



Saturday, 10/7/23 at 4:00

Sunday, 10/8/23 at 9:00

Numbers 16:1-50 NAS 1995

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: *The LORD God is HOLY and ALMIGHTY, deserving all our trust and obedience!* In this sermon, based on **Numbers chapter 16**, let us understand what the LORD did when He and His servants were challenged!

1. **Who and Why?** ¹ Now **Korah...**, with **Dathan** and **Abiram...** ² ...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.**
 - a. The descendants of Levi were designated by the LORD to take care of the tabernacle, *but only the descendants of Aaron could serve as priests.* Korah was among the descendants of Levi who were designated to hand-carry **the holy things of the tabernacle** on their shoulders, *while other descendants of Levi were designated to transport other tabernacle items on carts.*
 - b. Korah, *jealous of those doing easier work*, recruited Dathan, Abiram, and

- the 250 others to rebel against Moses and Aaron.
2. **The Complaint:** ³ **They** [the 253 men] 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?” // Moses and Aaron were humble; they never exalted themselves; instead, the LORD chose them to serve.
 3. **The Response:**
 - a. **The LORD will decide:** ⁴ **When Moses heard this, he fell on his face** [praying to the LORD]; ⁵ and [then] he spoke to Korah and all his company, saying, “Tomorrow morning the LORD will show who is His, and who is holy... ⁶ Do this: take censers for yourselves, Korah and all your company, ⁷ and put fire in them, and lay incense upon them in the presence of the LORD tomorrow; and the man whom the LORD chooses *shall be the one*

who is holy. // The LORD is the One who chooses, *so let us listen to Him.*

- b. **You should have been thankful:**
⁸ ...Moses said to Korah, “Hear now, you sons of Levi, ⁹ is it not enough for you that the God of Israel has separated you from the *rest of 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 to them; ¹⁰ and that He has brought you near, *Korah, and all your brothers, sons of Levi, with you?* // They had been given important responsibilities *but complained.**
- c. **Moses to Korah:** ¹¹ “...you and all your company are gathered together against the LORD...” // Let us always know the LORD’s position – *from the Bible* – and NEVER oppose Him!

4. **More Complaining:** ¹² Then Moses sent a **summons** [*an order*] to Dathan and Abiram...; but they said, “We will not come up. ¹³ Is it not enough that you have brought us up out of a land flowing with milk and honey [*trying to make Egypt sound wonderful*] to have us die in the wilderness, but you would also lord it over us? ¹⁴ ...We will not come up!” // Moses spoke for the LORD, *so to refuse him was to refuse the LORD.*

5. **Moses Cried Out to the LORD:** ¹⁵ ... “Do not regard their offering! I have not taken a single donkey from them, nor have I done harm to any of them.” // Moses told

the LORD what He already knew!
NOTHING is hidden from the LORD!

6. **The Rules:** ¹⁶ Moses said to Korah, “You and all your company be present before the LORD tomorrow, both you and they along with Aaron. ¹⁷ Each of you take his firepan and put incense on it, and each of you bring his censer before the LORD, two hundred and fifty firepans; also you and Aaron *shall each bring his firepan.*” // The instructions were clear.
7. **Greatly Outnumbered:** ¹⁸ So they each took his *own* censer 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. 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. // The 253 and the whole congregation (millions) against Moses and Aaron.
8. **The LORD’s Wide-Angled Anger:** ²⁰ Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, ²¹ “Separate yourselves from among this congregation [*from among the millions I delivered from Egypt*], that I may consume them instantly.” // Wow!
9. **Moses and Aaron Interceded:** ²² But [Moses and Aaron] fell on their faces and said, “O God, God of the spirits of all flesh, when one man sins, will You be angry with the entire congregation?” // Since Moses and Aaron were right with the LORD *through their faith in the coming Messiah*, He heard their plea!

