

Numbers 20:1 In the first month of the year, the whole community of Israel arrived in the wilderness of Zin and camped at Kadesh. While they were there, Miriam died and was buried.

Miriam:

- Moses' sister who watched over the infant Moses as he laid in the reeds of the Nile.
- Prophesied and led the people in singing worship.
- Came against and challenge Moses' leadership

Numbers 20:2-5 There was no water for the people to drink at that place, so they rebelled against Moses and Aaron. The people blamed Moses and said, "If only we had died in the Lord's presence with our brothers! Why have you brought the congregation of the Lord's people into this wilderness to die, along with all our livestock? Why did you make us leave Egypt and bring us here to this terrible place? This land has no grain, no figs, no grapes, no pomegranates, and no water to drink!"

History of Complaint and Unbelief:

- Exodus 2: "Who put you in charge . . . ?"
- Exodus 5: "You have ruined our reputation before Pharaoh—giving him reason to kill us!"
- Exodus 14: Egyptian armies are coming down on them—why have you brought us here to die
- Exodus 16: They were hungry and without food and complained—God gave them manna. They were missing meat—complained, and God gave them quail
- Exodus 17: There is no water! Strike the rock!
- Numbers 14: We are all going to die in battle! Go wander and die . . .

New location . . . same situation. A new generation . . . same struggle, same heart.

- When we allow it, FEAR becomes our perspective. We camp in the seemingly impossible and we feel powerless—we lose hope—there is only death. We lose sight that we serve the God who makes the impossible possible, and who brings power to the powerless—hope to the hopeless—and LIFE to that which was dead!

Numbers 20:6-11

Moses and Aaron turned away from the people and went to the entrance of the Tabernacle, where they fell face down on the ground. Then the glorious presence of the Lord appeared to them, and the Lord said to Moses, "You and Aaron must take the staff and assemble the entire community. As the people watch, speak to the rock over there, and it will pour out its water. You will provide enough water from the rock to satisfy the whole community and their livestock."

So Moses did as he was told. He took the staff from the place where it was kept before the Lord. Then he and Aaron summoned the people to come and gather at the rock. "Listen, you rebels!" he shouted. "Must we bring you water from this rock?" Then Moses raised his hand and struck the rock twice with the staff, and water gushed out. So the entire community and their livestock drank their fill.

Psalm 106:32-33 says: They angered him at the waters of Meribah, and it went ill with Moses on their account, for they made his spirit bitter, and he spoke rashly with his lips.

Spurgeon: “The scene changes, but the sin continues. Aforetime they had mutinied about water when prayer would soon have turned the desert into a standing pool, *but now they do it again* after their former experience of the divine goodness. This made the sin a double, yea a sevenfold offence, and caused the anger of the Lord to be the more intense..” Moses was at last wearied out, and began to grow angry with them and utterly hopeless of their ever improving; can we wonder at it, for he was man and not God? After forty years bearing with them the meek man's temper gave way, and he called them rebels, and showed unhallowed anger . . .”

Numbers 20:12-13

But the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, “Because you did not trust me enough to demonstrate my holiness to the people of Israel, you will not lead them into the land I am giving them!” This place was known as the waters of Meribah (which means “arguing”) because there the people of Israel argued with the Lord, and there he demonstrated his holiness among them.

What did Moses do so wrong?

1. *He got caught up in the moment*
2. *He made himself the hero!*
 - a. *“Listen, you rebels!” he shouted. “Must WE bring you water from this rock?”*
 - b. *We are never a hero...*
3. In his anger, Moses, disobeyed and marred the picture...

1 Cor 10:1-4

I don’t want you to forget, dear brothers and sisters, about our ancestors in the wilderness long ago. All of them were guided by a cloud that moved ahead of them, and all of them walked through the sea on dry ground. In the cloud and in the sea, all of them were baptized as followers of Moses. All of them ate the same spiritual food, and all of them drank the same spiritual water. For they drank from the spiritual rock that traveled with them, and that rock was Christ.

God: The Balance of Holiness and Grace

1. **God is Holy:** v12 **“Because you did not trust me enough to demonstrate my holiness to the people of Israel, you will not lead them into the land I am giving them!”**
 - a. **1 Tim 3** Is a list of characters rather than a list of giftings and personality.
 - b. **James 3** “. . . not many of you should become teachers in the church, for we who teach will be judged more strictly.”

- c. **Luke 12:48.** When someone has been given much, much will be required in return; and when someone has been entrusted with much, even more will be required.

2. **God's Grace!**

Romans 8:1 "So now there is NO condemnation for those who belong to Christ."

Our mistakes and even the consequences never define us—our Savior does.