



**WHAT'S MIRIAM DOING HERE?
Metzora – 2014**

How are the following two verses connected?

1. Devarim 24:8-9

<p>In cases of a skin affection be most careful to do as the levitical priests instruct you. Take care to do as I have commanded them. Remember what the L-rd your G-d did to Miriam on the journey after you left Egypt.</p>	<p>הַשֹּׁמֵר בְּנִגְעֵ-הַצָּרְעַת לְשֹׁמֵר מְאֹד וְלַעֲשׂוֹת כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר-יֹרֶוּ אֶתְכֶם הַכֹּהֲנִים הַלְוִיִּם כְּאֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתָם תִּשְׁמְרוּ לַעֲשׂוֹת. זְכוֹר אֶת אֲשֶׁר-עָשָׂה ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ לְמִרְיָם בְּדֶרֶךְ בְּצֵאתְכֶם מִמִּצְרָיִם.</p>
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FIRST ANSWER

Background Reading - Bamidbar 12

How are the following two comments similar/different?

2. Rashi Devarim 24:9

<p>If you wish to take precautions against being stricken with a skin affection at all, then do not speak slander in the first place. Remember what was done to Miriam, who spoke against her brother, Moses, and was stricken with lesions.</p>	<p>אם באת להזהר שלא תלקה בצרעת, אל תספר לשון הרע. זכור העשוי למרים שדברה באחיה ולקתה בנגעים</p>
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3. Ramban Devarim 24:9

<p>We remember the great punishment which G-d inflicted upon the righteous prophetess who spoke only about her brother upon whom she had bestowed her mercy and whom she loved as herself. And she spoke nothing wrong to his face, but only, in privacy, between her and her holy brother, Aaron. Yet all her good deeds were of no avail to her. You, too...will not be saved.</p>	<p>שנזכר העונש הגדול שעשה ה' לצדקת הנביאה, שלא דברה אלא באחיה גמול חסדה אשר אהבתו כנפשה, ולא דברה בפניו שיבוש, ולא בפני רבים, רק בינה לבין אחיה הקדוש בצנעה, וכל מעשיה הטובים לא הועילו גם אתה ... לא תנצל</p>
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SECOND ANSWER

4. Devarim 25:17

Remember what Amalek did to you on your journey, after you left Egypt.	זְכוֹר אֶת אֲשֶׁר-עָשָׂה לְךָ עַמְלֵק בְּדַרְךָ בְּצֵאתְכֶם מִמִּצְרָיִם.
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5. Ramban Devarim 24:9

In my opinion this actually is a positive commandment...I might think this means in your heart. But "In cases of a skin affection be most careful to do" refers already to forgetfulness of the heart. How then can I fulfill the injunction "Remember what the L-rd your G-d did to Miriam" I must conclude that it means verbal utterance...It appears from here our rabbis considered this a commandment, not as a narrative and advice on how to be saved from plagues as Rashi explained it. And how is it possible that, concerning slander which is as weighty as bloodshed, there should not be a real negative commandments against it in Torah...But this verse contains a great admonition to refrain from it in public and in private, whether with intention to hurt and to shame or with no intent to harm at all. And this commandment is one of the 613 commandments...	ולפי דעתי שהיא מצות עשה ממש...יכול בלבך, כשהוא אומר השמר בנגע הצרעת לשמר מאד ולעשות הרי שמירת הלב אמורה, הא מה אני מקיים זכור שתהא שונה בפיו...ומכאן נראה שרבותינו יעשו אותה מצוה, לא ספור ועצה בלבד להנצל מן הנגעים. ואיך יתכן שלשון הרע שהוא שקול כשפיכות דמים לא תהיה בו בתורה לא תעשה גמור או לאו הבא מכלל עשה, אבל בכתוב הזה אזהרה גדולה בו, להמנע ממנו בין בגלוי בין בסתר בין במתכוין להזיק ולהבזות בין שאין מתכוין להזיק כלל. וזו מצוה מכלל תרי"ג מצות...
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THIRD ANSWER

6. Shabbat 97a

Said Reish Lakish: A person who suspects innocent individuals will be bodily afflicted...	אמר ריש לקיש החושד בכשרים לוקה בגופו
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7. Legends of the Jews – Aaron and Miriam Slander Moses

When the seventy elders were appointed, and the spirit of the Lord came upon them, all the women lighted the candles of joy, to celebrate by this illumination the elevation of these men to the dignity of prophets. Zipporah, Moses' wife, saw the illumination, and asked Miriam to explain it. She told her the reason, and added, "Blessed are the women who behold with their eyes how their husbands are raised to dignity." Zipporah answered, "It would be more proper to say, 'Woe to the wives of these men who must now



abstain from all conjugal happiness!" Miriam: "How does thou know this?" Zipporah: "I judge so from the conduct of thy brother, for ever since he was chosen to receive Divine revelations, he no longer knows his wife." Miriam hereupon went to Aaron, and said to him: "I also received Divine revelations, but without being obliged to separated myself from my husband," whereupon Aaron agreed, saying" "I, too, received Divine revelations, without, however, being obliged to separated myself from my wife." Then both said: "Our fathers also received revelations, but without discontinuing their conjugal life. Moses abstains from conjugal joys only out of pride, to show how holy a man he is." Not only did they speak evil of Moses to each other, but hastened to him and told him to his face their opinion of his conduct. But he, who could be self-assured and stern when it touched a matter concerning God's glory, was silent to the undeserved reproached they heaped upon him, knowing that upon God's bidding he had foresworn earthly pleasures.

8. Targum Yonatan Devarim 24:9

<p>Be careful not to falsely suspect another person in order that you not be smitten. Remember what the Lord your God Did to Miriam who falsely suspected Moshe of something that wasn't true, and she was smitten by skin affection</p>	<p>הוּו זְהִירִין דְּלֹא לְמַחֲשָׁד חַד בְּחִבְרִיָּה דְּלֹא יִלְקִי הוּו דְּכִירִין מֵה דְּעֵבֵד יי אֱלֹהִיכֹן לְמֵרִים דְּחֻשְׁתָּ לְמֹשֶׁה בְּמִלְתָּא דְּלֹא הוּוּ בִּיה וְלִקְתָּ בְּצוּרְעָא וְאִתְעַכְבַּת בְּאַרְחָא בְּמִפְקֹכֹן מִמְצָרִים</p>
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FOURTH ANSWER

9. Chizkuni Devarim 24:8-9

<p>Do not grant special honor to important people by exempting them from banishment from the camp. Remember what God did to Miriam - even though she was sister to the king and high priest, she was nevertheless banished outside the camp for the entire seven-day period.</p>	<p>שְׁלֵא תִהְדַּר פְּנֵי גְדוּל לְפִטוּר מְלִשְׁלַחוּ חוּץ לְשֵׁלֶשׁ מַחֲנוֹת שֶׁהִיא זְכוּרָה אֶת אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ לְמִרְיָם אַחֲוַת לְמֶלֶךְ וְכֹהֵן גָּדוֹל וְאֶעֱפֹכֵי נִסְגְּרָה חוּץ לְמַחֲנֵה שִׁבְעַת יָמִים.</p>
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Based on articles by Rabbi Menachem Liebtog and Rabbi Yaakov Bieler