

Rebellion of Korah (Num 16)

by Phil Beach Jr.

Korah's Rebellion teaches the importance of recognizing and submitting to God's established order and hierarchy in the church, as well as the need for divine illumination and the role of the Holy Spirit in spiritual priesthood.

Duration: 34:28

Scripture: Numbers 16:1

Topics: "Rebellion", "Spiritual Priesthood", "Divine Order"

Description

Phil Beach Jr. explores the story of Korah's Rebellion in Numbers 16, emphasizing the importance of understanding one's God-given role within the church. He illustrates how Korah, a Levite, attempted to usurp the priestly duties reserved for Aaron's descendants, highlighting the dangers of overstepping divine boundaries. The sermon draws parallels between this Old Testament account and the New Testament understanding of spiritual priesthood, urging believers to recognize their unique callings and the necessity of the Holy Spirit's guidance. Ultimately, Beach encourages the congregation to embrace their roles in God's temple, emphasizing that true spiritual life comes from participating in the death and resurrection of Christ.

Transcript

It's encouraging to know that, you know, as a pastor, that's the greatest. It's that joy isn't preaching, beloved, at all. The joy is finding a shadow, putting my head down, and weeping because the good great shepherd is tending to his flock.

That's the chief joy. Now I did all this reading and studying here, and I never wrote down any of the scriptures. Somewhere in the book of Numbers, I think it's number 23.

I don't want to get into this in depth, because I only want to go as far as the Holy Ghost took it, tonight. But the Holy Ghost gave us an illumination. I just want to write down, it's Korah's Rebellion.

Korah's Rebellion in Numbers. I believe it's maybe 23 or in that area. Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers.

That's the fourth. That can't be there. It's not 23.

Korah's Rebellion, Numbers chapter 16. Now I just want to write down some characters here. Aaron, Levi, Korah.

Yes, I just was testing you, Norman. I'm glad you're paying attention. Korah, and Aaron's rod.

Praise the Lord. Now, just bear with me for a few minutes, and then we're going to read some scriptures, okay? It's only 8 o'clock, so we have some time. Now this is a story in the Old Testament, Brethren, that has an incredible spiritual application to what God is doing today.

And as God opens up our hearts and gives us understanding, this can be an incredible encouragement to us, to help us understand what the Lord is doing for us. God had a tabernacle in the wilderness where he promised to meet his people. And I'm just going to make it as simple as pie.

Very unscholarly. And he needed people to take care of his tabernacle. You know, real simple, right? I want him to build me a tabernacle, and I need someone to take care of it.

So God chose the house of Levi. Now Levi was one of the sons of who? Israel. Jacob had 12 sons, and Levi was one of them.

And it was his descendants that God chose to take care of the tabernacle. But now here's something. Let's just make a picture of the tabernacle here.

Okay? Now, God chose the Levites to take care of the tabernacle. And then from the Levites, he chose the house of Aaron, A-A-R-O-N, to be priests. Now, listen closely.

All the priests were Levites. But not all the Levites were priests. Only those who were from the house of Aaron.

They were the priests. Now, what's the difference between the priests who were of the seed of Aaron and the Levites, who were the general children of Levi? The difference was their participation and responsibilities within the temple of God. There were two basic responsibilities within the temple of God.

Like I said, we're making it very simple. There was that which pertained to the holy, and that which pertained to the common. Now, the sons of Aaron, the priests, they were divinely called by God to deal with the holy things.

The set-apart things, the sacred things in the temple of God. And the Levites were called to deal with the common things. Now, it was an absolute sin if anybody other than a priest would try and take on the responsibility or be involved in the participation with a priest in the things that he was called to do.

They couldn't do it. Now, the priests had responsibilities that the Levites couldn't partake in. One responsibility was the preparing of the showbread within the temple.

The lighting of the incense. The lighting of the candles. These were things that only the sons of Aaron could do.

Now, the Levites could assist the sons of Aaron in their responsibilities, but they couldn't do it. Now, this story that we're about to read is a story about Korah. Now, Korah was of the house of Levi, but he wasn't of the house of Aaron.

