

PARASHAT KORACH

(KORAH)

NUMBERS 16:1-18:32

ETZ CHAYEEM HOO (HE IS A TREE OF LIFE)

Yeshua is a tree of life to those who take hold of Him, and those who support Him are praiseworthy. His ways are ways of pleasantness and all of His paths are shalom. Bring us back YHVH to You, and we shall come, renew our days as of old.

As we begin to study the Torah let us never forget that YESHUA THE MESSIAH is the Living Torah, the Torah-Word of Elohim made flesh. He is the way, the truth and the life — the Living Manna sent from heaven. Without Him living in our lives through the indwelling Presence of his Set-Apart/Kadosh Spirit (Who leads us into all truth and revelation) the Written Torah can become the dead letter of the law!

Haftorah Reading:

1 Samuel 11:14-12:22

B'rit Chadashah:

On submitting to governmental authority: **Romans 13:1-7; Hebrews 13:17**

On rebellion against governmental authority: **Jude 1-25** (with emphasis on verse 11)

On Yeshua being the spiritual rod or vine: **John 15:1-7**

On supporting the ministry through tithes and offerings: **1 Corinthians 9:7-14; Galatians 6:6; 1 Timothy 5:17-18**

Outline of This Week's Parashah (Torah Portion):

- 16:1 Korah's Rebellion
- 16:12 Moses Summons Dathan and Abiram
- 16:20 Elohim Responds and Miraculously Destroys the Malcontents
- 17:1 [16:41] The Israelites Protest and a Plague Breaks Out Among the Israelites
- 17:9 [16:43] Moses Intercedes Again on Behalf of the Israelites
- 17:16 [17:1] A Miraculous Confirmation of Aaron's Priesthood: The Budding Rod
- 17:28 [17:12] Fear of Elohim Falls Upon the Israelites and a New Respect for the Tabernacle
- 18:1 Aaron's Responsibilities Reconfirmed
- 18:1 Gifts to the Kohanim and Tithes to the Levites

Study Questions For This Week's Midrash (Torah Discussion):

1 16:1-2, *Korah ... rose up before Moses*. Pride and ambition can easily give way to slander and rebellion. Yeshua said in Matthew 5:3, "Blessed are the poor [contrite] in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven," and in Matthew 20:27, "And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." How easy it is to become displeased with those who YHVH has chosen to be leaders and to fall into the sin (spirit) of Korah. YHVH curses those who use their mouths to try to destroy godly leadership. (Read Jude 1-25, especially note verses 10-13.)

2 16:1-3, Notice a progression (or downward spiral) of actions on the part of Korah and his rebels: they *separated* themselves from fellowship, *rose up* against Moses, *gathered together* others of like mind and

falsely *accused leadership* of wrong doings. This is the world's formula for achieving political (humanistic) power and domination. It is the opposite method of advancing in YHVH's kingdom where the way down is the way up—the way of laying one's life down in service, which brings spiritual reward and blessing (Matt 20:27; 23:10).

Rebels, like Korah, tend to separate themselves from fellowship, seek out other like-minded rebels, and then rise up in defiance and accusation against godly leadership. Again, this leads to political power. The way of spiritual power is laid out in Acts 2:42–47 where the followers of Yeshua continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, in fellowship, breaking bread together, in prayer and sharing their goods with one another. The result was spiritual power and anointing. This can only happen as people forsake not the assembling of themselves together (Heb 10:25), and function within the spiritual body of Yeshua submitted one to another.

