

Naaman Healed of Leprosy Part 2

by Bertha Smith

The sermon emphasizes the importance of humility, selflessness, and prayer in our relationship with God, and warns against the consequences of sin and criticism.

Duration: 31:33

Scripture: Exodus 2:11-12, Exodus 24:12, Exodus 25:8-9, Exodus 33:11, Numbers 12:6-8, Numbers 12:10-12, Hebrews 12:21-22

Topics: "Healing"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the stories of Moses and Mary Maginn from the Bible. He highlights how Moses, at the age of forty, took matters into his own hands and killed an Egyptian taskmaster, leading him to flee and live in the desert for forty years. On the other hand, Mary Maginn is mentioned after forty years when she leads an orchestra of women in praising God for the miraculous crossing of the Red Sea. The preacher also mentions the importance of animal sacrifices in the Old Testament and how they foreshadowed Jesus as the ultimate sacrifice for sin. Additionally, he briefly touches on the discipline of women in biblical times and the role of the head of the family in maintaining order.

Transcript

In the sense of excusing, it's sin must be punished, sin must be punished. And poor Elijah, Elisha, had to pronounce the sentence on his co-worker. And Elisha said unto him, With not mine heart with thee? And when the man turned again in his chariot to meet thee, Is this a time to receive money, and receive garments, and olive yards, and vineyards, and sheep, and oxen, and menservants, and maidservants? King Hazael had completely spoiled the impression of God's prophet and of the true God.

He went and told him Elijah had changed his mind, that he wanted some of that money, needed some of it. As if he had performed that miracle and deserved it. But what next? We don't just suffer ourselves when we sin.

We don't just suffer ourselves, friends. The leprosy, therefore, of laymen, Elisha says, Will cleave unto thee and unto thy seed forever. And he went out from the presence of his master, from the presence of Elisha.

A leper, as white as snow. Full of developed leprosy, all over his body. Now, a layman could be a leper up in Syria and go in and out with the King, even, and live at home with his family.

They didn't know anything about infectious diseases or contagious diseases. Now, the Jews were under God's law. The Jews didn't know anything about infectious diseases or contagious diseases either, but the Lord God did.

And he had Israel quarantine lepers. A leper had to leave his home and had to go outside the towns and villages. And we see them over there today.

They went out some distance from outside the city and the towns. They put up four poles and cut some limbs and put them across the top, some smaller poles. They put across the top a straw mat, usually, or sometimes an old piece of carpet.

They put it to break the sun, and they put an old piece of carpet or a straw mat down on the ground. And there they sat with a dirty blanket and a dirty pillow in there. And the dust, the winds just blow the dust over the country so there are not many trees to break the wind.

And they are just covered in dust. And, oh, there are one sight. And that was the portion of Jehovah for the rest of his life, for the rest of his life.

Sin separates. Sin always separates. Sin separates from the Holy God because it comes from the devil.

It comes from the devil. Now, this is a man who sinned. Let's take an example of a woman who sinned and see what it did for her.

Now, remember, Elisha didn't suffer by himself, or all of his family's sin. Of course, Elisha suffered. He had to go get a new coworker.

He couldn't find another one who had been trained like Zehazah had to suffer. But he couldn't excuse sin. But Zehazah's family was going to be lepers for generations.

Those lepers just had to marry and go on producing lepers until the disease gets so bad they can't. Well, we have a description of a woman who sinned, a very prominent woman, recorded in the 12th chapter of Numbers. You remember Moses had an older sister to watch him when his mother made that little basket and put it down in the river Nile.

And that sister, Miriam, stood by and watched him. And when Pharaoh's daughter arrived and saw him, she said, had him picked up and brought to her. Miriam rushed up and said, Shall I call a nurse for the child? And she called a mother.

Of course, the mother had a potty bag. Perhaps she was ten years old then. Do you suppose? Do you suppose she was ten years old? Old enough to look after her little brother.

