

Torah Portion Korach
Numbers 16:1 – 18:32

The name of this portion is taken from the name of Korah who rebelled against Moses/Aaron, and thus rebelled against the LORD.

Korah was a descendant of Levi, in fact, he was a descendant of Kohath just as Moses and Aaron. However, he was not chosen to be priest, but Aaron. Korah was already able to participate in the care of the temple because he was a Levite. He and his descendants were to be helpers of Aaron and his sons. However, we see that this was not enough for Korah. Korah wanted the priesthood.

Korah and those who rose up to follow him, represent those people of all times who cannot except the fact that they are not in charge, that someone else has been chosen by the LORD to fulfill a called out purpose. Notice who arose with Korah – some of the sons of Reuben. Who was Reuben? Reuben was the firstborn son of Jacob. I would imagine that their reasoning would have them to believe that if anyone were to be in charge, then surely it should be the descendants of the firstborn.

With all that had transpired in their journey up until this point, one would only assume that they had learned by this time that Moses and Aaron were specifically chosen by the LORD to lead/teach and mediate for the people. Had they not already seen what happened to Miriam herself when she complained against Moses. Yet, human beings soon forget important lessons. It is a dangerous thing to arise against a person who is anointed and called out by the LORD.

Notice that these 250 followers of Korah made the same mistake that the two sons of Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, had made. They tried to offer profane fire before YHVH. Since they did not come from the sons of Aaron, the fire and incense in their censers would never have been accepted before Him. Here, again, we find that they had not learned their history lesson very well.

It always amazes me when a nation tries to erase its history because that history offends someone. I cannot change what my ancestors may have done, or the founders of a nation, but I can certainly learn from their mistakes, that is unless the history books have been re-written. When a person, or nation, refuses to learn from their past, they are certain to repeat it.

In 16:41-49, just one day after Korah, and the others who rose up in rebellion, were destroyed suddenly by YHVH, we find the people complaining against Moses and Aaron again. Isn't it always amazing how troublemakers, which start out few in number, can incite rebellion and chaos for many. YHVH now causes a plague to destroy these rebel rousers. One must choose very wisely whom they choose to be influenced by and whom they choose to follow. In this world there are many voices calling out. Most of the time, the one crying out the loudest is the wrong voice. If the majority is listening to a particular voice, then it is usually the wrong voice.

Moses must now show the people who are left, once again, that Aaron is the one chosen by YHVH. This is done by the budding of Aaron's rod.

The portion ends with instructions given for the duties and care of the Levites and the Priesthood.

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