

Korach**Korah (Bald)****Securing the Calling of G-d****Torah:** Numbers 16:1-18:32

(1). 16:2. 250 Misguided leaders who convinced themselves to rise up against those whom G-d had selected because they did not like the verdict of G-d - they wanted to take possession of the Ark and get a different decision from G-d (and lead the people back to Egypt, which they call a land which flowed with milk and honey). Be careful that people do not make the world and its beliefs and values sound like the Promised Land, because it is the prison we have been delivered from, not the land we are called to imitate in anything we do or say.

(2). 16:13. Making words stand on their head and blaming Moses for their folly. After being trained for a year and seeing the wonder of G-d, the people who refused to go in are now refusing their punishment and blaming Moses for bringing them into the wilderness, which was never to be their destination. This life and the things of this life are not our destination and we are never to get stuck on them. We need to remain stubbornly focused on the world to come and not get stuck on this world or the things of this world.

(3). 16:41. Blaming Moses for the death of the rebels - rooting out the last of the leaders of the rebellion (14,700). Now a whole crowd or mob rushes forward to overpower Moses and the elders and physically take possession of the Ark (take G-d hostage) and return to Egypt, which they falsely remember as a place where life was easy and good. Buyer remorse and horror at the consequences of their rebellion - and the stubborn resolve that if they could only get a hold of G-d without Mosaic interference they could get what they really wanted from G-d and not have to do what they did not want to (sound familiar - saying that the true words of G-d are not to be found in what it says but in what they say). A last ditch effort to avoid the wilderness wandering through further rebellion instead of honest repentance.

There is a crowd of rebellious believers in our world today calling sexual sin acceptable (and something to be proud of) and promoting the murder of babies and the acceptance of evolutionary nonsense and politically correct universalism. They sound "spiritually mature" but they are only a modern, cloned version of: "Has G-d really said" (or is that what He really meant). The calling of G-d is always irrevocably attached to His Word, both to what it says and to what it means.

(4). 18:29. When you have set apart all the gifts (offerings), you shall take of the best (and give it to the priests). Tithing is a great honour because we always want to give our best to the L-rd. To make sure we understand that Moses and the Levites and what they teach are the Word of G-d, their rights are outlined and they are to live off the tithes, which are to be taken from the best of the produce and not the scraps. We have to respond to the calling of G-d both by accepting what He taught through Moses and the written Word and by living our lives in response to these teachings and not fall prey to the "yes but" or "has He really said" approach of the modern rebels (the 21st century Korah's, Dathan's and Abiram's)

Haftarah: I Sam. 11:14-12:22

(5). 12:17 So that you could know that in addition to all your sins you have asked for a king.

The people did not want a king for the right reasons but because they did not fully trust in the ability of the L-rd to raise up generational deliverers until His king was ready. Be careful that we respond to the calling of G-d and not to our own fears or devices - that we trust the L-rd's abilities in our lives and do not rebel and want our own way.

(6) 12:20, 21 You have done wrong, but if you do not forsake the L-rd and if you serve Him with all your heart and do not turn to worthless things that neither bring deliverance or (spiritual) gain (you shall be fine). The best and only way to recover from rebellion (sin) is honest and complete repentance (which is a return to obedience) and not to keep on trying to turn G-d to our own will, like too many compromised believers are doing in our world today.

Brit Chadashah: Acts 5:1-11

(7) 5:4 You have not lied to men but to G-d. This is one of the most troubling passages in the Bible, but it is a reminder not to try and get away with sin and use deception to appear spiritual, when we are in fact lapsing into darkness. I never thought I would live to see the day when most of the historical churches would embrace sexual immorality and abortion - and there is incredible, increasing pressure from the world for believers to abandon the historical calling of G-d and accept a changed version of the Gospel (of the Torah), without realizing that this kind of rebellion will never be acceptable to G-d and that all it will do is separate us from G-d and open us up to the retribution of G-d, which is what our modern world is racing towards. The calling of G-d will forever be attached to His word and to what the people He called in His word have taught. If we ever violate the Word, we can never know G-d or walk with Him. Are you securing the calling of G-d in your life?

