

Parashat Korach

פרשת קרח

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Do I have a Rebellious spirit before God?

השבועות הזה קוראים / This Week's Reading

תורה: Numbers 16:1-18:32

הפטרה: 1 Samuel 11:14-12:22

הברית: John 9-10

החדשה

Triennial cycle: Bamidbar / Numbers 16:1-17:15

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In this week's Portion, from Parashat Korach in *Bamidbar / Numbers 16:1-17:15*, Korach, Datan, and Aviram rose up and assembled themselves against Moshe and against Aharon and questioned whether their role as priests was really the will of God. 250 men went to offer incense by fire before the Lord.

15

As a result, the entire assemble of men died by fire that proceeded from the Lord God because of their sin. The entire camp of Korach, Datan, and Aviram were also swallowed up in the earth going down to the grave alive. After these things, the congregation (sons of Yisrael) complained against Moshe and Aharon and a plague broke out in their midst. Moshe told Aharon to take a censor filled with burning incense and stand in the gap between the dead and the living. As we study the reading from the Triennial Cycle this week, the children of Yisrael persisted in a rebellious Spirit against Moshe, Aharon, and God. What can we learn about having a rebellious spirit before God that applies to our lives today?

20

The people did not appear to understand that rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft (*1 Samuel 15:23*). The peoples response over the death of Korach, Datan, and Aviram is recorded in *16:41 But on the next day all the congregation of the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron, saying, 'You are the ones who have caused the death of the Lord's people.'* (NASB) The second sin of rebellion

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causes the Lord to say *הָרַ' מִן מִתּוֹךְ הָעֵדָה הַזֹּאת וְאֶכְלָהָ אֶתְכֶם כְּרָגַע וַיִּפְּלוּ עַל-פְּנֵיהֶם*

30

"part from the midst of the congregation so that I can consume them." Rebellion and having a rebellious spirit before the Lord is certain death. Does our spirit today exhibit aspects of rebellion like Yisrael here? This week we will see that it is very important we root out any and all forms of rebellion in our lives.

35

במדבר 16:1-22

פֶּרֶשׁ וַיִּקַּח קָרַח בְּנֵי־צִהָר בֶּן־קֹהַת בֶּן־לֵוִי וְדָתָן וְאַבִּירָם בְּנֵי טוֹ
אֱלִיאָב וְאוֹן בְּנֵי־פִלֵּת בְּנֵי רְאוּבֵן; וַיִּקְמוּ לִפְנֵי מֹשֶׁה
וְאִנָּשִׁים מִבְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל חֲמִשִּׁים וּמְאַתָּים נְשִׂאֵי עֵדָה
קָרְאוּ מוֹעֵד אֲנִשֵׁי־שָׁם; וַיִּקְהָלוּ עַל־מֹשֶׁה וְעַל־אַהֲרֹן
וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֱלֹהֵם רַב־לָכֶם כִּי כָל־הָעֵדָה כֹּלָם קֹדְשִׁים

1

Bamidbar / Numbers 16:1-3

16:1 Now Korah the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, with Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took action, 16:2 and they rose up before Moses, together with some of the sons of Israel, two hundred and fifty leaders of the congregation, chosen in the assembly, men of renown. 16:3 They assembled together against Moses and Aaron, and said to them, 'You have gone far enough, for all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is in their midst; so why do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the Lord?' (NASB)

