

# Lessons Learned From Korah's Rebellion

by Alan Martin

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*The sermon explores the story of Korah's rebellion against Moses and God's plan to draw out the hearts of men, revealing the importance of living near God and serving Him.*

**Scripture:** Numbers 16:3, Psalm 25:5, Psalm 80:19, Jeremiah 32:17, Matthew 5:6, Luke 24:32, John 20:18

**Topics:** "Rebellion"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the urgency of repentance and understanding the wrath of God. He refers to a story in Numbers where the earth opens up and swallows rebellious individuals, and fire consumes others. Despite witnessing these events, the Israelite community still fails to grasp the seriousness of their situation. God allows someone to be found gathering wood on the Sabbath day, leading to uncertainty about what should be done to him. Moses and Aaron, accused of being mean, can only fall on their faces before God and entrust themselves to His judgment.

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## Transcript

Open your Bibles to Numbers. And let's acknowledge the Lord and ask Him to really grant us ears to hear. Father, we acknowledge that Your words are spirit and life.

Your understanding and wisdom is also spirit and life. And it's not according to our natural man, we understand that. Therefore, we ask for Your spirit.

We ask You to grant to us the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of You. We ask that You fill us with the knowledge of Your will, with all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that we may walk in a manner that's worthy of You unto all pleasing. For how, Lord, apart from Your spirit can we understand the deep things of You? You say You've given Your spirit who searches, who knows Your mind and heart, and even searches the deep things of You.

And You say You've given us Your spirit so that we can know what You've prepared for us. Lord, there are things You've prepared for us that You intend to understand and to receive so that You can be glorified as we walk in them. Lord, people perish for lack of understanding.

You said this is good and pleases You. You want all men to be saved, but You also said, and to come to the full knowledge of the truth. Lord, You want to be known for who You are so we can worship You in spirit and truth.

You want to be understood fully. You want to be fully known. You want eventually for the knowledge of the Lord to cover the earth and the glory of the Lord to cover the earth.

Father, You have supplied everything we need for life and godliness, but You have said that it's through the knowledge of You. You say You've made it clear that in Your Son are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. But how can we avail ourselves of the treasure if we know so little of Your Son? And You said, Father, through Your servant Paul, that if any of us are even close to maturity, if any of us are even close to full grown, that we would have the mind that He expressed that we forget what lies behind.

What we've known of You is not good enough. What we've done for You is not good enough. Lord, we want to strain ahead.

We want to lay hold of that which You've laid hold of us for. We want to know Christ. We want to know Him in the power of His resurrection.

We want to know Him also in the fellowship of His sufferings. And Father, for those in this body, for myself, we want to fully know Him. We want to be fully conformed to His death to sin.

We want to be fully conformed. We want to be united with Him in the likeness of His death so that we can present ourselves to You as those having been raised from death to life. With sin, no more ruling over us.

Just like death, no more rules over Him. We want Your grace to reign in our hearts under righteousness so that You could have a people who live by the righteousness of faith. A people in whom You work to will and to do according to Your good pleasure.

And we know, Lord, that righteousness is pleasing to You. Every good and perfect gift comes from You. You are the Father of heavenly lights.

You don't need to change. There's no shadow of turning in Thee. Everything good is in You.

And we are limited, Lord, of laying hold of those good things by not understanding, by our lack of understanding. People still perish for lack of understanding You. So, Father, we know it's Your will.

And we have confidence we can come boldly before You. We can approach Your throne of grace to the new and living way You opened unto us. Through the body of Your Son.

We come in His name. We come seeking Your will. We want what You will on earth to be done right here today.

We want You in heaven. You're understood. We want to understand You here.

In heaven, people are one. We want to be one here today. In heaven, people worship You in spirit and truth.

We want to worship You that way here now. We want Your will in heaven to actually be experienced in this body, in this city, in our day, in our time. And we need Your spirit.

And we know You are the one who gave some to be apostles and prophets and evangelists and pastors and teachers. And You gave them for the equipping of the saints, the perfecting of the saints for the work

of the ministry, until we all reach the unity of the faith and the full knowledge of Your Son. No longer like infants blown to and fro through every wind of teaching, but in all things, we'll grow up into the full knowledge of Christ under the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

I know that's why there's a gift of teaching here operating today. And I pray for all the young ones here that they would realize it's not a man. There's not a single person here that has Your wisdom in them, original from them.

You are the one working. You are the teacher. You are the one with knowledge.

And we may see gifts at work, but it's all Your name. It's all Your spirit. It's all Your Lord, Your Son, our blessed Lord Jesus.

