

She Walked Before Us

Grace, Courage, and Strength
from 12 Women
of the Old Testament

JILL EILEEN SMITH


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Jill Eileen Smith, *She Walked Before Us*

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To every person who has faced
life's trials, run into the brick wall
of immovable circumstances,
and found a way by God's grace
to walk through in victory—
these stories are for you.

CONTENTS

Introduction	11
Miriam: When God Corrects Your Character	13
Rahab: Daring to Trust What You Cannot See	31
Deborah: Dealing with God's Call	47
Ruth: Loving, Losing, and Waiting on God	61
Naomi: When Turning Around Is the Best Thing	75
Hannah: Never Giving Up on God	93
Peninnah: When Hurt and Hate Are All You Feel	109
Michal: Finding the Life You Lost	121
Abigail: Wisdom to Appease	133
Ahinoam: Dealing with Heartache	149
Maacah: When Life Is Out of Control	163
Bathsheba: Learning to Forgive	177
Conclusion	193
Acknowledgments	195

INTRODUCTION

In 2019, *When Life Doesn't Match Your Dreams* released as the first volume in this nonfiction collection. I didn't know what to expect from nonfiction, as it is very different from my novels. The interest in that book and the comments from readers who wrote and told me how it touched their hearts have blessed me more than I can express. Perhaps the human condition and emotions we feel are more similar than we know.

As we embark on this second edition of biblical women, I hope that whatever you are facing in your life right now, you can give it to the Lord and look to Him for the victory. Like those in the first book, these women also faced great struggles, some far worse than I've ever known. But maybe you have known those feelings, tragedies, or fears.

In this book, we will see women who complained too much or wanted a husband who wasn't so angry. One had to accept a call from God she might not have wanted. Another lost much and gained more. One had to go back before she could go forward. Another had a great deal to forgive. Still another stood by helplessly as her son committed rape and was later

murdered. And another had to deal with knowing her son had killed his brother.

How does one live through such things? And if we haven't experienced them, what lessons might God teach us along the way?

Through it all, I hope you see that in every trial, circumstance, lesson, heartache, or joy, God is there and He is not silent. You may not see what He is doing behind the scenes, but He never stops seeking you. He never stops loving you. And when you are caught in the middle, in the past, or in a deep pit, remember this—others have walked this path before you. When they cried out to God in humility and need, He listened. He is listening to you too, and calling your name. Do you hear Him?

I pray the stories of these women give you what you need to better know our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, whose story is woven into the lives of those born before He came to earth. Even in the lives of often forgotten women.

In His Grace,
Jill Eileen Smith

Miriam

When God Corrects Your Character

(Based on Exodus 15; Numbers 12; 20:1)

If I Were Miriam

“With Your unfailing love You lead the people You have redeemed. In Your might, You guide them to Your sacred home.” The words came easily from my lips that day, and my heart still sings them as I work about my tent. *Free*. Many times during my eighty-five years, I had wondered if I would live to see this day. Hadn’t Ima and Abba suspected that Moses would lead us out of Egypt?

My feet move to the rhythm of my heart song as I mix flour with the water of Marah, which God has made sweet instead of bitter. How good is our God!

Sounds of singing whisper to me on the wind. The women of Israel still rejoice in the words Moses led us to sing once

the Egyptian army perished in the sea. How is it possible? Freedom tastes strange. Sweet. We are used to the lash of the taskmasters or the restrictions on our movements, the constant fear that Pharaoh will do something else to make our lives more miserable than they already are . . . were.

A breeze filters through the tent as the flap lifts. I turn to smile at Elisheba, Aaron's wife. We are like sisters, she and I. I am grateful, for I do not know Moses's wife, Zipporah, yet. But Elisheba has been with us nearly as long as Jephunneh, my husband.

"Welcome," I say, moving closer to embrace her. We laugh. How good it feels to welcome her in freedom.

"I thought you could use some company." She sinks onto the floor and takes some of the grain to grind for me. My men will be eager to eat the moment they return from scouting the camp with Moses and Aaron.

"You are right. I always appreciate your company." I return to mixing the flour and water. "Do you ever feel strange?" I glance at her. "As though none of this is real?"

She nods. "Every moment. I mean, we knew it was coming. I never doubted that Moses and our God would triumph. But to be truly free, to see the Egyptian army destroyed, is something I will never forget."

