

# The city, seduction and arrogance

Dominic Steele, Numbers 12

1 Miriam and Aaron began to talk against Moses because of his Cushite wife, for he had married a Cushite. 2 "Has the LORD spoken only through Moses?" they asked. "Hasn't he also spoken through us?" And the LORD heard this.

3 (Now Moses was a very humble man, more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth.)

4 At once the LORD said to Moses, Aaron and Miriam, "Come out to the Tent of Meeting, all three of you." So the three of them came out. 5 Then the LORD came down in a pillar of cloud; he stood at the entrance to the Tent and summoned Aaron and Miriam. When both of them stepped forward, 6 he said, "Listen to my words:

"When a prophet of the LORD is among you,  
I reveal myself to him in visions,  
I speak to him in dreams.

7 But this is not true of my servant Moses;  
he is faithful in all my house.

8 With him I speak face to face,  
clearly and not in riddles;  
he sees the form of the LORD.  
Why then were you not afraid  
to speak against my servant Moses?"

9 The anger of the LORD burned against them, and he left them.

10 When the cloud lifted from above the Tent, there stood Miriam—leprous, [a] like snow. Aaron turned toward her and saw that she had leprosy; 11 and he said to Moses, "Please, my lord, do not hold against us the sin we have so foolishly committed. 12 Do not let her be like a stillborn infant coming from its mother's womb with its flesh half eaten away."

13 So Moses cried out to the LORD, "O God, please heal her!"

14 The LORD replied to Moses, "If her father had spit in her face, would she not have been in disgrace for seven days? Confine her outside the camp for seven days; after that she can be brought back." 15 So Miriam was confined outside the camp for seven days, and the people did not move on till she was brought back.

16 After that, the people left Hazereth and encamped in the Desert of Paran.

1 Seduced by arrogance

2 Setting the scene for seduction

3 Seduction and reaction

a Arrogance 1-3 cf Exodus 15:20

b God chooses to relate through his chosen mediator 4-8 cf Exodus 33:11, Deuteronomy 34:10, John 1:18

c God is angry when people won't accept that 9-16 cf Leviticus 13-14

4 Jesus

a God's chosen mediator John 1:18, Hebrews 3:1-6

b God is angry when people won't accept that Matthew 21:22-42, 1 Timothy 2:4

5 Seduced by arrogance

a Pluralism

b Under the Christian umbrella

c A personal direct mediator cf Isaiah 66