

### **#38 Korach Numbers 16:1-18:32**

By Moshe Schwab

While Praying:

- \* God gave us His word and the Holy Spirit to help us live right.
- \* We live in safety and in peace. The devil is out to trip us up and keep us from a blessed life. Don't be afraid, keep standing strong.
- \* God is our fortress. Rely on God and trust in God. He is powerful; we need His ways to cope with life.
- \* We sometimes look for peace within ourselves and that can be helpful. God's peace though passes all understanding; enjoy God's peace.

Korach is the name "Korah" which means, "bald or ice." In the previous portion, Israel sinned through unbelief in God because of the negative report of the spies and now had to spend 40 years in the wilderness. In the very next portion, we see some Israelites led by Korach believe they should be the ones to lead Israel and Korach apparently wants to be the High Priest. Perhaps they were power hungry. Korach was rich and perhaps he felt because of his riches, he deserved this position.

The real probable cause was that they failed to go into the promised land right away, Korach probably thinks he could have done better. He doesn't understand it was their sin of unbelief that kept them from entering the promised land right away. Some say the reason for Korach acting as he did was because he was jealous. Moshe had chosen Elizaphan as a leader instead of Korach. Korach thought he was in line to be chosen instead of him. While he may have used this to try to usurp Moshe, it is evident that the real reason had to do with the disappointment of not entering the promised land. (from the previous portion – context).

Yehovah opens up the earth and destroys the families of Korach, Dathan, and Abiram. They had said, "Is it a small thing that you have brought us up out of a land flowing with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, that you should keep acting like a prince over us?" Numbers 16:13 NKJV. Three of Korach's sons escape; they had probably repented. Fire came down from heaven and destroyed the 250 leaders that supported Korach.

Then the people were angry about this and God responds by sending a plague, but Aharon offers up incense to stop the plague. Aharon's staff buds so designating him as High Priest. The people were unhappy and afraid of God. If they had obeyed God to begin with, they wouldn't have had any trouble at all. When we understand that God is looking out for us and has our best interests at heart, we obey and trust God readily.

Only the Levi'im (Levites) were to help with the work of the Mishkan (Tabernacle in the desert). God chose the descendants of Aharon and the Levi'im to serve Him and receive support from the offerings. The Levi'im were to also give from the offerings they received and they were not to profane the holy things of the people of Israel. There were three different kinds of people. The priests who were descendants of Aharon (Aaron), the Levites who helped the priests, and the Israelites who were made up of Jews and also Gentiles who were assimilated into the Israelite community. The Israelites were to support the priests, Levites, and help the poor and widows. It amounted to a little over 10% per year.<sup>1</sup> The Jewish leadership though had them giving over 20%. The 10% provided for the legal system, the system of ritual at Jerusalem and the poor.

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<sup>1</sup> Some years they brought their tithe to Jerusalem and other years they were to support the Levites and the poor. The Jewish leadership misinterpreted the text (probably on purpose), so the people were giving more than they were supposed to.

Korach did not understand that God had chosen Moshe and Aharon to lead Israel. It is a picture of the need for us to accept Yeshua as God's anointed Messiah. God chose the Messiah Yeshua to come as a man, to die for our sins, and rise from the dead; God can do what He wants and just as He chose Moshe and Aharon, Yeshua was the form of salvation that God chose for mankind. We should accept who God has chosen. In this portion, those who were rebellious were destroyed. We should consider that before rejecting who God chose as the Messiah.

Also, just as Aharon was eager to bring deliverance to Israel from the plague, Yeshua was zealous to bring deliverance to Israel and also to the whole world. We should remember that God chooses those who serve Him and empowers their spiritual gifting. We should give deserving leaders the encouragement, honor, and financial support that they deserve.

The Head of the believers is the Messiah<sup>2</sup> and He does not lead a worldly organization. Those that Yeshua chooses to lead and serve under Him and are chosen by Him. The present day leadership are chosen by Yeshua because of their zealousness for the things of God just as Aharon was zealous to follow God. Willingness to serve, learn, teach, follow the lead of the Holy Spirit, integrity, purity, and other godly characteristics are things God requires of leadership. The Bible says leaders will be judged more stringently. "My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment;" James 3:1 NKJV. If the leadership is not teaching people to be holy and the people incur judgment because of them, how will God judge these leaders? Just a thought.