"Nor I. But as a people, will we forget all of the miracles our God did in Egypt?" I search her face. "We have led the women for years, and we know how easy it is for them to fall back into despair. We grew so weary of waiting." I stop, remembering. How often had I encouraged even Elisheba to not lose hope? Will I still be needed in that role now that we are free?

"You are right, but in one sense, I think the women will remember far more what God has done for us than the fear and the losses we suffered in Egypt. How could we deny His

power now? We have seen Him work with our own eyes! We have watched His powerful arm reach even into Pharaoh's own palace. How could we ever be unfaithful to Him now? Not after that." Elisheba lifts her chin in certainty.

I am too skeptical. I know this. "And yet the people complained against Moses just two days ago because the waters were bitter."

Elisheba stops grinding and tilts her head as if thinking. At last she nods. "You would think they would simply trust or ask Moses to pray for water. Aaron says the people were as bitter as the stream."

How well I remember. We had traveled three days in the wilderness, searching for water and finding none. When at last we found water at an oasis, no one could drink it. We named the place *Marah*, meaning "bitter." But Elisheba is right. Not even a week out of Egypt, and our people who were thirsty grew angry with my brother. Jephunneh told me how he and our sons had stood with Moses and Aaron, but they made a small force against the anger of hundreds of men.

"We must keep after the women to trust Moses's leading and not to complain to their husbands. When we complain, our men in turn will complain to Moses. If we are not careful, we will stop trusting our God in exactly the way we think we won't. There are already signs of it." I move from my work to sink down beside her. "Moses says that God is testing us. Surely the people will want to pass the test!"

It was Elisheba's turn to look at me, her dark eyes filled with skepticism. "I hope so, Miriam. I want to believe that we can keep hope alive among our women. I want to see us obey our God as much as you do. But now that you mention it, it is disconcerting that the men complained so easily after only a few days."

“We never lacked water in Egypt.” The Nile was Egypt’s life force.

“How long will our God let us wander before we reach the land He has promised to us? Aaron says the journey isn’t long. But will we go straight there and take what belongs to us?”

“Not even Moses can answer that. But the journey shouldn’t take more than a few weeks or perhaps a month. I only hope the people are ready for a battle once we get there. I do not think the Canaanites will give up their land without one.” Our people are not prepared for war. They are untrained slaves, barely able to follow Moses, Aaron, and me as we lead them.

“Perhaps we should suggest to Moses to build an army. It would not hurt to start training. Especially now that we are in a comfortable place with water.” Elisheba chewed on a fingernail, a habit she practiced when her ideas caused her worry.

“I will speak to him at the evening meal tonight. Or I will speak to Jephunneh and let him make the suggestion. Sometimes my brother prefers my husband’s counsel over mine.” That irked me often. Hadn’t God also spoken through me? Hadn’t I protected Moses’s very life when he was a babe in arms? But it is better to let Jephunneh speak to him. As long as the thing is accomplished, it matters not the source.

The tent flap lifts again, and both of us turn to see the object of my musings enter.

“You’re early.” I rise to greet my husband with a kiss on the cheek.

“I’m here to tell you to pack what you can. We have one more day here, and then we will move out. Moses’s orders.” He glances at Elisheba. “I only came to tell you. I will be back later.”

He leaves without giving me a chance to question him. Moses’s orders. God must have told him to move us onward.

Perhaps we will make it to the Promised Land sooner than I expect. A little thrill passes through me as I exchange a glance with Elisheba. A smile creases her slightly wrinkled face.

“I am glad,” she says, standing. “I cannot wait to feast my eyes on the beauty that awaits us.” She touches my arm. “I best go and do as Jephunneh said.”

I walk her to the door, and we hug. I watch her walk a few steps to the tent she shares with my brother Aaron. Though Jephunneh is of the tribe of Judah, he has chosen to keep us near my brothers, Israel’s leaders. I am grateful, and I am proud that my children have the heritage of both Levi and Judah. Priests and kings are promised to come from them.

I turn to survey the tent, pushing those thoughts aside. I must focus on doing as my husband has said, not warring with the seeds of jealousy and pride or the very complaining I accuse others of doing. None of them will do me any good.

What We Know

Miriam was the sister of Moses and Aaron, daughter of Amram and Jochebed. Her story is sprinkled through the pages of Scripture from Exodus to Numbers. She was the young girl who watched her brother’s “ark” in the Nile, and when the Egyptian princess found him, Miriam boldly asked the princess if she needed a Hebrew midwife to care for him. This is probably Miriam’s most famous accomplishment.