(Devorah p. 153) **Ps. 5** L-rd's Table Jewish Hero: Constable Daniel Woodall

There is Never a Second Opinion When G-d Has Spoken

Today's Torah portion deals with a tragic response to the verdict of G-d by the generation which came out of Egypt and saw His mighty works all the way to the place where they were to enter the Holy Land. They did not like what Moses had said - they did not like what the Word said, so they tried to overpower Moses and get a different opinion - a different option than the one which the L-rd had provided in response to their failure and rebellion.

Our modern society has made amazing strides in the sciences and we have more gadgets than our ancestors even dreamed of. In medicine, in technology and almost every area of life we live lives filled with the products of the technological revolution which make us feel so smart and so sophisticated and ready to tackle all the problems and challenges which life can throw at us. Part of this progress has been not only to challenge what the Bible teaches about the origin of the universe and of life, but also to undermine and redefine the morality which the Bible teaches. Rebellion against the Word is seen by many as spiritual liberation.

In fact many theologians want us to be liberated both from the scientific ignorance our ancestors wallowed in and from what they call the spiritual ignorance which the Bible teaches. This book is seen as an antiquated source of spirituality which has some good things to say, but which also has some legends and moral teachings which no longer apply to our modern, sophisticated world. Many feel we have outgrown its primitive teachings.

This may sound noble and modern, but it is really another version of the kind of rebellion which Korah and the leaders of Ruben tried to foist upon the house of Israel. You see the

Bible is a package deal with no deletions or substitutions permitted. What it teaches about the origin of the universe and the origin of life is the basis for the morality and spirituality it requires and both of these are being targeted by our world as part of the ignorance from which they claim we need to be delivered. They want to replace it with a new ignorance.

People still want G-d's blessing and His protection and even His direction as long as it is in the direction which people want to go and is not hindered by the morality which our global society no longer accepts. They want a newer, improved version of G-d and what He says.

You see the whole point of deliverance from Egypt was to be trained and transformed so that the entrance into the Promised Land could be as glorious as the exodus from Egypt. The fortified, giant filled land was ripe for the picking and if the people had refused to accept the report of the spies, the same enemies who cut them to pieces, would have been cut to pieces.

"Oh! If My people would listen to Me, if Israel would walk in my ways! In an instant I would confound their enemies; I would turn my hand against their adversaries (Ps. 81:13, 14).

The whole point of our deliverance from the Egypt of this world is to prepare us for the coming Kingdom and in our case our spiritual success is made or broken by our faithful obedience to what the L-rd teaches in His Word. There is no room for a second opinion or for a revision of either biblical morality or biblical spirituality - or for what the Bible teaches in Genesis 1:1-11. You see despite the massive advances we have made in the last two centuries, we have as many questions about why things do what they do in our universe and all the theories we have come up with are constantly changing in the face of new evidence, which show us how easily we jump to conclusions. There is really nothing new under the sun.

This applies to all the challenges to the accuracy and truth of the Bible, which challenges are falling like autumn leaves, but so many believers have got their minds made up and are duped by evolutionary humanism and want to change the Word to suit their evil desires.

Korah's first assault group and the 14,000 odd leaders who led the second assault, wanted to hijack the people and the ark and head back to Egypt because they did not want to accept the verdict which their rebellion earned them. They already knew that on their own, they were no match for the inhabitants of the Land and somehow they wanted G-d's help to take them back to Egypt and even return to some of the criminal idolatry they got away with in Egypt only this time with G-d's help and His blessing, if only they could hijack Him.

They wanted their own way with G-d and were prepared to rise up and attempt to physically take charge of the Ark so they could point G-d in the direction they wanted to go. In some twisted way they blamed the words of Moses and felt that their failure was his fault and they wanted a second opinion. This second opinion was really an attempt to avoid repentance and enshrine rebellion and disobedience as valid expressions of their faith in G-d. Sound familiar?

They did not like what G-d had said, so they rejected it and tried to get Him to say something else or to unsay what they did not like Him saying. The only biblically valid avenue open to them was to accept their call to wander through the wilderness and wait on G-d for the next generation to do what they had refused to do. They did not want to grow out of their failure.