While reading these Scripture verses, on the offering of censors before the Lord, interestingly we find a parallel with the sin of Nadav and Avihu offering fire in a similar manner. In *Bamidbar / Numberse 16:18* it says **וַיִּקְחוּ אִישׁ מִחֶתְתּוֹ וַיִּתְּנוּ אֵשׁ עֲלֵיהֶם אֵשׁ** meaning “each man took his sensor and gave upon them fire.” Here the 250 men placed fire in their censors and went before the Lord. The result, fire came from before the Lord and consumed them. In sefer *Vayikra / Leviticus 10:1* we read **אֵשׁ נָדָב וְאַבִּיהוּא אִישׁ מִחֶתְתּוֹ וַיִּתְּנוּ בְּהֶן אֵשׁ** saying something very similar “Nadav and Avihu each man his censor and gave in them fire.” In the case for the men of Korach, they did not have access to the altar for obtaining fire to place in their censors, where do you think they obtained their fire? In Nadav and Avihu’s case, the text does not explicitly state that they took the fire from the altar but it does say that they offered “strange fire” or “foreign fire” (*Vayikra / Leviticus 10:1*).

במדבר 16:18

18 **אִישׁ מִחֶתְתּוֹ: וַיִּקְחוּ אִישׁ מִחֶתְתּוֹ וַיִּתְּנוּ עֲלֵיהֶם אֵשׁ**

וַיִּשִׂמוּ עֲלֵיהֶם קְטֹרֶת וַיַּעֲמֵדוּ אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וּמִשְׁחָה

וְאַהֲרֹן: וַיִּקְהַל עֲלֵיהֶם קָרַח אֶת־כָּל־הָעֵדָה אֶל־פֶּתַח

אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וַיֵּרָא כְבוֹד־יְהוָה אֶל־כָּל־הָעֵדָה:

In both cases the bringing of fire that was not commanded of God is considered strange/foreign before the Lord. As a result, fire proceeded from the Lord and they died. These men were in the act of open rebellion before God offering fire the Lord had not commanded or instructed. Essentially, both Nadav, Avihu, and the 250 men before the Lord were drawing near (approaching) the Lord in their own way and not according to the way in which God had designed.

ויקרא 10:1-3

1 **י הַחֲלָבִים וַיֵּרָא כָּל־הָעַם וַיִּלְנוּ וַיִּפְּלוּ עַל־פְּנֵיהֶם: וַיִּקְחוּ**

בְּנֵי־אַהֲרֹן נָדָב וְאַבִּיהוּא אִישׁ מִחֶתְתּוֹ וַיִּתְּנוּ בְּהֶן אֵשׁ

וַיִּשִׂמוּ עָלֶיהָ קְטֹרֶת וַיִּקְרִיבוּ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֵשׁ זָרָה

2 **אֲשֶׁר לֹא צִוָּה אֹתָם: וַתֵּצֵא אֵשׁ מִלִּפְנֵי יְהוָה וַתֹּאכַל**

3 **אוֹתָם וַיָּמָתוּ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה: וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל־אַהֲרֹן הוּא**

אֲשֶׁר־דִּבֶּר יְהוָה לֵאמֹר בְּקִרְבִּי אֶקְדָּשׁ וְעַל־פְּנֵי כָל־

4 **הָעַם אֶכְבֵּד וַיָּדַם אֹהֲרֹן: וַיִּקְרָא מֹשֶׁה אֶל־מִישָׁאֵל וְאֵל־**

It is very interesting that fire is used in many different ways through the Tanach and the Ketuvei Shelachim (Apostolic Writings). The Lord manifested Himself in various forms of fire on different occasions. The manifestation of fire occurred while God made a covenant with Avraham in *Bamidbar / Genesis 15:17*, the burning bush to Moshe in *Shemot / Exodus 3:2-4*, as a pillar of fire leading

Bamidbar / Numbers 16:18-19

16:18 So they each took his own censor and put fire on it, and laid incense on it; and they stood at the doorway of the tent of meeting, with Moses and Aaron. 16:19 Thus Korah assembled all the congregation against them at the doorway of the tent of meeting. And the glory of the Lord appeared to all the congregation. (NASB)