Scripture also tells us that she was a prophetess and that she led Israel along with her brothers. She and Aaron complained against Moses later in their journey in the wilderness because of his choice of a wife, and God condemned Miriam with leprosy for a week for speaking against His chosen servant. We also know she died near the waters of Meribah.

Other than this, we know very little about Miriam. The Bible does not give us a name of a husband or even tell us if she married. No children are listed. My choice to give her both is for the sake of story—strictly my imagination—and because most women of her day would have married.

We are not sure of her age at the time of Moses's birth, though I have found sources that suggest she was either five or seven years old. This makes her quite young to watch her brother's ark bobbing in the waters of the Nile.

Miriam was probably at least eighty-five years old when the Hebrews finally escaped Egypt. She sang along with Moses after crossing the Red Sea and led the people in praise because they were finally free.

This type of leading in worship might go along with her gift of prophecy (Exod. 15:20). We aren't sure when God called her, but His words in Micah 6:4 indicate that she and Aaron led the people with Moses: "For I brought you up from the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of slavery, and I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam."

Given that she was put in a position of leadership along with her brothers, how do you think that made her feel? Women in leadership was not common in ancient times, and the number of prophets exceeded that of prophetesses. Miriam was chosen and perhaps more gifted than we may realize.

Not all people in positions of leadership have the gifts or calling they need to fulfill those roles. Some seek positions for selfish reasons, and others who are called to leadership do not seek it or—like Gideon, who came much later—do not want it. We aren't told whether Miriam wanted to prophesy or lead her people alongside her brothers, but eventually, the role seemed to cause her a little too much pride and ended in complaining.

We are not told what Miriam prophesied, but the daunting task to help lead the people could not have been easy, considering the size of Israel. Yet Miriam seemed to struggle in her later years with God's apparent favoritism of Moses over her and Aaron. Do you ever wonder if she wanted more? I do, and this is why: she complained.

Oh, can I relate to that. Can't you? Are we ever truly satisfied with our lives? It seems like there is always something that comes up that can cause us to either become dissatisfied and complain or lean into God and trust what we don't understand. Gratitude is harder to cultivate than complaining.

What we don't quite know is what she complained about. The Bible says it had to do with Moses's marriage to a Cushite woman. Perhaps Miriam and Aaron were upset with his choice because she was not from the nation of Israel. But neither was Moses's first wife, Zipporah, who came from the land of Midian. And what they said had nothing to do with the Cushite: "Has the LORD indeed spoken only through Moses? Has he not spoken through us also?" (Num. 12:2).

Did they think Moses needed their permission about who to marry? Or could they have carried around a bit of jealousy at Moses's favored status? Though we later read that God has no favorites, there are times when He chooses to use or bless certain people because He wants to do so.

Still, Miriam had been singled out as a leader, so why the complaining in her old age? Did she wish she could push the boundaries and hold even more authority than she did? We do have examples in Scripture where God spoke to women over men. Rebekah, Deborah, and Manoah's wife all heard from God apart from their husbands. Jesus revealed that He was the Messiah first to a woman (the Samaritan woman), He showed His resurrected body first to a woman (Mary

Magdalene), and He welcomed women (Joanna, Susanna, another Mary, and more) into his company. The apostle Paul began a church in Philippi with a woman (Lydia) who was the first to believe.

As I already mentioned, the Bible tells us that God does not show partiality (Rom. 2:11). He doesn't play favorites. We are all equal in Christ. Unfortunately, throughout history, that level of equality has wavered depending on the culture and the country.

So I wonder, what more might Miriam have wanted? What could have caused her to complain against her brother with words that make her sound like she is defending herself? Somehow her attitude caused God to step in and show her that Moses was not in the wrong.

Have you ever struggled with jealousy? How easily do you complain? I might feel jealous when I long for something that God holds back from me yet gives to someone else. But more often, I find it far too easy to complain. Can you relate?

Do you compare your life to others and find yours wanting? When things don't turn out the way you expected, how do you react?

Some people, like my husband, can take life in stride and accept whatever comes their way. If plans change, he is easygoing enough to just go with it. Me? I want to know the plan and follow it. But as I've been learning in my years on earth, each day really does have enough trouble of its own. And trouble will come. I might plan to write all day and end up sitting in a hospital room or find myself interrupted with things I could not possibly foresee. Those 3:00 a.m. calls can mess with a day's schedule.