Then we go to hear of Miriam again for 40 years. Moses grew up. He was 40 years old.

He went out to do a job for God, dedicated himself to God to do a job for God. And he went out, dedicated himself, not waiting for the Lord to guide him, not waiting for the Lord to put into his heart how he was to lead the children of Israel out of bondage. You remember he saw one of those past masters beating an Israelite, and he wheeled away with a strong right arm and killed that Egyptian past master and buried him

in the sand.

He thought it was all covered up. But somebody saw him. The Bible says he looked this way and that way and didn't see anyone, so he killed him.

He didn't look up. He should have looked up. There was a big eye up there with a gap.

He couldn't escape that. But no, the result was that he had to flee and live in the desert 40 years. Well, now there's 240 years before we hear of Miss Miriam again.

After 80 years, she would have been perhaps 92 or 93 years old. And oh, when the children of Israel crossed over the Red Sea, we hear of Miriam again. What is she doing? Oh, she got the women together.

She was the leader of an orchestra. And they went with their cymbals, they were swinging their cymbals and dancing and singing. Glory to God for what he had done to open the Red Sea for the children of Israel to go across and then drown the Egyptians when they got in the middle of the sea.

Oh, what a glorious woman, leading all the women to praise the Lord, to praise the Lord, composing the horse and the rider for grounding the sea. Well, Miriam ought to have gone to heaven right then. Some people just live too long.

And Miss Miriam was surely one of them. Well, they went on, and after a few more weeks, after she had led her orchestra, the children of Israel reached Sinai. And after they had been there a while, perhaps another 40 years, when they first got there, the Lord appeared to them and gave them his Ten Commandments.

Then he called Moses up in the mountain to give them away, whereby God himself could dwell in their midst. And in order for the Holy God to dwell in their midst, I think they would have to put the whole crowd to death. Because they were not the people whom God made, even though they were descendants of Abraham.

And this poster here, this Chinese poster here, shows the two classes of people in the world. There are those that are like this, this black, crooked man. And then here are these new men.

This new man is the upright man, and this is all the fruit of the Spirit, and this is the works of the flesh. This is the new created man. Well, God had to put those people to death because they descended from Adam and Eve after they sinned.

And the whole human family was that black, crooked heart. And he had to give Moses away, whereby he could dwell in their midst. He didn't have to dwell in their midst, because he carried him up to Canaan.

And he made them the great nation among whom he could send his Savior, send the Savior to the whole world. And he had to give them a standard to live by, and he had to give them a way by which they could worship him. And the first thing he could do in order was to put them all to death.

Well, how could he put people to death and leave them to die at the same time? Well, only God could do that. And he had to give Moses a way whereby he could put all of the Israelites to death for what they were by nature, in those animal sacrifices, having them transfer themselves to the animal sacrifices and kill the animal. And of course, God looked forward to seeing his Son coming to the world to be God's Lamb that would come to take away the sin of the world.

And it took Moses about 40 days up there, and then another 40 days, and it took him 80 days to even get the law, for God to give him the law, because the Israelites sinned after 40 days, and he had to go down and put 3,000 to death, and the leaders. Then when he had been there, perhaps after they had built the tabernacle and dedicated it, we don't know just when, but sometime Moses sent for his wife, his father-in-law, his brother-in-law, to come and bring his wife and boys. You see, when he was that 40 years up there in the wilderness, he married.

He married the daughter of a priest. It doesn't say what kind of priest, but God had his priest at that time, here and there, who knew him. Melchizedek lived in Jerusalem, a priest of God.

Nobody knew where he came from and where he went, but that just means we have no record of who his people were. All that is told about him is that he was God's priest, and Abraham recognized him as God's priest and paid his tithes to him. Balaam was a man that knew the true God.

He was not true to God, but he knew the living God. It had been handed down from the time of Noah, the knowledge of God, and it had been kept alive in some places more clearly than in other places. But anyway, when Moses' wife got there, Miriam didn't like her sister-in-law.