Vayikra / Leviticus 10:1-3

10:1 Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took their respective firepans, and after putting fire in them, placed incense on it and offered strange fire before the Lord, which He had not commanded them. 10:2 And fire came out from the presence of the Lord and consumed them, and they died before the Lord. 10:3 Then Moses said to Aaron, 'It is what the Lord spoke, saying, 'By those who come near Me I will be treated as holy, And before all the people I will be honored.' So Aaron, therefore, kept silent. (NASB)

70 Yisrael in the desert in *Shemot / Exodus 13:21*, the Lord burned on the mountain
of Sinai in *Shemot / Exodus 19:18*, in the flame on the altar according to
Mishpatim / Judges 13:20 and the Lord even answered by fire as in *Melchims
aleph / 1 Kings 18:24* and *38*. The answering by fire resulted in the death of
Nadav, Avihu, and the 250 men of Korach in our verses this week. The Ruach
Hakodesh (Holy Spirit) was manifest as tongues of fire in *Acts 2*. The Korbanot
(sacrifices) and offerings including the burning of incense were all to be made by
75 fire (i.e. *Shemot / Exodus 12:8-10*, *Vayikra / Leviticus 1*). Fire also represented
the acceptance of a Korban by the Lord as indicated in *Mishpatim / Judges 6:21*,
Melechims aleph / 1 Kings 18:38, and *Divrei Hayyamim aleph / 1 Chronicles
21:26*. Sefer *Vayikra / Leviticus 9:24* tells us that the sacrificial fire “*come forth
from the Lord*” thus the fire on the altar was to be continually burning according
80 to *Vayikra / Leviticus 6:12-13*. Fire came down from heaven at the consecration
of Solomon’s Temple. Now while the Lord’s answer by fire was in many
instances positive in nature, there were times when God’s manifestation by fire, or
the use of fire was done so in a correction or destructive sense such as in the
verses in our reading this week and also in *Bamidbar / Genesis 19:24* (Sodom and
85 Gomorrah), *Shemot / Exodus 9:23*, *Vayikra / Leviticus 20:14, 21:9*, *Bamidbar /
Numbers 11:1*, *Yehoshua / Joshua 7:25*, and *Tehilim / Psalms 104:4*. Fire is also
used figuratively for God’s glory in *Daniel 7:9*, of His holiness in *Yeshaya /
Isaiah 33:14*, of the protection of His people in *Melechims bet / 2 Kings 6:17* and
Zechariah 2:5, of God’s jealousy for men worshiping only Him in *Devarim /
90 Deuteronomy 4:24*, *Tehilim / Psalms 79:5*, and *Ivrit / Hebrews 12:29*, of God’s
wrath in *Devarim / Deuteronomy 9:3*, *Tehilim / Psalms 18:8* and *89:46*, *Yeshaya /
Isaiah 5:24*, of God’s power in *Jeremiah 5:14* and *23:29*, of God’s divine truth in
Tehilim / Psalms 39:3, *Jeremiah 20:9*, and *Luke 12:49*. Fire also represents that
95 which guides men in *Yeshaya / Isaiah 50:10-11*, of Christ in His glory in *Hitgalut
/ Revelation 1:14*, of the power to overcome evil in *Romans 12:20*, of trials and
suffering in *Tehilim / Psalms 66:12*, *Yeshaya / Isaiah 43:3*, *1 Peter 1:7* and *4:12*.
Fire represents evil in *Mishley / Proverbs 6:27*, *Yeshaya / Isaiah 9:18* and *65:5*, of
lust and desire in *Hoshea / Hosea 7:6*, *1 Corinthians 7:9*, of greed in *Mishley /
100 Proverbs 30:16*, of the evil tongue in *Yaakov / James 3:5-6*. Fire also represents
heaven and its purity in *Hitgalut / Revelation 15:2* and *21:22-23* and of the divine
testing, see *Hitgalut / Revelation* chapter *20*. As we can see, fire is used
descriptively through all of Scripture.