They had cried to G-d for deliverance while they were oppressed slaves in Egypt and bumped along until they spent a year learning the expectations of the L-rd and preparing to be a people in whose midst He dwelt. After some hard lessons they were all enthusiastic and

excited about the end of their journey. When they came to the edge of the Promised Land and were turned back because of their fear and disobedience, they wanted another option rather than accepting what G-d had said. They felt that because they had repented before they could change the verdict they did not like. Repentance never changes G-d's verdict, it prepares us to accept His verdict - which is His mercy in action to break the power of sin in our lives.

People in our world today want another option and no longer accept the call of G-d to abandon sin and learn repentance - and no longer accept the verdict which the sinfulness of the generations of mankind has left us with. People no longer want to see themselves as sinners in need of repentance and obedience. Spirituality is no longer about becoming sinners saved by grace who explore repentance and obedience; it is about people who do not feel they are sinners because they feel that what they want to do is not sin. Many of the activities which are called abominations in the Bible are now protected by law and to condemn them is now called criminal discrimination and persecution which leads to potential hate crimes and which have to be stopped and banned.

When we do not accept what the Bible teaches and when we do not accept the guilty verdict which it passes on our modern world, like the three groups of rebels, we have two choices. We can either accept the false report of the spies (it is too big, and we are not strong enough to do it) or we can refuse it and press ahead. The people refused.

We can either accept the punishment of wandering as a greater mercy than the immediate annihilation which Moses averted or we can try and force another option on G-d and say that what His Word teaches needs to be updated to conform to the new standards and values of our modern scientific world. It is only when we accept the bad news that we are in any position to accept the good news. The rebellious leaders tried to change what was said and the earth swallowed them up and the fire consumed them. The course which G-d has set cannot be changed and should never be seen as primitive ignorance which needs to be modernized and modified.

The headlong rush of the 14,700 to take physical possession of the Ark - to take G-d hostage was the product of people who not only felt that the verdict of G-d was wrong, but that they could force G-d to change His mind and amend His judgements to what they found more acceptable.

Too many people today feel that G-d is a nebulous entity who can be molded to fit into how we want to view the world and how we should live in the world. He is still called upon by those who have rejected His Word and who practice criminal abominations, but only because they feel they have a superior updated version of the primitive G-d which they no longer find acceptable and instead of trying to conquer sin, they want to learn to live with it and convince everyone that G-d has changed His mind, which He has not done.

This week's Torah portion is a tragic attempt to hijack the purposes of G-d and turn a major defeat into an excuse to modify the divine agenda and return to the wickedness of the world from which we have been delivered. When I read the literature of liberal theology which seeks to reconfigure spirituality to accept all kinds of idolatry and immorality, I hear the voices of the ten spies joining the voices of the 250 rebels and of the 14,700 horde to assault what the Bible says and make G-d say and do something else.

This is the great deception against which we are fighting and this is the lie which will bring in

the final darkness before the return of our Messiah and we have to decide which side we are going to be on. All the folly which portrays the Bible as a primitive book in need of upgrading and modification is only a lot of fog which cannot change the eternal truth of G-d and His Word, and only blind our eyes to it. The rebels who rose up against Moses in three waves were dealt with so that the truth of g-d could stand and come down to us so that we can face the same challengers they faced and decide to make different decisions.

We cannot alter what the Bible teaches about the origin of the universe and of life on our planet. We cannot alter the morality which His Word stipulates and which Word cannot be altered, even if it is called criminal discrimination punishable by the laws which Korah and his henchmen would have heartily agreed with. If we do not like what the Bible says, our spirituality is deficient and will be swallowed up by the earth and the fire which is to come and will be a plague on our lives worse than the one which the L-rd sent on the rebels in the Torah portion.

When we accept His judgement and reach out and embrace His cure (faith in His Son and obedience to His Word), we escape the judgement which is about to come upon our world and we are set free from the true spiritual darkness which is escalating in our modern world. We may suffer in the process and be mocked, marginalized and called all kinds of terrible things (antiquated monsters), but we will both be blessed and protected by G-d through this mounting tribulation and we will escape the judgment which is about to come on all the generations and nations of mankind who have rejected his Word and who continue to do so. I feel very sorry for the deceived and compromised believers in our midst, but not enough to join them in their folly and their rejection of G-d's Word. How about you? Truly there is no second opinion when G-d has spoken. Let's pray.