

Numbers 12:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Miriam was shut out from the camp seven days: and the people journeyed not till Miriam was brought in again.

Analysis

The record 'Miriam was shut out from the camp seven days' emphasizes the completion of her discipline. The temporal nature—'seven days'—shows the discipline was restorative, not final. The purpose was purification and restoration, not permanent exclusion. This models church discipline's goal: restoring repentant sinners (Galatians 6:1), not condemning them. The time limit prevented indefinite punishment. After seven days, she was fully restored to fellowship, prefiguring how Christ's discipline of His children, though painful, works repentance and restoration (Hebrews 12:11).

Historical Context

During Miriam's seven-day exclusion, the entire nation waited—'the people journeyed not till Miriam was brought in again' (verse 15). This demonstrates honor for Miriam despite her sin and shows that community moves together. They did not abandon her but waited for restoration, modeling how churches should wait for and welcome back disciplined members who repent.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does time-limited church discipline serve restoration rather than permanent exclusion?
2. What does the community's waiting for Miriam teach about patience with disciplined members?
3. How can we maintain both holiness standards and gracious restoration in church discipline?

Interlinear Text

וַתִּשָּׁטַח רַ	מִרְיָם:	מִח וַיֵּצֵא	לְמַחֲנֶה ה	שִׁבְעַת	יָמִים
was shut	And Miriam	out	from the camp	seven	days
H5462	H4813	H2351	H4264	H7651	H3117
וְהָעָם	לֹא	נָסַע	עַד	הָאֵסָף	מִרְיָם:
and the people		journeyed		was brought	And Miriam
H5971	H3808	H5265	H5704	H622	H4813

Additional Cross-References

Habakkuk 3:2 (Parallel theme): O LORD, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid: O LORD, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy.

Lamentations 3:32 (Parallel theme): But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies.

Micah 6:4 (Parallel theme): For I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of servants; and I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.