

And when you take what is clear it can still be certain even though there are some things we are not sure about. Now here ~~∕~~ we are looking at these first two incidents then. First of them is

A. The Death of Miriam. It says here that (reading Num. 20:1). Does that mean the first month of the next yr. after they left Sinai and therefore come before this rebellion, because Miriam is not mentioned~~∕~~ in connection with the rebellion? Or does it mean the first month of the 40th yr., the beginning of the march to the plains of Moab. In placing it here in XI, taking it in the order in which it is presented here ^{that} we are assuming~~∕~~it is in the case in -- during the final march in the last month. But we do not know for sure, and I don't think it makes a tremendous difference to us whether Miriam died ~~∕~~ at that earlier time, or the later time. It is more important to us probably~~∕~~ to know when the second event took place. And that is not dated. And so it would seem to come about the same time as this situation with Miriam, but whether it is early in the wilderness wanderings or whether it is ~~∕~~ at the beginning of the end, we don't know. But this next incident, as far as its effect on us is concerned, is much greater importance. That is

B. The Sin of Moses and Aaron 20:2-13. If I were the Archbishop and were dividing into chapters I would make that a chapter by itself, because it ~~∕~~ is so important. Here it is just buried within this long chapter. I don't think there is any harm in that, but there are many other chapters of this length which have less reason for separation from context than this did. Because this is a very impor^tant incident -- the sin of Moses and Aaron. We have been having many times when people have been repudiating Moses' leadership, even Aaron did in ch. 12., or repudiating the leadership of both of them. But ~~∕~~ here we have the sin of these two leaders told. It is a marvellous thing about the Bible. The Bible presents ~~∕~~ humanity as it is. There is good in the worst, in the most wicked person on earth. There is some good because man is made in the image of God and no matter how far we sink into sin, some of that image of God is still there. And until a man has actually died, no matter how wicked he may seem to be, you cannot but that it may be the will of the Spirit of God that that man shall turn to Christ and