She was an Ethiopian. And of course, the Jewish women, if they don't eat too much, they're pretty women. They're pretty women.

Pretty women. They don't take over too many pounds. And so she didn't like her sister-in-law.

Of course, she was dark. Now, she was Ethiopian, but not black like the Nigerians. They're about like the Egyptians, a little darker than our American Indians, a bit darker.

And Miriam, well, it was too late to say anything, just too late for Miss Miriam to open her mouth. But she did open her mouth. She didn't like that woman.

And then, lo and behold, if Moses didn't tell her brother-in-law and his father-in-law, if they'd come and go with him, he would see that they received all the blessings of the true God that the Israelites received when they got into the land. They'd have their portion, just like the Israelites. And Miriam surely couldn't stand that.

And you know, Miriam, she was older than Aaron, and Aaron was four years older than Moses. So that made her, we don't know how much older than Aaron she was, but perhaps she was 10 or 12 years older than Moses. Well, she stirred up her younger brother, Aaron, against the sister-in-law and against Moses.

And if Miriam didn't act just like some Southern Baptist women are today, wanting to be pastors and accepting deaconship. Now, the very fact that a woman wants to be a pastor of a church disqualifies her from being a pastor. Why does she want to be a pastor? Why does she want to be a pastor? She wants to be in a position of leadership and show off what she can do.

Now, how would I like to look a nurse in Brother Marshall, a chemist, that? Now, wouldn't I be out of my place? Below the descendants of Miriam, we've had free women ordained in my state. I hope you haven't had any in your state yet. I hope you don't have free women that proud and putting themselves that much out of place.

And I don't know why men listen to them and do it. I don't see why the Church says, Well, give us a chapter and verse for this, give us a chapter and verse for this, and then we'll ordain her. But we'll not ordain her without a chapter and verse.

Now, when does the Bible give any direction for the kind of pastor of a church a woman should be? Or even a deacon? The deacons are men. Plenty for a woman to do in the Church. And the biggest thing she could do at all would be just to pray, and pray over the telephone with her friends, stay at home and watch the church, and pray with her friends over the phone, pray with the neighbors, give them a testimony of the Lord's answer and pray.

Well, Miriam, and she isn't an example to the rest of us. Oh, she wanted cheer, but she stared up at Aaron and said, We should be leaders the same as Moses. What rights does Moses have to be our leader? Is he the only leader that God has? We can be leaders, too.

Now, just what about that? Could you imagine such a, except you know she just had a heart like that. Now, let's read some of this. This is recorded in the 12th chapter of Numbers.

And Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married. For he had married an Ethiopian woman. And they said, Had the Lord indeed spoken only unto Moses? Hath he not spoken also by us? And what can you suppose if the Lord didn't hear what they said? And the Lord heard it.

The Lord heard it! I'll tell you, friends, we wouldn't say a lot that we say if we knew the Lord heard it. If we were just reminded and keeping in our minds that the Lord is here and everything we say, and everybody has got to give an account and a judgment of what they say, we wouldn't say so much. Now the man Moses was very meek above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.

Now, meekness means complete selflessness, complete selflessness. You are making no plans for yourself at any time. You are accepting nothing for yourself at any time for your own honor.

And Moses showed in his all-awareness-dealing position, and he made that case. He went up to the Mount to offer himself for a sacrifice. He was so completely selfless for their sins.

And the Lord spoke suddenly unto Moses and unto Aaron and unto Miriam, Come out, ye three, unto the tabernacle of the congregation. Well, what happened? Well, they came out. Of course they did when the Lord called.

And the Lord came down in the pillar of a cloud and stood in the door of a tabernacle and called Aaron and Miriam, and they came forth. Well, of course they had to. And he said, Hear now my word.