After the 250 men died, God commands Moshe to take up the censers
because they are holy; the censers were purified by fire. It is interesting if we
105 think about fire on its use in the purifying sense. God has used fire and its
illustration in our lives to show how He is breaking down, molding, and shaping
us into His image and the image of His son Yeshua the Messiah. (Think about
this for a moment. Manufacturing would not be possible without fire, the use of
fire to break down and reshape materials for our own use.) It is also interesting to
110 note about the surrounding pagan cultures the people would sacrifice their
children to Molech as it says in *Melechims bet / 2 Kings 23:10* *And he defiled
Topheth, which is in the valley of the children of Hinnom, that no man might make
his son or his daughter to pass through the fire to Molech. (NASB)* Here we find
the concept of the passing through the fire. The children were caused to pass
115 through the fire and they were burned up as a sacrifice to the demonic spirit

Molech (known by name of the graven image or idol). When these children passed through the fire, their lives were changed, they died. If we walk in our own ways or in the ways of men, if we are allowing ourselves to be shaped and molded by any means outside of God's holy Word we will die spiritually. The path that we take will reshape our lives, just like fire reshapes this material world. Is your life being reshaped in an ungodly way? How is that affecting your walk and relationship with God? It is of utmost importance to stay on the straight and narrow path, studying the bible daily so that God's fire, the fire that is from the Lord will be kindled in our hearts so we become pliable and can be shaped into the image God would have us to be. This is the very characteristic of walking humbly before our God!

The fire that come from the Lord against these 250 men (*Bamidbar / Numbers 16:18-21*) was working to remove sin, the men of Korach and Nadav and Avihu, their bodies were unable to withstand the effects of the fire because of the nature of sin that went down into the very depths of their hearts. The prophet *Zephaniah* says in *3:8* 'Therefore wait for Me,' declares the Lord, 'For the day when I rise up as a witness. Indeed, My decision is to gather nations, To assemble kingdoms, To pour out on them My indignation, All My burning anger; For all the earth will be devoured By the fire of My zeal. *3:9* 'For then I will give to the peoples purified lips, That all of them may call on the name of the Lord, To serve Him shoulder to shoulder. (NASB) Here the earth is devoured by fire and then God will give the people purified lips that may call upon the name of the Lord.

Clearly these men (Nadav, Avihu, Korach, Datan, and Aviram) missed the mark. They missed the importance of God's calling on their lives as Levites and their specific role in the service of the Lord. Think about this for a moment. Because of who they are, they were committed to act in a certain way before God but in rebellion turned and chose to question God's Word and come up with their own idea of reality. Do we have our own idea of reality of who we are in Christ? Because of who we are in Christ, according to the bible, we are also committed to act in a certain way before God! Certainly these men missed the mark in a way that cost them their lives. Are we acting in a way today, is there sin in our lives, unconfessed sin that will cost us our lives when we go before the Lord?

While thinking on "missing the mark" it is interesting that in sefer *Mishpatim / Judges 20:16* it states that the Benjamites "could sling a stone at a hair and not miss." Here in the text "and not miss" is written as **וְלֹא יִחָטֵא**. The Hebrew word for "miss" here means "sin."

משפטים 20:16

16 בַּחֹר: מִכָּל הָעָם הַזֶּה שָׁבַע מֵאוֹת אִישׁ בַּחֹר אֶמֶר יְדֵימֵינוּ כְּלִיזָה קָלַע בְּאֶבֶן אֶל־הַשֵּׁעֶרָה וְלֹא יִחָטֵא:

Mishpatim / Judges 20:16

20:16 Out of all these people 700 choice men were left-handed; each one could sling a stone at a hair and not miss. (NASB)

Here the concept of sin is understood as "missing the mark." Sin appears to be the intent of the author of sefer *Mishpatim*. Here, according to the text, the 700 men could send a stone in the right direction and not miss by orienting themselves in the correct way. Nadav, Avihu, and the 250 men of Korach, along with the house of Datan and Aviram all oriented themselves in the wrong direction and were unable to hit the mark and the consequences resulted in death. Sin involves

our whole entire being. If we do not orient ourselves correctly, trusting the Lord and His Messiah Yeshua, we will certainly miss the mark as these men did sinning greatly and dying in their sin.