And you know what Korah did? Korah looked at the sons of Aaron and said, Hey, we're gonna do what you're doing. Because we're just as called as you are. And you know what? Korah was right.

The sons of Levi were just as called as the priests. They were just as chosen, just as called, just as set aside. But, they couldn't do what the priests were doing.

Now, there's an incredible analogy in this lesson that brings us to a New Testament understanding. Now, let's read through the story, and then we're gonna go in to Aaron, Levi, Korah, and Aaron's rod and show how in the present church, the called out people, there's the same conflict occurring as there was in this day. A spiritual meaning to this lesson, the same thing.

The Levites are still, the sons of Korah are still trying to do what only Aaron's seed can do. You say, well, who's Aaron's seed? Well, we'll see that. It's very, very exciting.

Numbers chapter 16. Now, Korah, the son of Ishar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab and On, the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men. And they rose up before Moses with certain of the children of Israel, 250 princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown.

And they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said unto them, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them. Wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord. And when Moses heard it, he fell upon his face.

I love to read about how Moses handled problems with the church. I love it. He fell upon his face and prayed out to God.

Boy, no wonder he was so loved by God. Verse number five. And he spoke unto Korah and unto all his company, saying, Even tomorrow the Lord will show who are his and who is holy, and will cause him to come near unto him, even him who he hath chosen will he cause to come near unto him.

This do. Take you censors, Korah and all his company, and put fire therein, and put incense in them before the Lord tomorrow. Now mind you, this was only something that the sons of Aaron could do, but he told them to do it anyway, and see what the Lord did.

Verse number seven. And put fire therein, and put incense in them before the Lord tomorrow. And it shall be that the man whom the Lord doth choose, he shall be holy.

Ye take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi. And Moses said unto Korah, Here I pray you, ye sons of Levi. Seemeth it but a small thing unto you that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel to bring you near to himself to do the service of the tabernacle of the Lord, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto them.

In other words, he's saying, don't you see that you should be satisfied with what God has called you to do? Now this is just an Old Testament example, but when we get in the New Testament, we'll see God's called us all to be priests, but not everyone is functioning as a priest. Verse number 10. And he hath brought thee near to him, and all thy brethren, the sons of Levi, with thee, and seek ye the priesthood also? For which cause both thou and all thy company are gathered together against the Lord? And what is Aaron that ye murmur against him? And Moses sent to call Gathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, which said,

We will not come up.

Is it a small thing that thou hast brought us up out of a land that flowing with milk and honey to kill us in the wilderness, except thou make thyself altogether a prince over us? Moreover, thou hast not brought us into a land that floweth with milk and honey, or given us inheritance of fields and vineyards. Wilt thou put out the eyes of these men? We will not come up. And Moses was very wroth and said unto the Lord, Respect not thou their offering.

I have not taken one ass from them, neither have I hurt one of them. And Moses said unto Korah, Be thou and all thy company before the Lord, thou and they and Aaron tomorrow. And take every man his censer, and put incense in them, and bring ye before the Lord every man his censer, two hundred and fifty censers, thou also and Aaron, each of you, his censer.

And they took every man his censer, and put fire in them, and laid incense thereon, and stood in the door of the tabernacle of the congregation with Moses and Aaron. And Korah gathered all the congregation against them unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the congregation. And the Lord spoke unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment.

And they fell upon their faces and said, O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, shall one man sin, and wilt thou be wroth with all the congregation? And the Lord spoke unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the congregation, saying, Get you up from about the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. And Moses rose up and went unto Dathan and Abiram, and the elders of Israel followed him. And he spoke unto the congregation, saying, Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest you be consumed in all their sins.

So they got up from the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, one every side. And Dathan and Abiram came out and stood in the door of their tents, and their wives, and their sons, and their little children. And Moses said, Hereby ye shall know that the Lord hath sent me to do all these things, for I have not done them of my own mind.

If these men die, the common death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men, then the Lord hath not sent me. But if the Lord make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they go down quick into the pit, then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the Lord. Boy, it almost seems like it's another Mount Carmel experience.

Elijah's standing on the Mount Carmel. They're ready to bring fire down from heaven. Why is this so serious? Oh, beloved, there's a reason why God was so strict about this.