God gave us His word and the Holy Spirit to help us live right. The Bible says we are to get rid of any wickedness in our lives. "Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves;" James 1:21 NKJV. It says God's words which include His commandments are able to save us. Some people mistakenly think that doing what God tells us doesn't do anything for us. I've heard people say they don't need God and He never did anything for them. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work;" 2 Timothy 3:16-17 NKJV.

These people either never applied the scriptures to their life or they don't want to. The scriptures are profitable the Bible says and I can personally testify that my life has gone a whole lot better by following God's commandments. Not only will things go better for us, but God puts a blessing on us for following His commandments (Deuteronomy 11:27).

This is a time of testing where we will go through temptations. It won't be like this for those who will live in eternity with God. This is a temporary time. Ya'akov said, "Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life;" James 1:12 NKJV. If we remain faithful to God in this era of temptation, we will receive a blessed eternal life. That is something truly amazing and wonderful. Yochanan (John) said, "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away;" Revelation 21:4 NKJV. Our eternity with God will be amazing and wonderful. It will no longer be a time of testing.

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<sup>2</sup> "He has put all things under his feet and made him head over everything for the Messianic Community." God put Yeshua in charge of the believers and anyone who thinks they are in charge instead of Yeshua are committing the atrocity of Korach.

Without God, life will not go as well as it could have gone. We receive blessings from God for doing what is right and then eternal life, but God also gives us the gift of the Holy Spirit to help us when we believe in the Messiah Yeshua. God is surely wonderful and good. The Holy Spirit has saved my life and helped me with my life. One time I had a fire in my house and God got me up just in time and saved my life!

It's not just what God does for us in the here and now when we believe in Him and keep His commandments, but He saves us eternally. As a good God, He must judge those who do evil and those who don't want to live right will end up in the lake of fire. "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death;" Revelation 21:8 NKJV. It's definitely worth doing what is right and being holy. "Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord;" Hebrews 12:14 NKJV. We are to actually do what God says and not just be hearers only it said in James.

We can live in safety and in peace. The devil is out to trip us up and keep us from a blessed life. Kefa (Peter) said in 1 Peter 4:8-9 NKKJV, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world." Don't be afraid, keep standing strong.

**Don't Be Afraid** by Aaron Hall, 2 weeks as #1 on rhythm and blues chart

There's no need to be afraid, my baby  
I'm as gentle as a kitten  
Oh, baby, don't you be afraid  
I promise I won't hurt you, no way, no way  
And through the good times and the bad  
I said I will be right there hand in hand and side by side

**In the song, we see that people can be incredibly good, but God is truly good.**

James 1:17-18 NKJV

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth."

Jeremiah 29:11 NKJV

"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. I will be found by you, says the Lord."

**God is for us.**

Psalms 139:16-17

"Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed.  
And in Your book they all were written,  
The days fashioned for me,  
When as yet there were none of them.  
How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God!  
How great is the sum of them!"

### **He is gentle yet all powerful.**

Psalm 145:3-6 NKJV

"Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised;  
And His greatness is unsearchable.  
One generation shall praise Your works to another,  
And shall declare Your mighty acts.  
I will meditate on the glorious splendor of Your majesty,  
And on Your wondrous works.  
Men shall speak of the might of Your awesome acts,  
And I will declare Your greatness."

### **He will be with us in the good times and the bad.**

God said to Moshe even after Israel had failed, "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest;" Exodus 33:14 NKJV.

### **He is there to hold our hand when we need Him.**

Isaiah 41:10 NKJV

"Fear not, for I am with you;  
Be not dismayed, for I am your God.  
I will strengthen you,  
Yes, I will help you."

Isaiah 41:13 NKJV

I will uphold you with My righteous right hand  
"For I, the Lord your God, will hold your right hand,  
Saying to you, 'Fear not, I will help you.'"

### **We can pray to Him with confidence as God's people,**

1 Kings 8:57-59 NKJV

"May the Lord our God be with us, as He was with our fathers. May He not leave us nor forsake us, that He may incline our hearts to Himself, to walk in all His ways, and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments, which He commanded our fathers. And may these words of mine, with which I have made supplication before the Lord, be near the Lord our God day and night, that He may maintain the cause of His servant and the cause of His people Israel, as each day may require."

