Lesson 12

MIRIAM, AARON, AND KORAH

OBJECTIVES

- 1. To learn that all the tasks we do in church are equally important in God's eyes.
- 2. To understand that we ought to serve God with humility, not wanting more than we have or feeling like we should deserve more.
- 3. To understand that God will reward those who work for Him.
- 4. To understand the danger of jealousy and how we can overcome it.

MEMORY VERSE

"And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men."

(Colossians 3:23)

PRAYER

- 1. We thank God for gathering us here so that we can worship and learn more about His word.
- 2. Lord, please help us to understand and overcome jealousy.
- 3. Today, we'll be learning about complaining, as well. Please help us to understand Your teachings.
- 4. May God help us focus on this lesson and apply its teachings to our lives.



- 1. The Complaints of Miriam and Aaron
- 2. Korah's Rebellion
- **3. Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs**—Salvation is given by grace through faith
- 4. Life Application
 - Job Attitudes
 - Identifying and Dealing with Jealousy
- **5. Activity**—Calendar booklet

Background Knowledge for Teachers

Miriam and Aaron's Rebellion

Miriam and Aaron's apparent disagreement with Moses' choice of wife (an Ethiopian woman, not an Israelite), may very well have just been an excuse for their contention with Moses. The subsequent verses imply that it is their jealousy and personal pride that are the root of their protest. In addition, the Bible records Miriam before Aaron's name, implying that she was the instigator, supported by the fact that, of the pair, only she received leprosy.

God's response to their dissent is portrayed in an unusually physical sense; He comes down, stands before the door, and calls the two forward. He is speaking to them in a manner that establishes His control. It is God who decides how He communes with His people, whether that be physically, in visions or dreams, or face to face, as He does with Moses. Neither Miriam nor Aaron had the right to declare who deserved what or the right to speak against Moses, whom God had clearly favored so much.

Korah and His Followers

Unlike the previous rebellion, this one was against both Moses and Aaron; Korah and his allies were dissatisfied with the role that God had given to them and vied for priesthood instead. However, by claiming dissatisfaction with their God-given role, they were also expressing their dissatisfaction with God Himself, on the basis that He had not elevated them to a "sufficient" level. Arrogance was, again, the primary drive in this rebellion.

The response to this rebellion was more complex than the previous. Moses falling on his face signified his submission to God's will, and the challenge that he set would clearly show them what God's decision on the matter was. In Numbers 16:9, Moses issues a condescending reply for the contempt that Korah and his allies showed to the work God had appointed them. They did not appreciate nor realize how gracious God was being in giving them the important work that they had. Furthermore, Dathan and Abiram were arrogant enough to accuse Moses with spurious claims, even blaming him for their inability to enter Canaan (Num 16:14). Although God justly punishes the rebels, it is interesting to note that Korah's family was spared, with his descendants even contributing a considerable number of psalms (Psalm 42).



Reaching Out to Your Students

At this age, your students may not realize or appreciate the fact that the work they are given in church are blessings from God. Being omnipotent, He doesn't need any of us to do work for Him; these duties should be regarded as opportunities to serve Him and to store up our reward in heaven. They are opportunities that are given out of His grace and mercy.

Try to emphasize to your students that no matter what we are chosen to or choose to do for God, such jobs are not indicative of any sort of social position or hierarchy. Everything, from cleaning the bathrooms to speaking on the pulpit, is regarded as equal in God's eyes. He chooses what is best for our abilities and offers us the chance to serve Him so that we might receive blessings in the future. Help your students to understand that everything they do—including obeying their parents at home or preaching to their friends at school—are equally important jobs in which we should do our best.



5 Minutes

Think of various tasks that you can assign the students, such as writing down the lesson title on the board, tidying up the tables/chairs, handing out papers, or sweeping the floor. You may actually assign these or simply pretend that you are assigning various duties to the students. Then, ask the following questions.

- 1. Do any of you like the task that you have?
- 2. How many of you would prefer a task that someone else has?
- 3. How many of you don't want to do the task at all?

Oftentimes, we might get tasks that we think are a pain or annoying to do. But all of these tasks that you were just assigned are various forms of serving God! They are all ways that we could show God our love. In this lesson, we're going to learn more about serving God and about *how* we should do it.



arrogance: an attitude which shows excessive pride in oneselfpride: exceedingly great self-esteemcontempt: the act of regarding someone or something as inferior or worthless



Bible Discovery & Spiritual Teaching

30-35 Minutes

Today, we're going to learn about certain people who argued against Moses because they didn't like their job. They thought they *deserved* better jobs, because they were full of **pride**.

