

Racial offences

Here is the account of Miriam's racial offence against Moses and his Ethiopian wife. An important lesson to us all regarding gossip, flippant remarks and criticism of others. They actually got off lightly compared to the rebellion of Korah in Numbers 16. It's good to see how the Book of Jasher compliments the Bible and vice versa, with additional details for the enlightenment of the reader. (leigh)

1B

So Moses went and returned to Jethro his father-in-law, and said to him, "Please let me go and return to my brethren who are in Egypt, and see whether they are still alive." And Jethro said to Moses, "Go in peace." Now the Lord said to Moses in Midian, "Go, return to Egypt; for all the men who sought your life are dead." Then Moses took his wife and his sons and set them on a donkey, and he returned to the land of Egypt. And Moses took the rod of God in his hand. And the Lord said to Moses, "When you go back to Egypt, see that you do all those wonders before Pharaoh which I have put in your hand. But I will harden his heart, so that he will not let the people go. Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the Lord: "Israel is My son, My firstborn. So I say to you, let My son go that he may serve Me. But if you refuse to let him go, indeed I will kill your son, your firstborn." ' ' " And it came to pass on the way, at the encampment, that the Lord met him and sought to kill him. (Exo 4:18-24)

1J

And the Lord said to Moses, Go, return to Egypt for all those men who sought your life are dead, and you shall speak to Pharaoh to send forth the children of Israel from his land. The Lord showed him to do signs and wonders in Egypt before the eyes of Pharaoh and the eyes of his subjects, in order that they might believe that the Lord had sent him. Moses listened to all that the Lord had commanded him, and he returned to his father-in-law and told him these things, and Reuel said to him, Go in peace. Moses rose up to go to Egypt and took his wife and sons with him; he was at an inn in the road, and an angel of God came down, and sought an occasion against him. He wished to kill him on account of his firstborn son because he had not circumcised him and had gone contrary to the covenant which the Lord had made with Abraham. For Moses had listened to the words of his father-in-law which he had spoken to him, not to circumcise his first born son, so he did not circumcise him. (Jasher 79:5-10)

2B

Then Zipporah took a sharp stone and cut off the foreskin of her son and cast it at Moses' feet, and said, "Surely you are a husband of blood to me!" So He let him go. Then she said, "You are a husband of blood!" - because of the circumcision. (Exo 4:25-26)

2J

Zipporah saw the angel of the Lord seeking an occasion against Moses, and she knew that this thing was because of his not having circumcised her son Gershom. Zipporah hurried and took some of the sharp rock stones that were there, and circumcised her son, and delivered her husband and her son from the hand of the angel of the Lord. (Jasher 79:11-12)

3B

And the Lord said to Aaron, "Go into the wilderness to meet Moses." So he went and met him on the mountain of God, and kissed him. So Moses told Aaron all the words of the Lord who had sent him, and all the signs which He had commanded him. Then Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel. And Aaron spoke all the words which the Lord had spoken to Moses. Then he did the signs in the sight of the people. So the people believed; and when they heard that the Lord had visited the children of Israel and that He had looked on their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped. (Exo 4:27-31)

3J

Aaron the son of Amram, the brother of Moses, was in Egypt walking at the river side on that day. And the Lord appeared to him in that place; he said to him, Go now toward Moses in the wilderness. And he went and met him in the mountain of God, and he kissed him. Aaron lifted up his eyes and saw Zipporah the wife of Moses and her children, and he said to Moses, Who are these to you? And Moses said to him, They are my wife and sons which God gave to me in Midian; the thing grieved Aaron on account of the woman and her children. Aaron said to Moses, Send away the woman and her children that they may go to her father's house, and Moses listened to the words of Aaron, and did so. Zipporah returned with her children and they went to the house of Reuel, and remained there until the time arrived when the Lord had visited his people and brought them forth from Egypt from the hand of Pharaoh. Moses and Aaron came to Egypt to the community of the children of Israel and spoke to them all the words of the Lord, and the people rejoiced a very great rejoicing. (Jasher 79:13-19)

4B

And Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses' father-in-law, heard of all that God had done for Moses and for Israel His people - that the Lord had brought Israel out of Egypt. Then Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, took Zipporah, Moses' wife, after he had sent her back, with her two sons, of whom the name of one was Gershom (for he said, "I have been a stranger in a foreign land") and the name of the other was Eliezer (for he said, "The God of my father was my help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh"); and Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, came with his sons and his wife to Moses in the wilderness, where he was encamped at the mountain of God. Now he had said to Moses, "I, your father-in-law Jethro, am coming to you with your wife and her two sons with her." So Moses went out to meet his father-in-law, bowed down, and kissed him. And they asked each other about their well-being, and they went into the tent. (Exo 18:1-7)

4J

The children of Israel proceeded from Rephidim and camped in the wilderness of Sinai, in the third month from their going forth from Egypt. At that time Reuel the Midianite, the father-in-law of Moses, came with Zipporah his daughter and her two sons for he had heard of the wonders of the Lord which he had done to Israel, that he had delivered them from the hand of Egypt. Reuel came to Moses in the wilderness where he camped, where the mountain of God was. And Moses went forth to meet his father-in-law with great honor, and all Israel was with him. Reuel and his children remained among the Israelites for many days, and Reuel knew the Lord from that day forward. (Jasher 82:1-5)

5B

Then Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married; for he had married an Ethiopian woman. So they said, "Has the Lord indeed spoken only through Moses? Has he not spoken through us also? And the Lord heard it.

(Now the man Moses was very humble, more than all men who were on the face of the earth.) Suddenly the Lord said to Moses, Aaron and Miriam, "Come out, you three, to the tabernacle of meeting!" So the three came out.

Then the Lord came down in the pillar of cloud and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam. And they both went forward.

Then He said, "Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, I, the Lord, make Myself known to him in a vision; I speak to him in a dream. Not so with My servant Moses; he is faithful in all My house. I speak with him face to face, even plainly, and not in dark sayings; and he sees the form of the Lord. Why then were you not afraid to speak against My servant Moses?"

So the anger of the Lord was aroused against them, and He departed. And when the cloud departed from above the tabernacle, suddenly Miriam became leprous, as white as snow. Then Aaron turned toward Miriam, and there she was, a leper.

So Aaron said to Moses, "Oh, my lord! Please do not lay this sin on us, in which we have done foolishly and in which we have sinned. Please do not let her be as one dead, whose flesh is half consumed when he comes out of his mother's womb!"

So Moses cried out to the Lord, saying, "Please heal her, O God, I pray!"

Then the Lord said to Moses, "If her father had but spit in her face, would she not be shamed seven days? Let her be shut out of the camp seven days, and afterward she may be received again."

So Miriam was shut out of the camp seven days, and the people did not journey till Miriam was brought in again. And afterward the people moved from Hazeroth and camped in the wilderness of Paran. (Num 12:1-16)

5J

And they departed from Kibroth Hattaavah, and pitched in Hazeroth, which is in the wilderness of Paran. And while the children of Israel were in Hazeroth, the anger of the Lord was set ablaze against Miriam on account of Moses, and she became leprous, white as snow. She was confined outside the camp for seven days until she had been received again after her leprosy. The children of Israel afterward departed from Hazeroth and camped in the end of the wilderness of Paran. (Jasher 83:30-33)

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Quotes from the NKJV Bible and The Book of Jasher :-

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