If there be a prophet among you, I, the Lord, will make myself known unto him in a dream and will speak to him in a vision. You see, when they didn't have the word of God complete, God had to communicate with his leaders through dreams and visions. Well, when had he given them any visions and dreams? When had Miss Miriam been given any preparation for being a leader in this life? My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all his paths.

With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently not in dark speaking. And the similitude of the Lord shall he behold. Therefore were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses? Now, you see, after Adam and Eve sinned and received this black devil nature, their descendants were never allowed to see

Holy God again.

And when the children of Israel got to Israel, I've said to the group that was here this morning, if the Lord took Israel by signing, I had to go to school to him. He had to dwell in their midst, and he would have to dwell in their midst. If he carried out his purpose, to send his son in their midst later on.

And he would have to choose his own leaders, and God would have to give Moses, or he did give him, directions for making a tent in which Holy God could dwell in the midst of Israel. And later when they got into Canaan, they built a temple, and God's glory came down and filled it, and that fire dwelt in the Holy of Holies, on that mercy seat. And in that way he dwelt in the midst of the children of Israel.

Now the children of Israel had to be given God's standard to live by. If he were going to dwell in their midst, he would have to give them his standard. And Moses would have to get up close enough to Holy God for God to speak in him here.

Well, how could that be? Moses also descended from Adam and Eve after they sinned. Do you remember Jehovah God set a boundary around that mount, the base of the mount, some kind of a fence? And if anybody went over that mount, except the man that God called up with Moses and took Joshua up with him a little ways, he would be shot through, he would be put to death. And if an animal went over that mount and went up on that mount where Holy God was going to come down, that animal must be shot through with arrows.

Do animals have sin? No, but they are suffering from man's sin. They had to be cursed for man's sin, to keep man busy, to build houses to protect him from animals. Now, Moses had to go up in the face of the essence of all holiness, and Moses had a sinful nature.

Well, how could he do it? Well, the Lord put Moses in a cloud as he went up. And that mountain was reeling to and fro, and burning with fire and smoke, and yet Moses had to go up. And he describes that experience in the Hebrews by saying, The sight was so terrible, I did exceedingly fear and quake.

But God had called him up, and he went on up. And he was in that cloud, but God had to get him right up in his presence, as he says, he spoke to him mouth to mouth, in order to give him directions for their worship, for the priesthood. And then after he gave them directions for building a tabernacle where God would dwell in their midst, and regulations whereby sinful human beings could worship God by being put to death and no sacrifices, he gave them their civil laws.

He expected to be their earthly king, and of course he expected to choose some man to work through, and that man would die and he would choose another. But God was expected to be their king and dwell in their midst, and he would have to have his laws. So he had to give Moses all of his laws.

They had to be different from other nations, and they had to live as if God was dwelling in their midst, to please him, to prepare for the coming of his Son into the world. Well, how could Moses get that close to holy God? Well, Jehovah God put some of his own glory on Moses. He put some of his own glory on Moses, in order that Moses could stand in his presence and receive directions if he needed.

And hear this woman saying, we have a right, we have a right to be as much right as Moses has to be. Well, when the Lord told her that he is Moses, he would speak mouth to mouth with Moses. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Mary and Aaron, kindled against them.

The anger of the Lord was kindled against them, and he departed. Now, what about God coming down from heaven and expressing his anger towards them and leaving, not doing a thing? Now, weren't they in the fix? Weren't they in the fix? Well, look how Aaron, I've just said Moses was Aaron's little brother, younger brother. And look how Aaron humbled himself.

And Aaron cried to Moses and said, oh, I'm leaving out something. And the Lord went up. Aaron, Neron was standing there a leper from head to foot, covered with leprosy, covered with leprosy.

Now, that's how God feels about people that criticize other folks. That's how he feels about them. And Aaron said to Moses in verse 11, Alas, my Lord, looking at him, looking at him, calling his older brother Lord.

Now, that's not capital letters. That's little Lord. But they called ahead the big brother who was head over all the rest of them, responsible for all of them.