We'll see it in a moment. And it came to pass, as he had made an end, of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that was under them. And the earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up, and their houses and all the men that appeared unto Korah and all their goods.

They and all that appertained to them went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them, and they perished from among the congregation. And all Israel that were round about them fled at the cry of them, for they said, Lest the earth swallow us up also. Now go to chapter 17.

And the Lord spoke unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and take of every one of them a rod, according to the house of their fathers, of all their princes, according to the house of their fathers,

twelve rods. Write thou every man's name upon his rod, and thou shalt write Aaron's name upon the rod of Levi. For one rod shall be for the head of the house of their fathers, and thou shalt lay them in the tabernacle of the congregation before the testimony, where I will meet with you.

And it shall come to pass that the man's rod, whom I shall choose, shall blossom, and I will make to cease from me the murmurings of the children of Israel, whereby they murmur against me. And Moses spoke unto the children of Israel, and every one of their princes gave him a rod apiece, for each prince one, according to their fathers' houses, even twelve rods. And the rod of Aaron was among their rods.

And Moses laid it up, laid up the rods before the Lord in the tabernacle of witness. And it came to pass that on the morrow, Moses went into the tabernacle of witness, and behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds. Wouldn't you like to have eaten an almond off of that? Boy, I tell you, I bet they were good almonds.

Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha. Now listen to this. Verse nine, And Moses brought out all the rods from before the Lord unto all the children of Israel.

Listen now. And they looked, and took every man his rod. And the Lord said unto Moses, Bring Aaron's rod before the testimony to be kept for a token, for a sign against the rebels.

May all the house of Korah once and for all behold Aaron's rod. It's God's sign. See? And thou shalt quite take away their murmurings from me that they die not.

And Moses did so as the Lord commanded him, so did he. And the children of Israel spoke unto Moses, saying, Behold, we die, we perish, we all perish. Whosoever cometh anything near unto the tabernacle of the Lord shall die.

Shall we be consumed with dying? Okay. Now, the Bible says in Revelation chapter 5, let's just lay this New Testament foundation. Revelation chapter 5. Revelation chapter 5, verse 10.

And has made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth. Now, I would like to just share with you for a few moments the New Testament application to this incredible story in the Old Testament. And this is what the Holy Spirit is doing in our midst tonight.

First, I'd like to give you the definition of some words. And as we understand the meaning of the words, and we can understand their spiritual application, we will greatly be enlightened and encouraged to seek the Lord for that special touch that he gives to the seeking heart. Now, first of all, the word Aaron means enlightened one.

The word Levi means fitted together. The word Korah means baldness. And Aaron's rod, listen closely, is life out of death.

Now, you know what I see right here? I see the New Testament. How many see the New Testament there? It's incredible. You see the New Testament? You say, I don't see the New Testament.

This is an incredible picture. Of the divine order that God has established in the Church of Jesus Christ. God has called the Church.

Now, the Bible says in Ephesians that we're all fit together and joined together. The body is not one member, but we're many members. Each one of us have been fitted together as God was pleased.

Some of us are feet, some of us are hands. We've all been knitted together and fit. And we all make up the body of Christ.

That's a believer saved. But beloved, not everyone who has been fitted into the body of Christ has understood or realized their priesthood, the seed of Aaron, is a spiritual symbol or a spiritual call to pray and ask God for the special illumination and light that can come to you through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Now, Korah means baldness.

The Bible teaches that as a believer it is expedient that we recognize that without abiding in and under the covering of Christ who is indeed our covering, we are spiritually bald. Now listen, we are spiritually bald. Christ alone is our covering.

Listen now, positionally, we've all experienced being brought into Christ, but experientially it hasn't been brought in us. So, we look at Aaron, the enlightened one, Levi, the fitted, fitted together, Korah, baldness, and now we've got Aaron's rod, which is life out of death. Now, we don't want to make this complicating.

It's very, very simple. It's a very simple illustration of what God is trying to teach us. Korah was a Levi, but he was not of the seed of Aaron.

