

## 30 AMAZING BIBLE STORIES YOU MAY NOT KNOW

### #18 | The Rebellion of Korah

#### SOME IMPORTANT BACKGROUND

- Moses was uniquely selected by God. Numbers 12:6-8, in addition to plenty of examples of Moses being the only one God dealt with in the Exodus experience.
- Aaron and his sons were uniquely selected by God to serve as priests – Exodus 29:44.
- Moses had previously learned a lesson about being too humble in this selection.
  - Numbers 12:2-4, especially verse 3.
  - This experience strengthened Moses in his understanding of a singular call.

#### MEET KORAH, A MAN WITH AN AGENDA | NUMBERS 16:1-3

- Verse 1 - Korah: cousin without the kindred spirit.
  - Korah was the son of Izhar, grandson of Kohath.
  - Kohath's *other* grandsons were Moses and Aaron.
  - The Jewish rabbis teach that Korah was upset because Moses should have selected someone else in the family (Korah?) instead of Aaron, his own brother.
- Verses 1&2 – Korah gathered help:
  - First, leaders from the tribe of Ruben to join him. This tribe was encamped along the same side (south) of the tabernacle, thus they were “neighbors.”
  - Secondly, 250 who were **famous in the congregation, men of renown.**
- Verse 3 - Korah's agenda is clear: *usurp authority from Moses.*
  - Note the twisting of the truth: **all the congregation are holy** (v. 3) was *true*, but *not* all the congregation was *called as high priests*. This was reserved for children of Aaron alone.
  - Note Korah's *unspoken agenda* was surely that *he have the authority of Moses*, or at least that of Aaron.

#### MOSES ADDRESSES THE REBELLION | NUMBERS 16:4-18

- Verse 4 – Moses **fell upon his face**. Why? Perhaps because, since his Numbers 12 experience, Moses knew *what* he had to do and also *the consequences* of Korah's rebellion.
- Verses 5-7 – Moses asked the men to bring censers to see who the Lord would select. Presumably a reminder of Numbers 3:4.

- Verses 8-11 – Moses reminds Korah of his role as a Levite (especially v. 10).
- Verses 12-14 – Moses specifically calls Dathan and Abiram.
- Verse 15 – Moses makes his request before God.
- Verses 16-18 – Final Instructions for the showdown. Note that verse 18 is a *strange fire* (Num. 3:4), that is, one *not* started by the Lord. The Lord's fire will come later.

#### THE REBELLION THAT ENDS IN SPECTACULAR DEATH | NUMBERS 16:19-35

- Verses 19-22 – The Lord threatens to kill the entire nation.
- Verses 23-27a – The nation is warned, and responds.
- Verses 27b-35 – The Lord punishes those who rebelled. Note the Lord's fire in verse 35.

#### A FOREVER REMINDER | NUMBERS 16:36-40

- The Lord instructed that the metal from the censers be beaten into sheets to cover the altar, as a forever reminder that *only Aaron* and his descendants should take sacrifices before the Lord.

#### BE CAREFUL: MISAPPLICATION WILL PUT YOU IN BONDAGE

- In the dispensation of the grace of God (Eph. 3:2), *we do not have a priesthood*, nor do we have an earthly appointed leader like Moses.
- If we make any direct application of this passage, we will *always* make an incorrect application, and that application is *likely* one that will put us into bondage.
  - To a person to whom we shouldn't be in bondage.
  - To a system to which we shouldn't be in bondage.
- An example (from the best place to go for exemplary bad answers to good questions). <https://www.gotquestions.org/rebellion-of-Korah.html>
  - “The rebellion of Korah demonstrates the grim consequences of usurping the authority of God and of those whom He has chosen to be leaders of His people.”
  - “Korah's problem was not that he was unqualified, humanly speaking, for the position, but that he was arrogant, stiff-necked, and self-promoting.”
  - “Some 1,500 years later, Jude records a strong warning about such men who come into the church as false teachers, arrogating to themselves the authority of God and His Word”
  - “God's true leaders, the elders and pastors of the church who shepherd the flock with humility and care, have an accurate understanding of the Scriptures”