

# Numbers 16 & 17

## (Rebellion Against the Leadership)

Today there are many splits and sectarian divisions within the church. As a result many pastors have broken hearts from trying to heal or prevent divisions. Alternatively, there are also many false teachers, who readily promote things that are not doctrinally sound (2.Tim.4:3-5, Titus 1:9-10, 1.John 4:1.).

In the Torah, the book of Numbers has much to say on these matters. In Numbers 10, there was a rebellion against Moses' authority by Korah, Kohath, Dathan, and Abiram, as well as On, the son of Reuben. If we pick up the story in v.3, we will see all the classic works of Satan coming into play. Satan is the author of division, especially among the Jews, for he knows that his time is short.

If we begin to look at the charges levelled against Moses and Aaron, we see all the basics of rebellion.

"You take too much upon yourselves for all the Congregation is holy, everyone of them, and the Lord is among them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the Lord?"

They begin by undermining the authority, whilst endorsing the Lord within the body. When Moses heard these words he fell on his face. Why? To plead for their souls Proverbs 1:7 informs us

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction."

In attempting to undermine the authority the Lord has put in place, the perpetrators take their lives in their hands, interfering with the authority which the Lord has put into place. For we are told in Eph.4:11-12 that the ministries are in place "to equip the saints, and for the edifying of the body, till we all come to the unity of the faith, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ". For the **Pastor** in his ministry should reflect the **love of God**, the **Teacher** should reflect the **Word of God**, and the **Prophet** should reflect the **Spirit of God**.

In v.14 they even dared to put the Lord's word on trial, so in v.15 Moses was very angry. He was not angry when he himself was questioned, however, when they began to question God's Word, Moses did what Paul and every other Godly Jewish leader would have done, he gave them to their just reward (2.Cor.12:7.). After the Lord separated the rebels from the congregation, he opened the ground and swallowed them up.

In ch.17 of Numbers, the rebellion continues, and yet again the congregation stood against Moses and Aaron. The result being that the Lord told them to get a rod from the leader of every tribe, for the rod was a symbol of the authority from each tribe, or family, and Aaron's name was written on the rod belonging to the tribe of Levi. The rods were then placed in the tabernacle before the Lord. The rod which the Lord chose would begin to bud and bear fruit, thus confirming his chosen leadership of the tribal elders, and by implication, the one who would minister before him. This is today how we should judge the ministers of the Lord (1.Cor.12:15-18,25, 28, 29.). Yeshua (Jesus) said that they should be known by their

fruit, which is still the case today. The ones who bear the fruit of the Spirit are the ones who are equipped of the Spirit.

The Lord, in Numbers 18:16, chose the Levites as a gift for the rest of the congregation (Num.3:5-13) to minister before them in the same manner as he chose the ministers as a gift for the church (Eph.4:7-8.). First Apostles, second Prophets, third Teachers (1.Cor.12:28.).

There is perfect order in heaven, and the structure for the same has been put in place for the church by the Holy Spirit (Matthew 6:10.). However, it must be understood that the church is not a democracy, it is power from above from Yeshua the King, through the Holy Spirit, flowing down through the Body, and nowhere do we see this clearer than in Psalm 133, where it describes the position very well, for it symbolically likens it to the dew which runs down over Mount Hermon.

Yeshua, being the rock in the symbolism, with the dew passing down over it in like manner as the Holy Spirit descends upon the church. This is also symbolised in the Psalm by the anointing of Aaron, which brings it into context. However the key is unity, for where this is, there the Lord commands the blessing. What blessing? the blessing of the ordered and structured assembly that has the power of God to make a difference.

In the light of all this, there are still some people that are under the impression that they can usurp power, just like satan did, and if it were not for the fact that we live in the Day of Grace, they would be dealt with in the same manner as Numbers 16&17. For people are not chosen for high office in God's Kingdom just because they look the part, but they are tested of the Lord over many years and some, in the economy of God, are even born for that purpose (Matthew 22:14.).

The truth is, in the same in the Levitical priesthood, as in the early church, there is no place for rebellion (1.Cor.11:16.), and there is sure chastisement for those who try to put themselves in positions of power in the church (Matthew 15:13, 1.Tim.5:1, Heb.13:7-17.). In point of fact, in the Old Testament, as well as the early church, it is regarded as gross wickedness (1.Sam.15:23, Prov.17:11.). Since we all have to give an account for the deeds we have to do in the body (Matthew 14:12, Heb.4:13.), let us keep a good conscience before God.