So he had to receive the property and look after all of them and provide for them all. The head over all the clan was called Lord, with a little L, of course. And here Aaron calls his younger brother Moses Lord.

Now, doesn't he humble himself? I beseech thee, lay not this sin upon us, wherein we have done foolishness. He says, we've just acted fools, because they certainly have. And do you know anybody who sins against the Holy God just acting a fool? And some of the most brilliant minds and people with the most degrees after their name, and the A students in college and high school, who just act fools in sinning against God? And the Lord is seeing it.

And sooner or later, sooner or later, we got the answer for it. Well, Aaron praised Moses and said, Let her not be as one dead, as one whose flesh is half-consumed when he comes out of his mother's womb. Children that were born from leprosy and had leprosy when they were born, there was absolutely no cure.

He said, Don't let her be like that, don't let her be like that. And me, Moses, cried to the Lord to heal her. Do you know what you and I would have said? Oh, the Lord put this leprosy on her.

We won't dare do a thing, we don't dare do a thing. Let her suffer, let her suffer. Now, Moses was completely selfless, and it was his wife she didn't like, but Moses certainly was not holding it against her.

Moses cried to the Lord to heal her. And the Lord said, Well, if her father had spit in her face, should she not be separated from the rest of the family for seven days, let her be put outside of the camp seven days, and then the letter be received again. And the Oren, where the families brought their wives, all the sons and the grandsons and the nieces and nephews brought their wives into the family, they all had their private rooms, each couple, and they had private rooms showing them for their children.

But they all ate together, and they were together during the day, and the living quarters were spared for the bodies. And you know, those women would get in trouble sometimes, and they'd get the first one. And what could they do? They had to be disciplined.

And the head of the clan, whether it was a grandfather, an uncle, or father-in-law, he had to take a hand. Well, you couldn't turn a grown woman across her knees and spank her, so what could you do? Well, you know, the Orens just have all kinds of sense and wisdom, and they know what to do. Well, the father of the clan spit in her face.

Now, that was the most humiliating thing that could ever happen to a person. And she was so contaminated and humiliated, they put her in an out room over there across the courtyard by herself and sent her meals out there to her. And so the Lord said, just put her out of the camp.

And Miriam had to be put in a little tent out of the camp for seven days. And listen to what her sin cost other people. What her sin cost other people.

Jehoshaphat's sin cost him the health of his family. His whole family became lepers because of him, and for generations, all that ever came into the world, as long as a leper was light enough for them to keep their children, would be lepers. That was his family.

Well, look here who suffers for Miriam's sin. The whole nation suffers for Miriam's sin. And Miriam was shut out of the camp seven days, and the people journeyed not till Miriam was brought in again.

The whole camp, they had already started on their way to the Holy Land, up to Cana. And the whole camp had to camp, and all those children play in that dirt and desert sand, desert brush, for a whole week, because of one woman's tongue and one woman's jealousy in her heart. Sin is fool.

People do act fools when they sin. And they were from three to nine or ten million people. Some Bible scholars estimated as low as three million.

I don't see how they ever could. All the numbers we have, that there were 600,000 fighting men. If each of them had had a wife, that would have been 1,200,000.

Well, they had a lot more wives than a wife. They had brothers and sisters and uncles and aunts and cousins and elderly people. They lived to be old and had big families.

There may have been as many as eight or ten million people. And the whole nation suffered as a result of Miriam's sin. How many of you are here this evening who haven't been here before? Please raise your hand.

Not many, just a few. Friends, sin is an affront to holy thought. Sin comes from the devil.

Sin grieves the Holy Spirit. Sin hinders other people in their heavenly road. Sin so grieves the Holy Spirit that he just, when people are saved and sin, and the Holy Spirit living inside them and they still sin, he's just so grieved he just can't help them out.

And yet he's so patient he just never leaves us, but he just can't do his work like he wants to do. Other people suffer because of our sin.

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