Or maybe we miss something we really wanted to attend because our circumstances took us elsewhere. Sometimes the

opposite is true, and we find ourselves bored and lonely and unable to do anything because of physical limitations.

We struggle with growing older too. And Miriam was definitely aging. So perhaps she wasn't so much jealous as she was just weary. Weariness can lead us to complain, can't it?

We will never know the exact nature of the complaint against Moses's Cushite wife. But we do know Aaron and Miriam had a problem with her.

Have you ever found such struggles brewing in your family? Has there been a time when you competed with a sibling and perhaps felt less favored and wanted to tell them so? Or maybe you felt your parents didn't love you as much as your little sister or your older brother. Maybe you just don't like the choices your siblings are making.

This little passage of Scripture can cause all manner of speculation—everything from subtle jealousy to discontent to anger to hurt to feeling displaced. But we do need to guard our hearts against all of these possible scenarios in our own lives.

When we look at how the apostle Paul describes love in 1 Corinthians 13:4–5, we see that it “is very patient and kind, never jealous or envious, never boastful or proud, never haughty or selfish or rude. Love does not demand its own way. It is not irritable or touchy. It does not hold grudges and will hardly even notice when others do it wrong” (TLB).

If we are in relationship with people, there is going to be conflict. Guaranteed. Sometimes we do need to confront situations. But as Miriam found out, we had best be sure that we do so with the right motives and for the right reasons. If we confront out of anything but love, we run a great risk. We can make things worse for everyone.

Imagine with Me

When the dreams began, I didn't know what to make of them. The images confused me sometimes but were clearer at other times. I saw the people in them, saw what they were doing, but I could not always understand what the dream meant. I did not realize the first time that God had singled me out to speak to me as He would a prophet. A sense of elation filled me that He would consider me worthy of such a privilege. I walked around in a daze for some time.

When the events in the dreams actually came to pass . . . that's when I had the courage to mention them to Jephunneh. I am not sure he believed me at first, but then I learned to trust him with the dreams before they came to pass, so that when they did, he knew I spoke truth.

I have felt a kinship with our God because of the dreams, and even when they frighten me, I feel nothing but awe. Why should our powerful God speak to me, a woman? And yet He does, over and over again.

Aaron hears His voice as well, though he hears God's word in visions more than dreams. Both of us wonder if Moses has had the same experience, especially when he lived in far-off Midian.

But here in the wilderness where we have wandered far longer than anyone expected, we have watched Moses spend more time with God—alone on the mountain or in the tabernacle. Both Aaron and I no longer hear from Him as we once did.

I ache with missing Him sometimes. And when Moses's face glows with the brightness of God's glory, I find my heart yearning to meet with God face-to-face as one does a friend. That's what Moses has—or seems to have. And I struggle with feelings I know I should not feel.

I walk over craggy paths as I meander through the tents, not headed in any particular direction. I just grow so weary of the tent, of the same food, of wandering. I never say so though. Moses does not need an uprising against him. People have already complained about the manna and missing the variety of food in Egypt. I do not miss Egypt.

My feet turn of their own accord toward Moses's tent in the Levite encampment. I spot his new wife sitting on the ground, spinning wool newly shorn. She is darker than we are. She is not of Jewish blood. And *I* used to fear I was wrong to marry a Judahite. How could Moses bring this woman into his tent with Zipporah barely in the grave? It's not like he is young and needs a wife to bear him sons.

I nod and greet her as I pass, but I do not linger. I should. I should welcome her into our family, but the whole situation doesn't seem right. She joined us out of Egypt, so she has seen the miracles, the devastation of that land. That doesn't mean Moses had to marry her after Zipporah died. My jaw clenches of its own accord.

Would you have preferred he remain alone? Or did you want to be the one to meet his companionship needs?

The words accuse me, and I turn back toward my tent, disgusted with myself. How selfish can I be? Surely the woman has qualities that I can learn to love. But after months of trying to feel right about their relationship, I simply can't.

I seek Aaron out, and he agrees. "Hasn't God spoken to us as well?" I ask. "How can Moses be so sure God wanted him to marry her?"

"She isn't one of us. As our head leader, he should have married within our clan, our tribe. Why hasn't God reprimanded him?" Aaron's white brows are furrowed, the lines along his forehead deep.