Now, as you might know, Moses was a very humble man. God often said that He spoke to Moses face to face because Moses was such a humble and a faithful servant. In the two stories we're going to learn, some people thought that they were better than Moses and believed that they deserved more important positions than the ones that God had appointed them. They decided that they were better than the roles given to them. Let's open our Bibles to the first story in Numbers 12.

Do you remember who Miriam and Aaron were? They were Moses' siblings! The Israelites often rebelled, but it must have been very upsetting for Moses to see that his own family spoke against him. But what exactly was their complaint?

Let's read 12:2. Miriam and Aaron complained that they were also special people, so why weren't they treated as specially as Moses was? Basically, they were **arrogant**, meaning that they took too much **pride** in themselves. By speaking against Moses' position, they were saying that they should have been given more important roles.

Now you might remember, but Miriam and Aaron actually had very, very important positions in the nation. Miriam was a highly regarded prophetess—this means that God often spoke through her. Aaron also had a very important position—he was the high priest of the entire nation. Both of them were important people among all of the twelve tribes. It may be because of this that they both believed they were superior over others, and, as a result, decided that they deserved better positions than the ones that God had specifically assigned to them.

Miriam and Aaron's complaints did not go unheard. In fact, God listened and spoke to them about it. Let's read God's response in 12:4-8.

God very specifically states that Moses is a special person. A prophet or a prophetess like Miriam might have received dreams or visions, but Moses was different. Instead of speaking to Moses in dreams or visions, God spoke to Moses face to face. This was an indication of the special relationship between the two of them. The only other people who had such a close relationship with God were Abraham and Jesus Himself. Miriam and Aaron knew this, but they still spoke against Moses.

Let's read the last part of the story in 12:10-15. At the end of this story, God punishes them by giving Miriam leprosy. But because they loved her, both Aaron and Moses prayed to God, asking Him to forgive her.

Korah and His Followers

The second story we'll be learning is about a man named Korah. Korah had similar thoughts to Miriam and Aaron. He thought that his position wasn't good enough for him. However, Korah also led hundreds in thinking the same way as him, so Moses faced a whole group of rebellious Israelites who thought that Moses didn't deserve his position and that they deserved better!

Let's read their complaint in Numbers 16:1-3, 12-14.

that they should be treated just as importantly as Moses. Similarly, Korah and his followers believed that they deserved a better position; however, they accused Moses and Aaron of not deserving leadership over the Israelites! As if this weren't enough, there were two men—Dathan and Abiram—who blamed Moses for leading them to their deaths in the wilderness and for not leading them into Canaan.

Does anyone remember the reason the Israelites had to continue wandering in the wilderness, instead of entering Canaan? (The Israelites believed the negative report of the ten spies and refused to enter Canaan. Because they did not believe in God's power or protection, He condemned them to wandering another forty years in the wilderness.)

Let's read Moses' response to the rebellion in Numbers 16:16-35. We'll go through the sequence of events one at a time.

For Teachers

Give the students some time to fill in the Bible Discovery worksheet, helping where necessary. Refer to the Teacher Version for answers.

Conclusion

What are some common characteristics that Miriam, Aaron, and Korah and his followers shared? (Answers may vary. E.g., pride, arrogance, greed, dissatisfaction with the jobs God gave them, ungrateful to God, accused Moses of things he didn't do, etc.)

Have you ever not wanted to do a job you were given? What were some reasons you felt that way? (It was gross, boring, etc.; I wanted to spend time doing other things, etc.)

Moses' job was a lot more difficult than any job we will ever receive. He had to endure the complaints and grumblings of an entire nation, while still trying to lead them on the correct path in faith! But despite all of this, he remained humble and faithful to God and never asked for more than he had. So, in the future, if we are ever given a job in church that we really don't like, we should try to remember the pride of Miriam and Korah, who didn't appreciate the positions God had given them, and the humility of Moses, who never asked for more from God.

In the previous story, Miriam and Aaron had complained



Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs

2-5 Minutes

Salvation is given by the grace of God through faith.

As believers in Christ, our ultimate goal is achieving salvation. But as humans, it is impossible for us to avoid sin. That's why we have baptism and the Holy Spirit to help us on our way. But it is not just these things that help us achieve our goal. Believing in Jesus Christ means that we must constantly strive to be like Him. We must always do our best to represent Jesus in everything that we do at church, at home, or at school so that we can shine as lights of the world. This means following His commandments, such as obeying our parents and teachers, keeping our bodies clean, and doing our best to be kind to all of our classmates—even the ones we don't like. As long as we try to do such things, our reward in heaven will surely be great!