We are to resist the devil who is trying to bring disorder and destruction into our lives Kefa said. It says in Colossians, "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful;" Colossians 3:15 NKJV. Letting peace rule in us can be to make our minds be at peace by letting go of what is on our mind. It can be allowing peace to direct us. Perhaps it can also mean to do things that bring peace.

What things do you do to bring peace into your life?

- Pray
- Resist thoughts that keep coming back that take away my peace. It could be an attack from the devil.
- Read scriptures that apply to what I am facing. I have 9 pages of scriptures that I have applied over and over to my life. I used to read them every day when the list was smaller, but now I read a page a day.
- Speak in tongues. The Bible says it is prayer and edifies us. 1 Corinthians 14:4, 14

- Decide I will trust in God no matter what.
- Have a thankful attitude in all you do.

God is our fortress. Rely on God and trust in God. He is powerful; we need His ways to cope with life. It astounds me how many people allow the pressures of life and even things we have no control over to cause us to lose our grip on reality and our ability to cope. We cannot control the weather, yet some act as though it has control of them. Believers should never allow things to cause us to lose our grip on reality. There are some things in life that are difficult to overcome, but regardless, we are to stay faithful to God no matter what.

Kefa goes on to say in 1 Peter 5:10 CJB, "You will have to suffer only a little while; after that, God, who is full of grace, the one who called you to his eternal glory in union with the Messiah, will himself restore, establish and strengthen you and make you firm." Shaul (Paul) says in 1 Corinthians 15:57-58 CJB, "Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Yeshua the Messiah! So, my dear brothers, stand firm and immovable, always doing the Lord's work as vigorously as you can, knowing that united with the Lord your efforts are not in vain."

We sometimes look for peace within ourselves and that can be helpful. God's peace though passes all understanding; enjoy God's peace. We simply must trust in God. "You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You. Trust in the Lord forever;" Isaiah 26:3-4 NKJV. Doing what is right and good (and following God's commandments) brings peace. The Jewish idea of doing good is to keep God's commandments. "For we are of God's making, created in union with the Messiah Yeshua for a life of good actions already prepared by God for us to do;" Ephesians 2:10 CJB. He is talking about the good acts that come from following the Torah with the help of the Holy Spirit. Who doesn't want good in their life? "Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith;" Galatians 6:10 NKJV. Let us do the things the Torah tells us to do with regard to each other.

God brought Israel out from under the rule of the Egyptians and gave them food and water and rules to live by. They still weren't satisfied. Korach and some other leaders took things upon themselves when they didn't need to. God already had a plan; no one is going to defeat God's plan. We can be part of God's plan if we will follow what He wants us to do.

Trusting in God and the Messiah Yeshua (having faith) is the most important thing we can do. "Don't worry about anything; on the contrary, make your requests known to God by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving. Then God's shalom, passing all understanding, will keep your hearts and minds safe in union with the Messiah Yeshua;" Philippians 4:6-7 CJB. It says God's shalom will keep you. Years ago, I went through something very difficult and I decided that I wasn't going to let that affect my relationship with God; I was going to stay faithful to His commandments. It was amazing. God's peace came over me. God must have done that for me supernaturally. At other times, I've had to rebuke the thoughts that were coming at me and it was a lot harder. Peace doesn't always come automatically, but in all things, go to God; He is our good Father (Avinu tov) and He cares about us. "Deuteronomy 32:6 NKJV says, "Is He not your Father, who bought you? Has He not made you and established you?"

The Haftarah portion is about Samuel anointing King Shaul. Shaul failed in his leadership role and God replaced Shaul. Moshe did not fail in his leadership role. The sin involving the spies issued in a lack of faith by the people towards God and they were then not allowed to enter the promised land for 40 years.

We will face situations where we need to take a stand even though it is a difficult time for us. Watch out for negative thinking and fear. We don't want to end up in rebellion like Korach. Be doers of God's commandments and not just hearers. God gave us His scriptures to equip to do what is right and good and the Holy Spirit to help us. Ya'akov said that those who endure are blessed, so stay faithful no matter what happens. Our eternity with an all-powerful God will be amazing so don't be a coward and also stay free from sin. Be at peace because we have a good God who is for us, will be with us, and will lift us up. We can trust God and have victory through Him and the Messiah Yeshua. Be part of God's plan, stay faithful, and be at peace.