He wanted to participate in those things that God said only Aaron's children can participate in. Now listen, Number one, the lighting of incense. Spiritual worship and praise.

I don't want to go into the scriptures because it would take too long, but the spiritual incense in the Old Testament was a shadow of the praise and prayers of the saints. The setting out of the show bread. Jesus said he was the bread of life.

Feasting on the show bread. The lighting of the candles in the temple, which is spiritual illumination. The eyes of the understanding being opened.

Wasn't that a prayer that Paul prayed for the Ephesians? That the eyes of their understanding would be opened and that they could comprehend and see, not by their natural mind, but that they would be divinely enlightened so that they can see and comprehend by supernatural ability. The riches and the glory that are in Christ Jesus. So the picture that we have here is only the enlightened one can share and participate in the holy things of the temple.

Now listen, we are the temple. We are, this isn't the temple, we are the temple of God. And God wants his temple to be filled with praise.

He wants it to be filled with spiritual prayer. He wants his temple to be filled with spiritual illumination. See Aaron's responsibilities represented or typified the believer's life empowered by the very divine presence of the Holy Spirit.

Wherein the incense would be lit, the candles would be lit, the show bread would be out. Spiritual praise and sacrifice to God. But Korah wanted to do it.

And God said you can't. See the natural man, the natural unilluminated man cannot participate in the holy things of God. It can only come through divine illumination.

Now we can read this in 1st chapter 1 and 2. There's a host of believers today who are trying to worship, praise God, pray to God, and are miserably failing because they're doing it by their own strength, by their

own power, by their own might. And God says you just can't do it. Now remember all believers are called to this spiritual priesthood.

But we have to do it God's way. And God's way is to become acquainted with the illuminating power of the Holy Spirit. Now Aaron's rod, Aaron's rod was a sign that God had chosen the seed of Aaron for the holy things.

And Aaron's rod speaks of life out of death. Now listen, as the believer shares in the glorious gift of salvation, that is only the beginning of an entrance by faith through the Holy Spirit that should lead that believer into participating in the death and sufferings of Christ. And only as the believer under the leading of the Holy Spirit begins to experience the death of Christ can he experience life out of that death.

And this is a sign that God has established in the Old Testament which spiritually represents the way of the cross. The cross not only as a historical figure, we believed on Jesus, we believe in Golgotha. It's a past experience.

I believed in Christ twenty years ago, hallelujah. No, the cross must not only be a historical fact, but it must be a present day in working, in our spirits. We must be appropriating daily by the power of the Holy Ghost the death or participating in the death that was wrought the moment we believed.

And it's only as we participate in this death that we experience the budding, the life. And this signifies God's approval. Only as a Christian comes to the feet of Jesus and begins to experience the working of the Holy Spirit in his or her life, producing and applying in an experiential way the death of self, the death to whatever it is of us, so that in its place the life of Christ can come forth.

Only in that posture, only as Aaron's rod, spiritually speaking, continues to bud in our midst can we find ourselves by God's power entering into our spiritual priesthood as spiritually the children of Aaron. And this is what God is doing in our midst. Aren't you glad that God can do the work of his Spirit without a perfect understanding in our hearts of what he's really doing? But see, this is what he's doing.

If you're a Bible student, if you can get in, you can see that what God's doing in the Spirit, in the Church, is all through the entire Bible. He's making us spiritual people, so that we can be qualified to be priests in his temple, offering up spiritual praise and worship and sacrifice and feasting on the bread from heaven. He's taking a people and through the cross and through death, he's bringing forth almonds.

Out of death, he's bringing forth life. And this life, is the very life of Christ himself. And the Savior looks at his church today, and of course, the analogy isn't foolproof 100%, but he looks at his church today and he says, O ye sons of Korah, ye cannot do the work of a priest unless you go the way of the cross and through the power of the Holy Ghost.

So let us forever keep our eyes fixed on Jesus Christ, and let him continue to bring an enlightening to our soul, so that life can continue to flow out of the death that is working in us, and bless God, we will enjoy his sweet presence forever. Amen? The believers' priesthood and Korah's rebellion are the work of the Holy Ghost. the Holy Ghost.

Amen? Korah's of of

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