



PARASHAT KORACH

פרשת קורח

Numbers 16:1-18:32

Note to the adult teacher: It will be necessary for you to give the scriptural context and background for each of the points listed below.

Great Discoveries In This Week's Parashah (Torah Portion)

- 16:1 Korah's Rebellion
- 16:12 Moses Calls Dathan and Abiram to Meet With Him
- 16:20 Elohim Miraculously Destroys the Rebels
- 17:1 [16:36] The Israelites Protest and a Plague Breaks Out Among the Israelites
- 16:44 [17:9] Aaron Stands Between YHVH and the Israelites
- 17:1 [17:16] A Miraculous Confirmation of Aaron's Priesthood: The Budding Rod
- 17:13 [17:28] Fear of Elohim Comes to Israelites With a New Respect for the Tabernacle
- 18:1 The Priests' Duties in the Tabernacle Restated
- 18:1 Gifts to the Priests and Tithes to the Levites

Exploring This Week's Parashah:

1 The Need for Government

This week's Torah study is an amazing story about a man who wanted to be on top, and who came against YHVH's leader, Moses, but who in reality was rebelling against YHVH. The Creator of the universe didn't like this and took swift action against Korah and his band of rebels. What happened was one of the more interesting miracles recorded in the pages of the Bible.

The dictionary defines the word **rebellion** as "an act of violent or open resistance to an established government or ruler." A government rules over people with laws. A government may be over a nation, a state, a county, a city, or even a family or congregation. A leader in a government rules over people with laws. A ruler may be one individual such as a president, king, governor, or mayor, or it may be a group of individuals such as a congress, parliament, council or committee. These types of governments have authority or control over people. They are able to tell people what they can and cannot do through laws. They also have the authority to enforce the laws. That is, if one breaks the law, the king, president, congress, governor, etc.

can punish law-breakers by fining them money, taking away their property, putting them in prison or even putting them to death if the crime is serious enough.

The Bible teaches that there are four areas of governmental authority. The first and highest level of government is YHVH, the Creator of the universe. He is in charge of everything, and all humans, including kings and presidents, must eventually answer to him.

The next level of government is the family. The head of the family is the father, and then the mother. Children are expected to obey their parents. (Read Ephesians 5:21-23 and 6:1-3.) The father is answerable to YHVH for what he does. If he fails to be a good ruler over his family, then YHVH will punish the father.

Next after the family is the authority of the employer. If you work for someone, you have to do what they tell you to do. If you don't, you'll be fired (Read Ephesians 6:5-9.)

Another important area of authority is the church. YHVH has established government in the congregation of the saints. (Read Ephesians 2:22; 4:11-13.)

After this is the civil government. (See Romans 13:1-6.) Government is of YHVH (Romans 13:1), for it helps to keep men living together in an orderly manner so that men will not hurt and destroy each other.

Government is YHVH's plan. Families need government, as do our places of work, along with the church and society. YHVH established government. The universe stays running in an orderly manner because of laws that YHVH has established. The purpose of government is to create guidelines for men to follow so that they can live in a safe and orderly society where they can raise their families, practice their religion, work, and build their lives. Without government, everything would fall apart and the world would become like a wild and lawless jungle full of murdering savages.

2 Korah and His Followers Rebel Against YHVH's Government

Korah and his followers didn't like the government YHVH had established over the children of Israel. They thought that they could do a better job than having Moses rule over them. Therefore, they started a rebellion to get rid of Moses and rule in Moses' place. The problem is that they were actually rebelling against YHVH who had made Moses the ruler of the nation of Israel. Let's explore this interesting story and see what happened to these rebels.

- (1) (a) Who else rose up with Korah in rebellion against Moses? (Read Numbers 16:1.) What tribe was Korah from? How about the others? (See the same verse and also Numbers 26:5-10.)

Korah was Moses' cousin; therefore, he was jealous of his cousin, a fellow Levite. Dathan and the others were of the tribe of Reuben who was the firstborn son of Jacob, and therefore should have been the leading tribe of Israel. Reuben was disqualified years earlier from that position because he sinned against his father. (Read 1 Chronicles 5:1.) We see therefore that this rebellion was a struggle between cousins who thought they were more capable of ruling



Israel than Moses.