- 3 The rabbis note that Korah and his malcontent followers had come under the power of resentment, which grew and festered until open rebellion broke out. Korah was a fellow Levite and cousin of Aaron who was among those “overlooked” for the priesthood and who were relegated to being “mere” assistants to the priests. He was also a firstborn of his household (Exod 6:21), and when the Tabernacle sacrificial service was inaugurated Aaron's sons replaced the firstborn Israelites in offering sacrifices. Furthermore, Dathan, Abiram and On were of the tribe of Reuben, the first-born child of Jacob. These men had their own grudge, since Reuben had lost his birthright as the firstborn son to the sons of Joseph. (1 Chron 5:1). What do we see here? Resentment leads to bitterness, which then leads to separation, then to uprising, then to accusation, then to rebellion against YHVH-ordained authority, then to usurpation of authority, and eventually it leads to judgment and death. Is this not the path Lucifer took in his rebellion against YHVH Elohim? (Read Isa 14:12–23.)
- 4 **16:4, 15, 20–22**, When you are falsely accused, what is your first response? In a knee-jerk manner do you automatically defend yourself through verbal retaliation? Or do you do as Moses, who was the meekest of men, hold your peace and first seek YHVH for wisdom and direction so as to know how to respond?
- 5 In **16:20–21**, YHVH commanded the Israelites to separate themselves from the rebels. Does this not recall a warning in Revelation 18:4 where YHVH urges his people to separate themselves from Babylon (a rebellious, “Antichrist” system) so as not to be a partaker of her sins and plagues? (See also 2 Corinthians 5:17.) Are you still “flirting” with the world's sin and rebellion and making yourself an enemy of YHVH and setting yourself up for judgment?
- 6 **16:35**, *The Children of Israel Murmured*. Here we see an example of YHVH's judgment. These 250 men were the wrong men (they were not priests) offering the right fire (from the altar) up to YHVH. YHVH struck down Nadab and Abihu who were the right men (they were priests), but they used strange fire (Lev 10:1–2). What can we learn from this? Does YHVH have his prescribed method of how men are to approach him? Discuss why leaders carry greater responsibility to not lead the people astray and how they will come under greater judgment if they do.
- 7 **16:41**, *There came out a fire from YHVH*. Even after Elohim's tremendous display of powerful judgment against the rebels, the people still continued in their complaining. Man is very arrogant and right in his own eyes. He will defend himself even to the death. How many times do we face YHVH's judgment in our lives (perhaps health issues, financial troubles, broken relationships, legal problems, etc.), but we still refuse to repent and change our attitude toward others and our Heavenly Father? How long will we refuse to obey the laws of YHVH? How long will we insist on doing things our way, instead of YHVH's way? The choice is ours: obey YHVH and be blessed, disobey and suffer the long and short-term consequences of our sin and rebellion against Elohim.
- 8 **16:44–48**, Moses was a true intercessor or intermediary between YHVH and the people—a picture of Yeshua who is our spiritual Advocate (legal representative) before Elohim. YHVH wanted to destroy the people for their unending rebellion and murmuring, yet Moses and Aaron interceded on their behalf and many lives were saved. How often are we inclined to write people off who have wronged us instead of interceding for them, praying for their salvation, healing, welfare or whatever their need may be? Do you

go through life rendering good for evil? Where is the love of Elohim in all of this? It's all about love—the love of YHVH in us toward a dying and hurting world. Aaron went among the dying people burning incense (verse 47). Incense is prayer—the prayers of the saints (Rev 5:8; 8:4). How much time do you spend each day in prayer for others—or is most of your time spent in selfish prayer? Do you spend time each day in meaningful prayer? It has been reported that the average American Christian spends as little as ten minutes a week in prayer, and the average pastor about ten minutes per day. Is it any wonder this nation is as spiritually sick as it is? Perhaps the quality of your life would improve if you spent more time each day in prayer and intercession.

Here are some Scriptures that reveal the work of Yeshua the Messiah as the Mediator between Elohim (the Father) and man, and as the only way to the Father:

Yeshua says unto him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man comes unto the Father, but by me.” (John 14:6)

Truly, truly, I say unto you, Whatsoever you shall ask the Father in my [Yeshua's] name, he will give it to you. (John 16:23, see also 14:13,14,16; 16:24,16.)

But these are written, that you might believe that Yeshua is the Messiah, the Son of Elohim; and that believing you might have life through his name. (John 20:3)

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with Elohim through our Master Messiah Yeshua by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of Elohim. (Rom 5:1–2)

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of Elohim is eternal life through Messiah Yeshua our Master. (Rom 6:23)

Who is he that condemns? It is Messiah that died, yes rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of Elohim, who also makes intercession for us. (Rom 8:34)

But thanks be to Elohim, which gives us the victory through our Master Messiah Yeshua. (1 Cor 15:57)

Wherefore you are no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of Elohim through Messiah. (Gal 4:7)

