**KORAH’S REBELLION**

Sunday School Lesson 16

*Wandering in the Wilderness*

Numbers 16

4/27/2025

**Lesson Review:** We reached a pivotal point in our lesson series last week when the children of Israel finally got their first glimpse of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Unfortunately, the focus of our lesson was on the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ that came back from the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ spies that went into the land of Canaan. We noted first that the Lord wanted spies from Israel to go and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the land of promise. He was the One who called for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to assemble spies to go and see the land that He had promised to them. The Lord was specific in wanting a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ from every \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to go and see the land. Sadly, the spies saw that they wanted to see. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ saw evil. Two saw \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Their lack of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ caused ten of the spies to see a land of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. They did not see the promise of God in the land. Alternatively, the faith of the two spies caused them to see a land of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. They believed they could easily \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the obstacles there. The people had a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to believe the evil or the good report. The people gave no attention to the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ good report. They were quick to be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ by the evil report. The people were even \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ that they needed to trust the report that was consistent with God’s Word. They responded in anger and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. As a result, the promise of God became \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for those who did not believe. The Lord \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the people from ever going into the Promised Land. The people even tried to change their \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, but their \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ had passed. For today’s lesson, we will be looking at the continued rebellion of the people!

1. **KORAH TOOK ADVANTAGE OF A DISCOURAGED AND DIRECTIONLESS PEOPLE.**
2. **Notice the timing of Korah’s rebellion. Israel had just faced catastrophic failure and had no hope for the immediate future.** *Numbers 14:29–30 Your carcases shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me. Doubtless ye shall not come into the land, concerning which I sware to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.* The rebellion of Korah did not happen randomly; it was carefully timed. In Numbers 14, Israel had just been judged by God for refusing to enter the Promised Land. The devastating news that an entire generation would wander and die in the wilderness left the people discouraged, disillusioned, and directionless. They had no vision for the immediate future and no tangible hope of fulfilling the promises they had once eagerly anticipated. In this spiritually weakened state, Korah seized his opportunity.
3. **Notice the misguided hope that Korah offered to the people. He incorrectly proclaimed their holiness.** *Numbers 16:3 And they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said unto them, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?* Korah’s rebellion gained momentum by offering the people a message they desperately wanted to hear — that they were already holy and acceptable to God. In the midst of their discouragement and judgment, Korah assured them that no real change was needed. Their standing with God remained secure regardless of their continued disobedience. His claim of holiness was not only inaccurate, but dangerously misleading. While God had called Israel to be a holy nation (Exodus 19:6), holiness required their faith in the Lord and separating themselves unto Him.
4. **KORAH CLAIMED AUTHORITY WITH MEN WHO WERE DISTINGUISHED BUT DEFIANT.**
5. **Notice that Korah found two hundred and fifty well-known leaders of the tribes to support him in his rebellion.** *Numbers 16:2 And they rose up before Moses, with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown.* The rebellion gained dangerous momentum when Korah enlisted the support of two hundred and fifty princes. They had established reputations and influence within Israel. By aligning himself with these influential leaders, Korah gave his cause an appearance of legitimacy, deceiving many into believing that their movement was right simply because it had popular support. Their involvement shows that human fame and recognition are poor substitutes for true righteousness, and that even the most celebrated and recognized individuals can be dangerously wrong.
6. **Notice that these princes had already shown themselves to be defiant of God’s plan. Korah’s two main followers especially showed their rebellion against God and Moses.** *Numbers 16:12–14 And Moses sent to call Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab: which said, We will not come up: Is it a small thing that thou hast brought us up out of a land that floweth with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, except thou make thyself altogether a prince over us? Moreover thou hast not brought us into a land that floweth with milk and honey, or given us inheritance of fields and vineyards: wilt thou put out the eyes of these men? we will not come up.* According to Numbers 1, all of these princes had to be at least twenty years old. This means that these same leaders were the ones who chose to believe the evil report of the spies. Korah knew this. He was not ignorant to what had taken place. Yet, he chose to align himself with these men. His two main followers (Dathan and Abiram) were especially rebellious. When Moses called them, they refused to even go and speak with him. They blamed Moses for them not going to the Promised Land, and they said he just wanted to hurt them.
7. **KORAH MIRRORED AARON’S ATTACK BY CLAIMING DOMINION AND DIVINE BLESSING.**
8. **Notice that as a Levite, Korah recognized his right to dominion over the people. He thought he was worthy to offer direct incense unto the Lord.** *Numbers 16:6 This do; Take you censers, Korah, and all his company; 7 And put fire therein, and put incense in them before the Lord to morrow: and it shall be that the man whom the Lord doth choose, he shall be holy: ye take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi. 8 And Moses said unto Korah, Hear, I pray you, ye sons of Levi: 9a Seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to himself…*Korah looked at his Levitical heritage as a right that entitled him to dominion over the people. He did not see the need for Moses or Aaron. As a result, Moses challenged him to offer sacrifices that were only to be made by Aaron and his descendants. This was the opportunity for Korah to recognize his failed thinking and humble himself. Instead, he chose to take up Moses’ challenge. He believed that he was worthy to offer this sacrifice unto the Lord.
9. **Notice that Korah’s rebellion against Aaron highlights the principle of sowing and reaping.** *Numbers 16:10 And he hath brought thee near to him, and all thy brethren the sons of Levi with thee: and seek ye the priesthood also? 11 For which cause both thou and all thy company are gathered together against the Lord: and what is Aaron, that ye murmur against him?* Imagine what Aaron must have been thinking when Korah brought his rebellion before him! Notice that Aaron was silent throughout this entire chapter. Perhaps, he remembered how he and Miriam had just recently rebelled against Moses themselves. Now, one of the Levites who served him in the tabernacle was rebelling against him and using the same language that he used in his attack of Moses. The Bible is filled with examples of sowing and reaping. While Moses had been faithful and undeserving of the continued rebellion, Aaron was guilty and was reaping exactly what he had previously sown.
10. **KORAH’S REBELLION ACCOMPLISHED NOTHING BUT DEATH AND DESTRUCTION.**
11. **Notice that Korah was directly responsible for the death of himself, his family, and his immediate followers.** *Numbers 16:31–33 And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that was under them: And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods. They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation.* Korah’s rebellion ultimately led to the total destruction of himself, his family, and those who directly followed him. In a stunning and supernatural judgment, the ground itself opened up and swallowed them alive. Their rebellion not only cost them their lives but removed their households, possessions, and any legacy they might have left among the congregation. Rather than gaining influence or authority as they had hoped, they were wiped from the earth in an instant. His rebellion had done nothing to help Israel succeed.
12. **Notice that Korah was indirectly responsible for the largest death toll among Israel to that point in the wilderness.** *Numbers 16:49 Now they that died in the plague were fourteen thousand and seven hundred, beside them that died about the matter of Korah.* The destructive influence of Korah’s rebellion did not end with his own death. The very next day, the congregation of Israel, still hardened in heart, murmured against Moses and Aaron. They blamed them for the judgment that had taken place. In response, God sent a swift plague that consumed 14,700 Israelites in a very short period of time. This was the largest recorded immediate death toll thus far in Israel’s wilderness journey. Though Korah himself was already gone, the spirit of rebellion he had stirred up continued to spread like a deadly infection. Wicked rebellion leaves nothing but destruction behind.