

Spotlight on....Moshe Striking the Rock

Parashat Chukat contains the story of Moshe hitting the rock to withdraw water. 38 years have passed, and bnei Yisrael are ready to start traveling to enter the land of Israel. They arrive at a place called Zin, and Miriam dies. Right afterwards, the people complain that they don't have any water. Moshe and Aharon go to ask Hashem what to do, and Hashem tells them to take their staff, gather the nation, and go to the rock and tell it to provide them water. Moshe takes his staff, and he and Aharon gather the nation and go to the rock. But then, instead of speaking to the rock, Moshe speaks to the nation and says:

<p>וַיִּקְהֵלוּ מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן אֶת־הַקָּהָל אֶל־פְּנֵי הַסֵּלַע וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם שְׁמַעוּ־נָא הַמַּרְיָם הַמִּן־הַסֵּלַע הַזֶּה נוֹצֵיא לָכֶם מַיִם:</p>	<p>Moses and Aaron assembled the congregation in front of the rock; and he said to them, "Listen, you rebels, shall we get water for you out of this rock?" (20:10)</p>
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Then, instead of speaking to the rock, Moshe hits it:

<p>וַיִּרָם מֹשֶׁה אֶת־יָדוֹ וַיַּךְ אֶת־הַסֵּלַע בְּמַטְהוֹ פַּעַמַיִם וַיֵּצְאוּ מַיִם רַבִּים וַתִּשְׁתֶּה הָעֵדָה וּבְעֵינָם:</p>	<p>And Moses raised his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod. Out came copious water, and the community and their beasts drank. (20:11)</p>
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So, it seems like this was successful. Except, in next pasuk Hashem says:

<p>וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל־מֹשֶׁה וְאַל־אַהֲרֹן יַעַן לֹא־הֵאֱמַנְתֶּם בִּי לְהַקְדִּישֵׁנִי לְעֵינֵי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לָכֵן לֹא תְבִיאֹן אֶת־הַקָּהָל הַזֶּה אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־נָתַתִּי לָהֶם:</p>	<p>But the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not trust Me enough to affirm My sanctity in the sight of the Israelite people, therefore you shall not lead this congregation into the land that I have given them." (20:12)</p>
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So, even though their efforts were successful, clearly Moshe and Aharon did something wrong.

Questions:

1. Based on pasuk 10, how do Moshe and Aharon feel about bnei Yisrael at this moment?
2. Their behavior in pasuk 11 seems to be rooted in anger. Whom are they angry at? About what?
3. Based on pasuk 12, what did they do wrong? Why is Hashem going to punish them?
4. If you had to explain to Moshe and Aharon what they did wrong in this scene what would you say?