But now in Messiah Yeshua you who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Messiah. For he is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto Elohim in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. (Eph 2:13–18)

In whom we have boldness and access [to the Father in heaven] with confidence by the faith of him [Yeshua]. (Eph 3:12)

For there is one Elohim, and one mediator between Elohim and men, the man Messiah Yeshua; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. (1 Tim 2:5–6)

Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to Elohim, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. (Heb 2:17)

Wherefore, set-apart brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Messiah Yeshua. Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. (Heb 3:1–2)

Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Yeshua the Son of Elohim, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. (Heb 4:14–15)

So also Messiah glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, “You are

my Son, today have I begotten you.” As he says also in another place, “You are a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.” (Heb 5:5–6)

Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Yeshua, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. (Heb 6:19–20)

Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: we have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.... But now has he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. (Heb 8:1–2,6)

But Messiah being come an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the set-apart place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.... And for this cause he is the mediator of the renewed covenant, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.... For Messiah is not entered into the set-apart places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of Elohim for us. (Heb 9:11–12,15,24)

By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Yeshua Messiah once for all. And every priest stands daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins, but this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of Elohim.... having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Yeshua, by a new and living way, which he has consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high priest over the house of Elohim. (Heb 10:10–12,19–21)

And to Yeshua the mediator of the recently born/youthful covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaks better things than that of Abel. (Heb 12:24)

My little children, these things write I unto you, that you sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Messiah Yeshua the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world ... I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake. (1John 21–2,12)

9 17:1–13, Aaron's rod that budded is a picture of what? Who was the rod or branch from the stem of Jesse? Spiritual life for you and me came from what dead tree? Yeshua is at the center of everything! Can there be any doubt that he is the Messiah? Only he fulfilled all the prophetic types and shadows that we find in the Hebrew Scriptures.

10 Aaron's ministry was anointed of YHVH. The rod represented his authority and its budding represented the fruitfulness of his ministry. Is your ministry anointed of YHVH? What are the fruits being born of it? Are people's lives being changed for the good, or are you living in delusion thinking that you are called and anointed of YHVH when in reality you are self appointed like the rebels who challenged Aaron? If we are to be pleasing to YHVH we must periodically ask ourselves these hard questions and stay accountable before YHVH.

11 18:21, *I have given the children of Levi all the tenth*. The Children of Israel were to pay a tithe (a tenth) of their income to support the Levites—those who ministered to the Israelites and taught them YHVH's Torah. Since we are no longer subject to the Levitical priesthood system, some people interpret this to mean that tithing and giving to support those who minister to the saints and feed them spiritually is no longer obligatory. Some have the notion that pastors and Bible teachers are to minister free of charge. What does the Apostle Paul say about this? In 1 Timothy 5:17–18 we read, “

Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of **double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine**. For the Scripture says, You shall not muzzle the ox that treads out the corn. And, **The labourer is worthy of his reward.**”

Are you a giver or a taker? Do you support financially and prayerfully those who feed you spiritually? To not do so is theft and rebellion against the Word of Elohim, and you risk opening your finances up to demonic attack! (Mal 3:7–12)

KORAH & COMMUNISM

Ya'acov Natan Lawrence

Hoshana Rabbah Messianic Discipleship Resources

In Jude 11, we find a stern warning against those who will infiltrate the congregation of the saints and who are rebels like Korah and will do great damage. What is the spirit of Korah and how can you identify it?

The spirit of Korah is behind most political power on earth today. It is the spirit that drives most to seek power and control over others. It is at work in religious movements, churches and is at the heart and core of the political movements known as socialism, Marxism and communism. It even figures prominently in the seemingly benign movement with which we are so familiar called democracy.

[To learn more about the spirit of Korah, and how to recognize its insidious infestation, please read our teaching article entitled "Korah and Communism: A Character Study of a Malcontent and Rebel" at <http://www.hoshanarabbah.org/pdfs/korah.pdf>.]

HAFTARAH — 1 SAMUEL 11:14-12:22

Israel Chooses to Walk in YHVH's Permissive and Not His Perfect Will

Both this week's Parashah and Haftarah portions chronicle Israel's rebelling against the rule of YHVH-ordained leaders. In the former, Korah and company rebelled against Moses, while in the latter, Israel rejected Samuel's leadership in favor of a king. Both righteous leaders defend their integrity in service of the people.