Check for Understanding

5 Minutes

- 1. Who were Miriam and Aaron? Moses' sister and brother. Miriam was a prophetess, and Aaron was the high priest.
- 2. What did they complain about? They believed that they were as superior to the Israelites as Moses and that he did not deserve his position. They thought they deserved better jobs.
- **3. How did God respond? What did He say about Moses?** He called the three of them to the tabernacle and came down in a pillar of cloud. He told them that Moses was the only person He spoke to face to face.
- 4. What was their punishment? Miriam received leprosy.
- 5. Who were the main leaders of the second rebellion? Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.
- **6. What was their complaint?** They blamed Moses for things he hadn't done and believed that they deserved better positions than those they had been given. They also thought that Moses did not deserve leadership over the Israelites.
- 7. What was their punishment? The earth swallowed up their tents, and fire burned up their 250 followers.

Life Application

10 Minutes

1. Job Attitudes

Miriam, Aaron, and Korah and his followers all had one thing in common: they thought they deserved a better job. But they were punished not simply because they wanted a different job, but because of their attitude towards the jobs that they had and, therefore, to God.

Discussion question: What kind of attitude do you think we should have when we accept or are assigned a task at home? At school? At church?

- 1. What church task do you think is the most desirable, or the best, task to have?
- 2. What church task do you think is the least desirable, or the worst, task to have?
- 3. What is a church task that you would like to have?

Now, read the following verses and write them below:

1. Philippians 2:12-13

"Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure."

2. Colossians 3:23-24

"And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ."

Whatever task we do, it is all for one purpose: to show the glory of God. This means that the three tasks that you listed are all equal in God's eyes!

Lastly, look up the verse below and fill in the blanks.

Ephesians 4:1-3

"I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to <u>walk worthy</u> of the <u>calling</u> with which you were <u>called</u>, with all <u>lowliness</u> and <u>gentleness</u>, with <u>longsuffering</u>, <u>bearing</u> with one another in <u>love</u>, endeavoring to keep the <u>unity</u> of the Spirit in the <u>bond</u> of <u>peace</u>."

After studying these verses, has your answer to the discussion questions above changed?

2. Identifying and Dealing with Jealousy

Jealousy

How would you define jealousy? Write your definition here. [Allow students to share their answers.] *Answer:* Jealousy is a feeling of discontentment, hostility, or jealousy with regard to another's success or possessions.

Why are some people jealous or envious of others? [Ask students to share.] Do you ever envy other people? Why? Why not? [Ask students to share.]

Jealousy often goes hand-in-hand with **pride**. We see something that others have and desire for it. Then, we make up all sorts of reasons for why we deserve it more than they do. This is what it means to have pride.

It's really hard for us to ignore when other people have better things than we have. As human beings, it is only natural to feel dislike for someone who has something that we want! But it was this same exact feeling of jealousy that got Miriam, Aaron, and Korah in trouble.

What is jealousy?

Jealousy is a sin, which God does not like. Jealousy is terrible and can make a person sick both physically and spiritually. Jealousy brings decay to our lives because it makes us focus on anger and bitterness (Prov 14:30). It tells us in the Book of Ephesians that we should not give the devil any opportunity to get into our lives. Therefore we must be aware that jealousy can grow into bigger things. If we love to be generous, however, we push jealousy away, meaning that we are less likely to be led astray. Jealousy is evil and God tells us not to do evil. We cannot let bad feelings cause us to hurt our relationship with God or with others.

We must give jealousy over to God.

If we find ourselves becoming jealous, we have to give it over to God. We have to assess our emotions—are they in line with God's teachings? We need to read the Bible because the word is truth. God's word will change us. When our attitude changes, other things change, too. Our spiritual life changes so we can go and bear fruit. As children of God, we need to be careful not to become jealous. We can stop becoming jealous with God's help. If we admit our sins to Him and repent, He will help us overcome our jealousy.

What do we do? [Ask students to read the following scenarios and share what they think the characters should have done instead. Suggested answers have been listed here.]

1. Every day at school, June looked at her friend Sarah and wished that she could be like her. Sarah was smart, athletic, and musical. June could play the piano, too, but she could not play as well as Sarah. They had the same piano teacher, so June would always see Sarah play at their piano recitals. Everyone liked how Sarah played the piano, but very few people said anything about June. One day, June and Sarah were playing together during recess. Suddenly, June started thinking about how everyone liked Sarah, and she became very jealous. Out of her anger, she pushed Sarah down onto the ground. The teacher saw what happened and called June's parents to school. June got into a lot of trouble with her parents and after that, Sarah didn't want to play with her anymore. **Instead of getting jealous and angry, what should June have done instead?**

June should not have acted out of anger toward her friend. The Bible reminds us not to sin when we are angry (Eph 4:26). Instead, June should have asked Sarah if she had any tips for her that would help her improve her piano skills. June could have even asked Sarah to come over and practice piano with her, so June could learn from Sarah. Lastly, June should remember that God gives each of us our own gifts, so she also had a gift of her own. She only needed to reflect upon herself, instead of focusing on Sarah, to find it.