I tuck a wispy strand of hair beneath my scarf. “Perhaps we should talk to him.”

But before we can act, as if out of a windstorm the voice of God calls to us. We are summoned to the tabernacle. A shiver works through me. What can this mean? Had God heard our complaints?

I walk beside Aaron, my feet weighted, dread filling me. I cannot see what is coming. If I had suspected that God would defend my brother . . . I would have taken a far different course.

From Complaints to Humility

We are prone to complain against other people. I think we like to compare ourselves to others, don’t we? And yet Jesus tells us not to think about another’s future but to simply follow Him for our own lives.

Even Peter in the New Testament had a penchant for wanting to know what God’s plans were for his friend John, instead of accepting what God had planned for him alone. Jesus had told Peter, “If it is my will that he [John] remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow me!” (John 21:22).

This incident reminds me of a time when I sensed Jesus’ words applying to my situation. I was sitting in a Sunday school class at church and a friend was sitting nearby. I knew she and her husband were attempting to get pregnant. I had recently miscarried and longed to have a baby. Somehow, because I’d suffered, I couldn’t bear the thought of her having a baby before I did. (Competition, anyone?) And in that moment, I heard these words in my heart: *If I want her to have ten children, what is that to you? You follow Me.*

By the way, that friend didn't have ten children. She had one. I had three, but by then there was no longer a competition in my heart. I was sufficiently convicted that Jesus mattered more than what I wanted. And what His plans are for others is none of my business.

I think Miriam needed to learn that too.

Miriam, who once sang songs of praise at the Israelites' deliverance from Egypt, ended up growing old and developed a comparative, complaining spirit. Perhaps some of that shift in her attitude came from the changes in her roles in her family and Israel. Where once she had held responsibility and positive leadership, as time passed, something changed. Did jealousy usurp her joy? Or did something else happen to make her complain about the way life had gone?

The Bible does not give us her motives. We can guess that she didn't have the highest regard for her new sister-in-law. And given her defensiveness regarding leadership and God's call on her life, I wonder if she might have grown jealous of Moses's relationship with God or of his role as the main leader of a people she probably knew better than he did. Somewhere along the way, she gave in to the temptation to complain against her brother, and her words caught God's attention. And He did not like hearing her complain against His servant Moses, whom the Bible says was the most humble, or meek, man, more than all of the people on earth (Num. 12:3).

When you look at God's relationship with Israel at this time, His anger seems to have been most aroused when the people complained. And the longer they wandered, and even after they inhabited the Promised Land, the longer they continued to complain, disobey, and distrust God, provoking Him to wrath. Does that convict you? It does me.

I don't see complaining as the same as crying out to God for help. When the Israelites were slaves in Egypt, God saw their misery and heard their cries, and He answered them with a great deliverance.

However, as I've studied the books surrounding Miriam's life, or even just done a devotional read-through of the first few books of the Bible, I've seen a pattern. The people of Israel complained a lot, which is really saying, "I don't trust You, Lord."

The Israelites couldn't find water after three days of searching, and when they did, it was bitter—in other words, undrinkable. So they complained to Moses. God told Moses how to freshen the water.

The people grew hungry, and instead of praying, they complained to Moses again. God gave them manna, or bread from heaven. They got sick of the manna and complained again, so God sent them quail.

The spies sent to Canaan, who were supposed to encourage the people to take the Promised Land as God intended, came back instead with a lot of negativity. Rather than rousing the people to move forward and follow God's lead, all but two of them told tales of giants in the land who were too big for them to overcome, which made the whole nation afraid. People grew whiny again, making God angry over their lack of trust. So they faced the unhappy consequence of wandering in the wilderness for forty years.

If Miriam didn't like Moses's choice of a wife, she could have talked it over with her husband (if she had one) or with Aaron's wife, and she could have asked God to help her understand why what Moses chose to do was okay. Seems like before complaining, she should have noticed the pattern that complaint equals consequences from God. But obviously, she

didn't. Isn't it the same for us? It is easy to forget that God is listening to what we say. If He doesn't like what He hears, He may let us know that. If not now, then someday, when we will give an account to Him for our words.

Miriam had to face the consequences of her grumbling. She was stricken with a case of leprosy for seven days and forced to live outside the camp (Num. 12:10–15).