1 11:14, *And renew the kingdom there.* According to *The ArtScroll Rubin Edition Prophets Commentary*, Gilgal was the place where Joshua had originally set up the Tabernacle upon Israel entering the Promised Land (p. 69; Josh 5:9–10). From the time of Joshua to Samuel Israel had fallen on hard times physically and spiritually. As a nation, Samuel was leading Israel back to the geographical spot where Israel was last a great nation and walking in the perfect will of YHVH. A wise person once said, "If you're not hearing the voice of YHVH in your life and he seems to be silent, then go back to the last place where he told you to do something and you said, 'No.' That's where he told you to go right and you went left." This principle applies to nations *and* to individuals, as well. Reflect on this as pertaining to your life.

2 12:1ff, The establishment of Saul as king in Israel was a constitutional or limited monarchy, unlike the kings of other Eastern nations of the time where the king had total, unlimited and absolute power. "Their kings ruled by whim and fancy, Israel's would be subservient to the Torah; their kings placed their self-aggrandizement above the national interest, Israel's king was charged with upholding and safeguarding the nation's righteousness, and with guiding Israel as the bearer of [Elohim's]—not the king's—majesty" (*ArtScroll Stone Edition Chumash*, p. 1187). "The Jewish king was bound to respect the liberty, honour, and the property of his subjects, and his powers were strictly limited by the fundamental laws of the Torah (Deut 17:14–20). Prophets, psalmists, and sages all conceived of the king as a shepherd of his people, whose scepter should be a scepter of peace, pity, and righteousness" (*The Soncino Pentateuch*, p. 649). This is the basis of a republican form of government, which, in theory, is the basis for American government. As you become more familiar with YHVH's laws it will become evident that certain aspects of the American legal code derive from the Torah. This truth underscores the fact that our society has deep Judeo-Christian roots.

3 12:3, *Whose ass have I taken?* The moral integrity of spiritual leadership is essential. Most leaders in Christian or Messianic circles would strongly assert their probity (honesty and decency), and at the same time would deny that they are building their ministry kingdoms for personal benefit, but what is the real truth? How do they treat their children and wives behind the scenes? What is their response toward their

detractors? How do they treat other “competing” ministries? Do they live off of YHVH’s sheep, or do they use tithes and offerings for the care and feeding of YHVH’s sheep? If they do receive income from their flocks, how dependent are they on that income? To what degree do they make decisions affecting the congregation in order to solicit a response that will ensure the security of their position as chief leader and beneficiary of the congregation’s largesse? To what degree do they angle their teaching and preaching to curry the favor of their constituents thus keeping the funds flowing toward them? These are questions that spiritual leaders all need to ask of themselves from time to time.

- 4** **12:17**, *Your wickedness is great.* Samuel, speaking for YHVH, called Israel’s desire to be like the other nations and to have a king rule over them a great wickedness. To emphasize YHVH’s displeasure, Samuel asked YHVH to send a destructive rain upon Israel’s wheat harvest (verse 18). As a result of this punishment, Israel recognized their sin of rejecting YHVH’s mode of ruling them, and choosing instead to accept a worldly form of government (verse 19). But how deep was Israel’s repentance? Did it bring about a course change for the nation? How often does YHVH attempt to capture our attention because of sin in our lives, and as a result of his punishment and the impending physical loss (our personal “wheat harvest”) we verbally admit our sin, but our hearts remain hardened and predisposed to continue walking in the same sin?
- 5** **12:19**, *We have added unto all our sins this evil, to ask us a king.* The people knew they had sinned, but they refused to repent and to turn away from their sin. To know one has sinned and to even admit it is *not* the same as repentance, which means deeply regretting that sin, and then with one’s whole heart turning away from that sin and walking in righteousness.
- 6** **12:22**, *It has pleased YHVH.* Despite Israel’s unrepentant recalcitrance, what was YHVH’s response to his people? Some Bible teachers would have us to believe that the concept of grace is foreign to the “Old Testament” and is revealed only in the “New Testament.” YHVH’s response to Israel’s rebellion is but one of many such examples to be found in the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) of his mercy superseding his judgment. What are some other examples of this?