2. Liam and John both played for the school basketball team. They also hung out each time after basketball practice ended. Over time, however, John started getting better and better at basketball, leaving Liam behind. Liam started becoming jealous of John, and secretly wished that John would get injured so he couldn't play anymore. Still, John and Liam continued to hang out after practice as usual, as John had no idea that Liam was jealous of him. One day during practice, Liam was about to pass the basketball to John, but instead of doing a regular pass, he threw the ball with all his might and hit John in the head really hard. John started feeling dizzy and had to sit down. Later, John's mother had to come and take him home. Liam and John would not be hanging out as usual after practice that day. **Instead of getting jealous and angry, what should Liam have done instead?**

Liam should have asked John if they could practice longer together. By practicing more together, Liam could observe John and learn from him. In addition, Liam should have congratulated John on improving so much and have been glad that his friend found something in which he excelled. Most importantly, Liam should have remembered that while John may be better at basketball than him, there are also other things that he is better at than John. God gave him his own gifts, too, and he should remember to treasure those gifts.

The next time we feel jealous, what can we do? Instead of being mad at someone who can do something better than us, we can learn from their gifts. For example, if another church member is better at playing piano than we are, we can ask them for tips and suggestions that can help us improve. We can also praise God for giving them those gifts to help the church or other people.

Be Thankful

Make a list of things that God has given you. We can thank God for these things instead of comparing what we don't have. We must constantly examine ourselves to see if we are jealous of someone else.

Conclusion about jealousy:

- 1. Jealousy is sin (1 Cor 3:3; Jas 3:16).
- 2. It is unwise to compare yourself and your situation to others and their situations (2 Cor 10:12).
- 3. Be content with what you have (Heb 13:5-6).

HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

- 1. They believed that they were as superior to the Israelites as Moses and that he did not deserve his position. They thought they deserved better jobs.
- 2. He called the three of them to the tabernacle and came down in a pillar of cloud. He told them that Moses was the only person He spoke to face to face.
- 3. Korah, Dathan, and Abiram
- 4. They blamed Moses for things he hadn't done and believed that they deserved better positions than those they had been given. They also thought that Moses did not deserve leadership over the Israelites.
- 5. Answers may vary. Suggested answer: We should be humble, should not grumble that others' jobs are "better" than ours, and should serve willingly.
- 6. Answers may vary.



Activity God Loves Me When I...

10-15 Minutes

Objective: To make small reminders to the students that God loves it when they do work for Him to the best of their abilities, no matter what job it is.

Materials

- Printer paper, two sheets per student
- Construction paper
- Markers, pens
- Scissors
- Stapler, string, or other material to bind a booklet together
- Lined paper

Instructions

- 1. On a sheet of lined paper, have each student list out eleven jobs that they can do, either in church or at home. Remind them that obeying God's commandments in any manner is considered a "job" or "position" for us, so certain activities that may not initially seem like it are actually jobs that we can do for God. Suggestions have been listed below.
- 2. Distribute two sheets of printer paper to each student. Fold both sheets of paper in half lengthwise, then in thirds width-wise. You should have six panels. Cut out each third so that you have six pairs of panels that you can fold in half. Tuck them into each other to make a booklet.
- 3. Take one of the sheets and place it on the construction paper, and then use a pencil to mark the edges. Cut the construction paper about 1 cm larger than the markings so that you have a "cover" for the booklet. Fold it and tuck the booklet in. Staple or sew the binding together.
- 4. On the **first page**, have the students write "God Loves Me When I...", and on the **last page** have them write down "December" at the top and the memory verse below it.
- 5. Starting from the **second page**, have the students write down "January" (they may use markers or colored pencils to decorate it). Then, on the **third page**, write down the first item on their list of eleven jobs that they can do for God. Continue in the same manner until you reach November. The last page (December) should have the memory verse.
- 6. Use markers or colored pencils to decorate the cover.
- 7. Instruct your students to keep the booklet and, for each month, aim to do the listed activity at least once.

