which did not appear in the Levant until the Hellenistic period, well after the texts of Leviticus, Numbers, and Kings were written with passages focusing on skin afflictions. The spread of Hansen's disease by Alexander the Great's troops, from the Indus River toward the Levant, is attested in documents referring to necrosis and extremity loss, symptoms absent from the biblical descriptions of skin afflictions. Corroborating this later date for the appearance of Hansen's disease is the osteoarchaeological record. Hansen's disease leaves traces in the skeleton; none of the tested human remains prior to the Hellenistic period shows these traces, whereas a number of Hellenistic skeletons do. (Zucconi, L. M. (2019). *Ancient Medicine: From Mesopotamia to Rome* (pp. 137–138). Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.)

0.3. THE OLD TESTAMENT AND THE NEW

- **Col 2:16-17** Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. ¹⁷ These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.

1. THE IMPORTANCE OF RELATIONSHIPS

- individualistic holiness???
- **Rom 14:7-9** For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. ⁸If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living

1.1. TO EACH OTHER

- **John 13:35** By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another (*ἐν τούτῳ γνώσονται πάντες ὅτι ἐμοὶ μαθηταὶ ἐστε, ἐὰν ἀγάπην ἔχητε ἐν ἀλλήλοις*).
- **1John 4:10-11** In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.
- **1 John 4:19** We love because he first loved us (*ἡμεῖς ἀγαπῶμεν, ὅτι αὐτὸς πρῶτος ἠγάπησεν ἡμᾶς*)
- **Phil 2:1-3** So if there is any encouragement in Christ (*παράκλησις ἐν Χριστῷ*), any comfort from love (*παραμύθιον ἀγάπης*), any participation in the Spirit (*κοινωνία πνεύματος*), any affection and sympathy

(σπλάγχνα καὶ οἰκτιρμοί), ² complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³ Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.

1.2. TO CHURCH LEADERS

- **Heb 13:7-8** Remember your leaders (Μνημονεύετε τῶν ἡγουμένων ὑμῶν), those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. ⁸ Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.
- **Heb 13:17** Obey your leaders (Πείθεσθε τοῖς ἡγουμένοις ὑμῶν) and submit to them (καὶ ὑπέικετε), for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

2. INWARD ATTITUDES

- free thinking???

2.1. GOD'S SPOKESMEN

- **Lk 10:16** The one who hears you hears me, and the one who rejects you rejects me, and the one who rejects me rejects him who sent me.
- **Mt 23:2-3** The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat, ³ so practice and observe whatever they tell you- but not what they do. For they preach, but do not practice

2.2. WATCH YOUR HEART!

- **Pro 4:23** Keep your heart with all vigilance (מִכָּל-לֵב מִשְׁמֵר נֶגֶד לִבְךָ), for from it flow the springs of life (כִּי-מִמֶּנּוּ תֵּזְרַח חַיִּים)
- **Col 3:12-13** Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion (σπλάγχνα οἰκτιρμου), kindness (χρηστότητα), humility (ταπεινοφροσύνην), meekness (πραύτητα), and patience (μακροθυμίαν), ¹³bearing with one another (ἀνεχόμενοι ἀλλήλων) and, if one has a complaint against another, **forgiving each other**; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive (χαριζόμενοι ἑαυτοῖς ἕαν τις πρὸς τινα ἔχη μομφήν· καθὼς καὶ ὁ κύριος ἐχαρίσατο ὑμῖν, οὕτως καὶ ὑμεῖς)

3. DEALING WITH RELATIONAL PROBLEMS

3.1. DIE TO YOUR SELF!

- **Mk 9:49-50** For everyone will be salted with fire. ⁵⁰ Salt is good, but if the salt has lost its saltiness, how will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another (Πᾶς γὰρ πυρὶ ἀλισθήσεται. ⁵⁰ καλὸν τὸ ἄλας· ἐὰν δὲ τὸ ἄλας ἀναλον γένηται, ἐν τίνι αὐτὸ ἀρτύσετε; ἔχετε ἐν ἑαυτοῖς ἄλα καὶ εἰρηνεύετε ἐν ἀλλήλοις.).

3.2. THE CONFRONTATION PRINCIPLE

- **Mt 5:23-26** So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴ leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. ²⁵ Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison. ²⁶ Truly, I say to you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.
- **Mt 18:15** If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother
- **Gal 2:11** ...when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned (κατὰ πρόσωπον αὐτῷ ἀντέστην, ὅτι κατεγνωσμένος ἦν)

4. TO REMEMBER

- Wrong attitudes and behind-the-back talk make of us “spiritual lepers”.
- We have to apply the forgiveness we received to our attitude to other Christians and especially to leaders.
- To deal with the differences requires love and wise approach to confrontation.