10. **The LORD's Pin-Pointed Anger:** ²³ Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²⁴ "Speak to the congregation, saying, 'Get back from around the dwellings of Korah, Dathan and Abiram.'" ²⁵ Then Moses arose and went to Dathan and Abiram, with the elders of Israel following him, ²⁶ and he spoke to the congregation, saying, "Depart now from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing that belongs to them, or you will be swept away in all their sin." ²⁷ So [the congregation] got back from around the dwellings of Korah, Dathan and Abiram; and Dathan and Abiram came out *and* stood at the doorway of their tents, along with their wives and their sons and their little ones. ²⁸ Moses said, "By this you shall know that the LORD has sent me to do all these deeds; for this is not my doing. ²⁹ If these men die the death of all men or if they suffer the fate of all men, *then* the LORD has not sent me. ³⁰ But if the LORD brings about an entirely new thing and the ground opens its mouth and swallows them up with all that is theirs, and they descend alive into Sheol [*the place of the dead*], then you will understand that these men have spurned the LORD."

a. The three men and their families: ³¹ As [Moses] finished speaking all these words [*so, right away*], the ground that was under them split open; ³² and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, and their households, and all the men who belonged to Korah with *their*

possessions. ³³ So they and all that belonged to them went down alive to Sheol; and the earth closed over them, and they perished from the midst of the assembly. ³⁴ All Israel who *were* around them fled at their outcry, for they said, "The earth may swallow us up!" // The LORD made it clear: *He chose Moses and Aaron!*

b. The 250: ³⁵ Fire also came forth from the LORD and consumed the two hundred and fifty men who were offering the incense. // Like Korah, Abiram, and Dathan, *the 250 also opposed the LORD!*

11. **The Reminder:** ³⁶ Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ³⁷ "Say to Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, that he shall take up the censers out of the midst of the blaze [that killed the 250], for they are holy... ³⁸ ...let them be made into hammered sheets for a plating of the altar, ...and they shall be for a sign to the sons of Israel." ³⁹ So Eleazar the priest took the bronze censers..., and they hammered them out as a plating for the altar, ⁴⁰ as a reminder to the sons of Israel that no layman who is not of the descendants of Aaron should come near to burn incense before the LORD; so that he will not become like Korah and his company... // What are your reminders?

12. **The Congregation Complained:** ⁴¹ But on the next day [*right after the earth had swallowed the three families alive*] 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.”

// So foolish! *Some people never learn!*

13. **The LORD’s Confirmation:** ⁴² It came about, however, when the congregation had assembled against Moses and Aaron, that they turned toward the tent of meeting, and behold, the cloud covered it and the glory of the LORD appeared. // Again, the LORD clarified that He had chosen Moses and Aaron.
14. **The LORD’s Wide-Angled Anger:** ⁴³ Then Moses and Aaron came to the front of the tent of meeting, ⁴⁴ and the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ⁴⁵ “Get away from among this congregation [*these millions of people*], that I may consume them instantly.” // Their persistent rejection deserved the LORD’s wrath!
15. **Moses and Aaron Interceded:** Then they fell on their faces [and prayed to the LORD]. // In difficult times, *let us quickly call upon the LORD!*
16. **The LORD Gave the Cure:**
 - a. **Aaron obeyed:** ⁴⁶ Moses said to Aaron, “Take your censer and put in it fire from the altar, and lay incense on it; then bring it quickly to the congregation and make atonement for them, for wrath has gone forth from the LORD, the plague has begun!” ⁴⁷ Then Aaron took it as Moses had spoken, and ran into the

midst of the assembly, for behold, the plague had begun among the people. So he put on the incense and made atonement for the people.

⁴⁸ He took his stand between the dead and the living, so that the plague was checked. // Thousands of people were dying quickly by the hand of the LORD, yet Aaron was courageous to run into the middle of the slaughter to spare the people who opposed him and Moses!

- b. **The LORD stopped:** ⁴⁹ But those who died by the plague were 14,700, besides those who died on account of Korah [*him, his two allies, and their families*]. ⁵⁰ Then Aaron returned to Moses at the doorway of the tent of meeting, for the plague had been checked. // The LORD is **HOLY** and **ALMIGHTY**; it is utter foolishness to oppose Him or His servants, yet so many have and do. Let us NEVER be numbered among such people but let us tell others of the LORD’s **HOLINESS** and **POWER** and **LOVE**, so that they might repent and believe and be saved through Jesus!

Let Us Pray: Dear LORD, You are the Almighty God! Since You ♣have made us, ♣provide for us, and ♣have saved us through Jesus, help us to rightly **love You, trust You, and obey You**, and then **call others to do the same!**

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