- (b) Who else did these rebels gather around them to come against Moses? (Look at Numbers 16:2.)
- (c) What did they accuse Moses of? (Read verse 3.)
- (d) What was Moses reaction? Did he attack or accuse them in return? (Look at verse 4.) Where did Moses get his strength from and who gave him the wisdom to know what to do in this situation? (Read verses 5 and 6.)

We have already learned that YHVH has established areas of government on this earth to take care of people and to maintain order. These areas of authority include the family, the congregation of believers, the workplace (employer and employee) and national and local government.

Not everyone can be the head. Some people have to be the followers. Furthermore, in many cases, YHVH chooses who will become the head of something. In the Bible, we see that YHVH has a say in who will lead countries, or who will lead his congregation of believers.

That is not to say that everyone who is a leader is specifically put there by YHVH or is his first choice. Sometimes humans put themselves in places of leadership against the perfect will of the Father. This is not always a good thing for men. Sometimes people want someone to be a leader who really isn't the best choice and who ends up being a lousy leader. Sometimes, people choose a leader because of good looks, because he has money, is popular or is famous, or because he talks well.



- (e) Are these good reasons to choose someone to rule over you? What are better qualifications for a good leader? What kind of qualities does YHVH look for in a leader? (Read 1 Timothy 3:1-13.) Did Moses have these qualities? Did Korah and his fellows have them?
- (f) What test did YHVH put Korah and his followers to in order to prove if they were his choice for leadership over Israel or not? (Note Numbers 16:6-7, 17-19.)
- (g) What did Moses have to say about Korah's rebellion? Who were Korah and his band of rebels really rebelling against? (Read verses 8-11.)
- (h) Did Korah continue to have a rotten and stinky attitude toward Moses? (See verses 12-14.)
- (i) How did YHVH finally deal with Korah and his rebels for their evil? How did YHVH show Israel once and for all to the Israelites who his chosen leaders were? (Read verses 24-35.)

3 More Murmuring

- (j) Did the seeds of rebellion stop with the supernatural death of Korah and his rebels? (Look at Numbers 16:41-42.) What was YHVH's response this time? What did Moses and Aaron do? (Read verses 45-50.)
- (k) Read Numbers chapter 17 to see what YHVH had Aaron do to prove to the Israelites that he and his sons were the chosen priests to minister to YHVH on behalf of the Israelites.

4 The Greater Lesson

There is a greater lesson to be learned from this story. The first one is obvious: don't rebel against the leaders and authority YHVH has put in place. This could be your parents, your boss at work, the political government or congregational leaders.

The second lesson is not so obvious. We are all sinners and have repeatedly rebelled against YHVH. Every man and women, boy and girl has sinned against YHVH—broken his laws (Romans 3:23; 1 John 3:4).

As a result, everyone of us deserves the death penalty for our sin and rebellion (Ezekiel 18:4).

At the same time, each of us needs someone to stand up on our behalf before Elohim and plead with him not to destroy us because of our sin. Moses and Aaron (and the priests) did this before YHVH on behalf of Israel. Who does this for us now? (Read Romans 8:31-34; 1 John 2:1.)



"The rod of Aaron was budded." —Num. xvii. 8.

Yeshua died for us on the cross to pay the death penalty for our sins. Because he took our place by dying for each of us, he can ask the Father not to punish us with death because he died in our place.

The cross is the place where Yeshua paid for our sins. It is also the place where we receive spiritual life, even though we too deserve to die. Because of what Yeshua did for us, when we die our natural death, we can be resurrected at his second coming and live forever with him in his eternal kingdom.

Aarons' rod that budded is a picture of the cross. It was a dead staff of wood that miraculously budded, bloomed and brought forth fruit in a day. The same can be said

of the cross. Though only a dead tree post, life came from it by Yeshua's hanging on it and dying for our sins. As a result, the "fruit" of the cross is that we have been given a second chance to overcome sin and to live forever and through Yeshua's help. This occurs when we repent of our sins, place our trust in him and receive his Spirit in our hearts and minds to help us to live a sin-free life.

YHVH Elohim is the God of the second chance because of his great love for his people. Praise his great name!!