165 Let's look at little closer at the context and situation in sefer *Mishpatim* by examining chapter *17:1-6*. According to the text, there was a man named Micah who lived in the hill country of Ephraim.

משפטים 17:1-6

וַיְהִי אִישׁ
 2 מִהַרְאֶפְרַיִם וּשְׁמוֹ מִיכָהוּ; וַיֹּאמֶר לְאִמּוֹ אֵלֶיךָ וּמֵאֵה
 הַכֶּסֶף אֲשֶׁר לָקַחְתְּךָ וְאֹתִי אֵלַי וְגַם אָמַרְתְּ בְּאָזְנִי
 הִנֵּה הַכֶּסֶף אֵתִי אֲנִי לָקַחְתִּיו וַתֹּאמֶר אִמּוֹ בְּרוּךְ בְּנִי
 3 לַיהוָה: וַיֵּשֶׁב אֶת־אֵלֶיךָ וּמֵאֵה הַכֶּסֶף לְאִמּוֹ וַתֹּאמֶר
 אִמּוֹ הַקֹּדֶשׁ הַקִּדְשָׁתִי אֶת־הַכֶּסֶף לַיהוָה מִיָּדִי לְבְנִי
 4 לַעֲשׂוֹת פֶּסֶל וּמִסְכָּה וְעֵתָה אֲשִׁיבֵנּוּ לָךְ: וַיֵּשֶׁב אֶת־
 הַכֶּסֶף לְאִמּוֹ וַתִּקַּח אִמּוֹ מֵאֵתִים כֶּסֶף וַתִּתְּנֶהוּ לַעֲזֹרָה
 5 וַיַּעֲשֶׂהוּ פֶּסֶל וּמִסְכָּה וַיְהִי בְּבֵית מִיכָהוּ: וְהָאִישׁ מִיכָה
 לֹא בֵּית אֱלֹהִים וַיַּעַשׂ אִפֹּד וַתְּרָפִים וַיִּמְלֵא אֶת־זֵד אֶחָד
 6 מִבְּנָיו וַיְהִי־לוֹ לַכֹּהֵן: בְּיָמֵים הָהֵם אֵין מֶלֶךְ בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל
 7 אִישׁ הַיָּשָׁר בְּעֵינָיו יַעֲשֶׂה: וַיְהִי־נֶזֶר

Mishpatim / Judges 17:1-6

17:1 Now there was a man of the hill country of Ephraim whose name was Micah. 17:2 He said to his mother, 'The eleven hundred pieces of silver which were taken from you, about which you uttered a curse in my hearing, behold, the silver is with me; I took it.' And his mother said, 'Blessed be my son by the Lord.' 17:3 He then returned the eleven hundred pieces of silver to his mother, and his mother said, 'I wholly dedicate the silver from my hand to the Lord for my son to make a graven image and a molten image; now therefore, I will return them to you.' 17:4 So when he returned the silver to his mother, his mother took two hundred pieces of silver and gave them to the silversmith who made them into a graven image and a molten image, and they were in the house of Micah. 17:5 And the man Micah had a shrine and he made an ephod and household idols and consecrated one of his sons, that he might become his priest. 17:6 In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes. (NASB)

170 According to the text, the man had stolen 1100 pieces of silver from his mother, as a result, his mother blessed him, then they took 200 shekels to make a graven image (an idol), Micah's house was filled with idols, and Micah made one of his own sons as a priest to his household gods. The very last verses here says **בְּיָמֵים**

175 *הָהֵם אֵין מֶלֶךְ בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל; וְהָאִישׁ הַיָּשָׁר בְּעֵינָיו יַעֲשֶׂה* meaning *17:6 In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes. (NASB)*

