

Joyful Life Bible Studies

WOMEN OF THE BIBLE

MIRIAM

Lesson 4

FIRST DAY: Review and Overview

1. Review last week's lesson on the life of Rebekah. Share a way her life is an example for you.

2. This week we will be studying the life of Miriam, the sister of Moses and Aaron. She lived during exciting and extraordinary times. By observing her through the Word we will recognize how necessary it is for us to walk closely to the Lord. Read the following verses for your introduction to Miriam and record what you learn about her:
 - a. Numbers 26:59b

 - b. Exodus 15:20,21

 - c. Numbers 12:1,2

 - d. Micah 6:4

3. It is our desire that through your study of Miriam you will find application for your life. Begin your lesson by writing a prayer asking the Lord to teach you through Miriam's example.

*Teach me Thy way, O LORD;
I will walk in Thy truth.
Psalm 86:11a*

SECOND DAY: Read Exodus 2:1-10

1. The first time we meet Miriam in the Bible is in Exodus. To understand the background of Chapter 2 read Exodus 1:7-22 and explain why Miriam's baby brother had to be hidden.

a. How did the Lord protect and provide for Moses?

(1.) Share a way this ministers to you.

2. Consider that Miriam was probably about 12 years old at this time. What qualities do you see in her at this young age?

a. How was Miriam's mother affected by her daughter's courage and quick thinking?

3. Miriam probably was influenced by her mother's teaching and training. Consider the importance of this as you record what the following verses say:

a. Deuteronomy 6:6,7

b. Psalm 78:4,6

c. Share ways you can do this.

THIRD DAY: Read Exodus 15:20,21

1. One of the greatest miracles in all of history set the stage for our next picture of Miriam who was about ninety years old at this time. Read Exodus 14:13-31. Selah — pause and think about this. Briefly describe this awesome event.

a. How does this minister to you today?

2. After experiencing this great deliverance Moses and all the children of Israel were overflowing with joy (*Exodus 15:1 -19*). What did it prompt Miriam to do according to Exodus 15:20,21?

a. What is revealed about Miriam and her leadership in these verses?

(1.) How is she an example to you?

Challenge: Using a dictionary or Bible dictionary define the word *prophetess* (prophet).

3. As the Israelites praised the Lord, it seems that Moses led the men, and Miriam led the women as they responded alternately in song. The phrase *Sing ye to the LORD* in verse 21 can be viewed as an exhortation to praise the Lord. Write their expressions of praise from verse 21.

a. Singing is an integral part of our worship today. List a few reasons we should sing praises to our God.

b. Read Psalm 66:1-4 and record a few phrases that encourage us to sing praises.

c. How does singing to the Lord bless Him and benefit us?

4. Contemplate what the Lord has done for you. Take a few moments to follow Miriam's example and exhortation by singing a song of gratitude and praise to Him. What song did you choose?

Sing unto Him a new song. Play skillfully with a shout of joy.

Psalm 33:3 NKJV

FOURTH DAY: Read Numbers 12:1-10

1. The Lord had used Miriam in her youth and as an older woman she held a prominent place of leadership among the women during the children of Israel's journey from Egypt to the Promised Land. (See Micah 6:4.) Up to this point everything we have read about Miriam has been positive. Now in Numbers 12 we read about the mistakes she made. What did she do according to:

- a. Numbers 12:1

- b. Numbers 12:2

2. Sin was at the root of Miriam's behavior. What do the following verses warn us about:

- a. Proverbs 6:34

- b. Proverbs 14:30

- c. Proverbs 16:18

3. Read Numbers 12:4-8. Picture this encounter with the LORD as He dealt with this issue. Describe it in your own words.

- a. Consider the command of Psalm 105:15 in relationship to Miriam's sin. What do you see?

- (1.) How might this apply to us today?

4. Bible expositors believe that Miriam was the chief instigator of the criticism in Numbers 12:1,2. Think about the serious consequences of her behavior as recorded in Numbers 12:9,10. What did she experience?

*My child, don 't ignore it when the Lord disciplines you,
and don't be discouraged when He corrects you.
For the Lord disciplines those He loves,
and He punishes those He accepts as His children.*
Hebrews 12:5,6 NLT

FIFTH DAY: Read Numbers 12:11-16

1. In Numbers 12:11-16 we discover what happened next in this sorrowful part of Miriam's story. View this dramatic scene through the responses and actions of those involved by recording what each of the following did:
 - a. Aaron
 - b. Moses
 - c. the LORD
2. Miriam was shut out from the camp seven days (Numbers 12:15a). Stop and think about this. What do you think it would have been like for Miriam to experience this?
 - a. What lessons do you think she learned during this time?
 - b. When did the people resume their journey according to Numbers 12: 15b, 16?
3. Miriam was a prominent figure in the days of the exodus and deliverance of the children of Israel. Numbers 20:1 records her death and burial. Although her failure was serious, she was healed and restored. What encouragement should this give us?

*No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening - it is painful!
But afterward there will be a quiet harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way.*
Hebrews 12:11 NLT