Suggestions for jobs or activities your students can do:

- Help clean at church
- Wash dishes at home
- Do my RE homework early
- Read the Bible passage for my next RE lesson
- Talk to a classmate to whom no one else talks
- Bring a friend to church
- Spend more time practicing my instrument or doing my homework
- Try to be extra nice to my sibling(s)
- Keep my room clean
- Help mom or dad with house chores or grocery shopping
- Play piano at church or greet truth-seekers

KORAH'S REBELLION

Follow the sequence of events in Numbers 16:1-35 by filling in the blanks in the boxes below, referring to the Bible if you need help.

-1-

Korah and his allies challenged Moses, saying that the whole congregation was <u>holy</u>. They claimed that Moses did not deserve his position. (v. 1-3)

-3-

Moses angrily told Korah, "Isn't it enough for you that the God of <u>Israel</u> has <u>separated</u> you from the rest[...] and brought you near Himself to do the work at the Lord's tabernacle and to stand before the community and <u>minister</u> to them?" (v. 9)

-5-

Korah and his followers offered incense in front of the tabernacle, and the <u>glory</u> of the Lord appeared. He commanded that everyone move away from the <u>tents</u> of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. (v. 19-23)

-7-

The moment Moses finished speaking, the ground under the rebels <u>split</u> apart, and the earth <u>swallowed</u> Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. (v. 31-32) -2-

Moses fell down on his face before <u>God</u> and challenged them. He told them to take their <u>censers</u> and bring them before the Lord. (v. 4-7)

-4-

<u>Dathan</u> and Abiram accused Moses of <u>killing</u> them in the wilderness and of not allowing them to enter <u>Canaan</u>. (v. 12-14)

-6-

Moses told the Israelites, if the men died of natural causes, then he was not sent from God. However, if the <u>earth</u> swallowed them up, then they will know that the rebels treated God with <u>contempt</u>. (v. 28-30)

-8-

In the end, <u>fire</u> appeared and <u>consumed</u> Korah's followers, the 250 men who offered incense. (v. 35)

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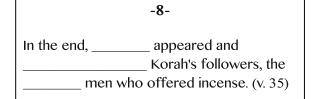
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Job Attitudes

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Discussion question: What kind of attitude do you think we should have when we accept or are assigned a task at home? At school? At church?

- 1. What church task do you think is the most desirable, or the best, task to have?
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1. Philippians 2:12-13

2. Colossians 3:23-24

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Lastly, look up the verse below and fill in the blanks.

Ephesians 4:1-3

"I, therefore, the	prisoner of the Lord, beseech	of the		with which	you	
were	_, with all	_ and	, with	r		one
another in	, endeavoring to keep the _		of the Spirit in the	_ of		

After studying these verses, has your answer to the discussion questions above changed?

"Walk worthy of the calling with which you were called."

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Identifying and Dealing with Jealousy

Jealousy

How would you define jealousy? Write your definition here.

What is jealousy?

Jealousy is a sin, which God does not like. It tells us in the Book of Ephesians that we should not give the devil any opportunity to get into our lives. Therefore we must be aware that jealousy can grow into bigger things. Jealousy is evil and God tells us not to do evil. We cannot let bad feelings cause us to hurt our relationship with God or with others.

We must give jealousy over to God.

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What do we do?

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The next time we feel jealous, what can we do? Instead of being mad at someone who can do something better than us, we can learn from their gifts. For example, if another church member is better at playing piano than we are, we can ask them for tips and suggestions that can help us improve. We can also praise God for giving them those gifts to help the church or other people.

Be Thankful

Make a list of things that God has given you. We can thank God for these things instead of comparing what we don't have. We must constantly examine ourselves to see if we are jealous of someone else.

Conclusion about jealousy:

- 1. Jealousy is sin (1 Cor 3:3; Jas 3:16).
- 2. It is unwise to compare yourself and your situation to others and their situations (2 Cor 10:12).
- 3. Be content with what you have (Heb 13:5-6).





E2 Year 1 Book 3 Lesson 12-Miriam, Aaron, and Korah

Homework Assignment

Name: Parent signature: _						Paren	t signa	ture: Date:
Bible Reading: Please put a check mark in the spacewhen you complete the reading each day.Prayer: Please put a check mark in the space on the1days you prayed to God.							•	
	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
Read								2
Pray								

Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse. (Colossians 3:23)

Short Answer

- 1. What did Miriam and Aaron complain about?
- 2. How did God respond? What does He say about Moses?
- 3. Who were the main leaders of the second rebellion?
- 4. What was their complaint?
- 5. What kind of attitude should we have when serving God?
- 6. What are some ways we can serve God?