

to all other prophets, and then asked why they had ventured to speak against him.

When the cloud departed, Miriam was white with leprosy (10). There is no mention of Aaron's receiving any punishment. Perhaps this means that Miriam was the real instigator of the conspiracy, and Aaron only an accomplice; or perhaps it was a greater punishment to Aaron to see his beloved sister smitten with leprosy than anything that could have happened to himself. His fervent plea (12) argues strongly, though not conclusively, for the latter suggestion.

Aaron's forthright confession of sin (11,12) gives evidence of true repentance. He addresses Moses as my lord. Never again do we have evidence of Aaron opposing Moses.

Aaron is particularly concerned about his sister's leprosy. He sees her as one head (12), so great is his love for her. Fervently he pleads for her restoration. Having sinned against Moses, who is God's representative, he addresses his prayer not to God, but to the man against whom he has sinned.

Without a word of rebuke, Moses turns to God and pleads for his erring sister (13). This is Moses' only action in the entire chapter. Although reviled, he reviled not again, but rather prayed for his detractors. Who can deny the exact truth of the character given him in verse 3?

God shows reluctance to deny a request from Moses (14). It would seem that the leprosy was removed, in response to Moses' intercession, but the seven-day period of isolation which follows the cleansing of leprosy must be observed. See Lv.xiv.8. The offence is too serious for punishment to be remitted entirely. An example must be made to deter others. Also it is desirable to give Miriam time to realize fully the extent of her sin. Thus the Lord delivered the camp from this dangerous rebellion against Moses' authority. And afterward the people removed (16). See xi.35n.