180 These verses illustrate the type of confusion that was occurring in those days. Today we are seeing all kinds of confusion occurring in the body of believers with the promotion of ecumenism and the interfaith movement that is being accepted on a wide scale. We have to study God's word today. We have to eliminate our confusion and stand firm and strong on God's holy Word! Later on in the text in sefer *Mishpatim / Judges*, the confusion goes so far as when a wandering Levite stumbles into Micah's town, Micah makes him his priest. How could a Levite have been so deceived to follow along with this kind of abomination? The Levite obviously was not studying the Torah as he was supposed to be doing. It seems

185 several hundred years later Yisrael had significantly strayed from the path of righteousness and truth that is laid out in the Scriptures. Now, several thousand years later, many are uniting themselves with false religions, joining arms with unbelievers completely missing the mark and sinning greatly before God.

190 In this present age of deception, we need to submit ourselves to the Lord,
trusting in His Word and not our own version of reality. Believing in Yeshua, we
find true peace and rest. Doing this the Lord will perfect, confirm, strengthen,
and establish us as it says in *1 Peter 5:6-11*.

1 Peter 5:6-11

195 *5:6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He
may exalt you at the proper time, 5:7 casting all your anxiety on Him,
because He cares for you. 5:8 Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your
adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone
200 to devour. 5:9 But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same
experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are
in the world. 5:10 After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all
grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect,
confirm, strengthen and establish you. 5:11 To Him be dominion forever
and ever. Amen. (NASB)*

205 All things are in His hands and we need not fear what any man or evil spirit can
do to us. To submit to the Lord is to be under His care and guidance, under His
power and protection and to be “in Christ,” in God’s Word. The Lord will justify
us, He will defend us and He will fight for us. If we remain in Yeshua, if our
210 surrender to the Lord is complete giving our entire being, then victory is assured
and we need not fear. Have you completely given yourself over to the Lord
today? Does it feel as if you have been missing the mark all your life? Are you
afraid of what might happen if the Lord were to return today, ask yourself do I
have God’s mercy or the fire of His wrath? (*John 3:36*) If you want God’s mercy,
215 let’s begin by asking for mercy and believing in Yeshua God’s Messiah through
whom we have salvation, peace, mercy, and everything God wants for our lives
which is an intimate relationship with Him.

220 Heavenly Father,

Thank You Lord for Your Holy Word and for the everlasting covenant
that You made in Your Son Yeshua. I am tired of missing the mark in my life. It
feels as if the cup of my sin in this life is over flowing. Please have mercy on me
225 Lord; please forgive me of my sins. I believe the Scriptures that Yeshua (Jesus)
had come to this earth by the mighty power of Your hand. I believe Yeshua laid
down His life on my behalf for the forgiveness of my sins. I believe by faith that
Yeshua established an everlasting covenant in His blood for me. Please forgive
me, renew me, restore to me the joy of Your salvation Lord. I want you in my life
230 Lord, please come into my life and make your dwelling place in me by sending
your Ruach HaKodesh (Holy Spirit) to live in me. Please make me into the
man/woman you would have me to be so that you can use me for your kingdom.
Yeshua gave His life for me and now I give my life to You. Thank you for
everything you have done for me. In all things, I give You the glory, the honor,
235 and the praise forever and ever.

In Yeshua's Name I pray!

Amen

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What to pray:

- *Ask the Lord to increase your faith.*
- *Ask the Lord to help you live your life by faith and to walk the straight and narrow path.*
- *Thank the Lord for lifting the burden of sin and revealing His truth in this day and age of unbelief.*

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Be Blessed in Yeshua, Christ our Messiah!

הללויה לאדוננו מורנו ורבינו ישוע מלך המשיח לעולם ועד:
Hallelujah for our Lord, our Teacher, our Rabbi,
"Yeshua" King Messiah forever and ever