We might ask, Why such a harsh punishment? After all, it was a simple complaint. But I think we underestimate how God views our complaining spirits. We are telling Him that we know better. We don't think He's gotten things right. We don't trust Him with our future or our present. To complain against our circumstances, a fellow human being, or even God Himself (um, yeah, I've done all of those) is an affront to Him.

I sense that may be why Miriam suffered God's discipline. It wasn't that God stopped loving her. But He wanted her to realize that He is God. She was not. He chose Moses to lead. He chose her to lead in a different capacity. Maybe because leaders are held to a higher standard, God couldn't allow her words to go unnoticed.

It is a testament to Moses's humility and love for his sister that he begged God to heal her. Some siblings might not have been so gracious, given the complaint against them. Moses was. And yet, even Moses didn't have an "in" with God to stop Him from disciplining His child. Hebrews 12:6 tells us that God disciplines those He loves, and He showed that love by teaching Miriam to respect Him.

I suspect that Miriam came away chastised and humble. We don't hear of her again until her death, so we can't know how she felt. But if God put me through something like that, I think I'd learn a little humility. Perhaps I would even make an attempt to turn my complaint into acceptance.

Do you do that? Have you ever taken your jealous or complaining feelings and given them to God, asking Him to help you accept the blessings He's given you, even if they aren't the blessings you wanted?

God uses the things we would rather complain about to bring about change in us. He wants to make His children like His Son, Jesus. That may sound like God wants all His children to look alike, but that's not the case. He doesn't want clones of Christ. He wants His image bearers to actually bear the mark of His image in their character.

Do I love as Jesus did? To the point of being willing to sacrifice all for the sake of a loved one?

Do I have Jesus' patience? To the point where I am willing to wait on God even if He takes years to answer my prayers?

Do I have Jesus' compassion? To the point where I am willing to lay aside what I want to do in order to comfort someone else who needs me right then?

Do I have Jesus' perseverance? To the point where when trials hit hard, I can stand up under them by God's grace?

When God graciously uses other people to bless us, do we allow Him to use us to touch other people in the same way? Do we thank people for what they've done for us? Do we turn irritable attitudes on their heads, and instead of complaining about what we don't have, we thank God for what we do?

Most of the time things could be a lot worse in our lives. But I sense so much entitlement in our thinking today that it feels like we've lost the desire to pray and have forgotten the art of gratitude.

If the Israelites had not complained so many times, showing their lack of trust in God to lead them, I can bet they would not have wandered in the wilderness for forty years.

Are you wandering in a wilderness of your own right now? I am. Or at least it feels like I am—on and off. I've been here a long time, but I sense that God is finally getting my attention enough to pull me out of it. I'm growing stronger in my faith, and the complaints are fewer, the gratitude more often, the praise real.

Maybe I'm beginning to carry just a bit of the character of Jesus. I hope so. How about you?

Ponder This

Life isn't going to go the way we expect it to. No one who lives on this planet gets everything they want. Even Jesus laid aside the right to dictate a perfect life for Himself here in order to prepare a place for us with Him in eternity that will be far beyond anything we could possibly ask for or imagine.

We are going to feel both good and bad emotions, deal with good and bad people, struggle with circumstances that don't go the way we expected, and even find joy in something that surprises us out of the blue. Whatever we face, we can take that circumstance or emotion and find the good in it. We can thank God even in the midst of trials. Maybe we aren't going to thank Him *for* the trial, but we can thank Him *in* it. He is working things for our good if we love Him. And loving Him takes a lifetime to truly learn.

Remember this:

For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.
(Rom. 8:38–39)

God loves you. If you have put your trust in Jesus Christ and believed what God says about Him, you belong to God, not to this world. You are here to fulfill the things God planned in advance for you to do, and to allow God our Father to shape you into the image of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Oftentimes the journey of growing to become like Christ—or, as in Miriam’s case, to be obedient to God—is not easy. It is more likely the hardest thing we will ever do. But it is worth every step along the way.

TAKING IT FURTHER

1. Do you think Miriam and Aaron should have been equal partners with Moses in leading Israel? Can you relate to why Miriam might have grown jealous of her brother’s favor with God? Why or why not?
2. Have you ever compared your situation in life to someone else’s? How has that comparison made you feel? What might you do differently the next time you are tempted to feel jealous, complain, or compare yourself to someone who seems to live an easier or better life than you?
3. What are some positive things you can do to grow closer to God? Name three things you can begin to do right now that will make God more real to you and start you on a path toward a greater intimacy with the Creator who loves you.