But we need Your understanding and Your body needs to be equipped. They need to understand what's going on, Father. And I pray You'd open the eyes of our hearts.

Breathe into us Your understanding. Come alongside us like You did those two disciples on the road to Emmaus. Open the Scriptures to us.

Cause our hearts to burn within us. And then give us a glimpse of Jesus. And let us run and tell other disciples, Lord, for Your namesake.

Strengthen Your church, Lord. Strengthen Your church. Fill those who are hungry and thirsting after righteousness this morning.

Instruct, Lord. Some of us need instruction. Some of us need encouragement.

How in the world could all these things be? Well, they're easy for You, aren't they, Father? Nothing's difficult for You. You're able to do all these things and we ask You to do so. We know that it's Your will to do so.

And we wait expectantly to receive Your will. We ask in faith in the name of the Lord Jesus. Amen.

If you're in Numbers chapter 16, I guess I should have you back up. That's a good place to start to the latter part of chapter 15. Where we are in the stage of Israel's journey here is they've just been forced to turn around from the borders of Canaan.

Chapter 14 of Numbers was when the spies came back and they did not bring a believing report. They brought an accurately doubtful report. They accurately reported that the giants were large.

The cities were large, well fortified. People were numerous. Nothing wrong about the facts of the report.

It's what the facts were not mixed with. And their unbelieving evil report caused the people to become discouraged. And those 10 spies were struck down.

The Lord raised His hand and swore that no one that 20 years or older that came out of Egypt was going to see the promised land. And they had, they wept. But they tried to repent after they became sorrowful.

They tried to go and take the land, didn't they? What happened to them? They got beaten out and run out. Now they're wandering around in the wilderness. And that sets the stage where we are right now in Numbers.

In verse 32, God in His infinite wisdom wants to do something. He's been dealing with the hearts of these people and He wants to draw something out. And He knows how to do so.

So He allows someone, in verse 32, to be found gathering wood on the Sabbath day. Think God is able to prevent all such things? Do you think God's in control of all such things? Do you think this was an accident that there's someone out there gathering wood on the Sabbath day? No. God knows.

Those who found Him, verse 33, gathering wood brought Him to Moses and Aaron and the whole assembly. And they kept Him in custody because it was not clear what should be done to Him. What do you think that means? I mean, was this a mistake? Did He forget? You know, you're not supposed to work on the Sabbath.

Was this a mistake or was this defiance? How do you know? What should we do? So notice how the Lord handles this. Then the Lord said to who? Now, God could have chosen to put a billboard up and said, this is my will, everybody, read. But God wants to do something.

God wants to draw out hearts. So God only tells one person. Not only does He just choose to tell one person, look what He tells that one person to do.

The man must die. Not only must the man die, it'd be one thing, Moses, you take Him and you kill Him. But what does He say? God has something He wants to accomplish, and He's going to accomplish it this way.

He tells the whole congregation, you're going to stone Him. Everybody. That's a pleasant thing to do, isn't it? Can you imagine that? Okay, everybody, let's get together.

God has spoken, He's revealed His will. He has, what's His will? It's His will for this man to die. What? Not only is it His will for His man to die, you're going to help me kill Him because the Lord told me to tell you this.

I don't know about you, but I'd be struggling about right that time. Moses, are you sure? Moses, are you sure, Moses? Well, there's a little interlude here about tassels. And just for the future, so none of you will forget, you're going to put tassels on your garments.

A little interlude. So the Lord is at work here. And He comes to verse 16.

And you'll begin to see His plan, what He's about doing begin to unfold. Chapter 16, that is, of Numbers. So Korah, son of Ishar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, and certain Reubenites, Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On, the son of Peleth took men.

I don't know if you realize that the took men is in the singular. So who the person taking the men is Korah. And you'll see through the story here that it's Korah who's the one that single out, singled out as the person God uses to help bring this about.

And there's something interesting about His name. That will be revealed a little bit later. But right now, His name is Korah.

But there is something that it's interesting that who He would choose. You know, Korah, and before I even mention that, Korah, it says, was the son of Ishar, who was the son of Kohath. The Kohathites were the portions of the Levites who were in charge of the Ark of the Covenant, the candelabra, the wash basin, all the gold covered and utensils of the sanctuary.

That it was their job to take care of that. And so Korah would have been like a great grandson of actual Levi himself. But they weren't a part of the priesthood.

Because to be a part of the priesthood, you had to be a direct descendant of Aaron. And so Korah wasn't in that. And Korah began to take issue with what Moses was doing.

And it's interesting that who he gets, he gets Nathan and Abiram. Now, what's significant about them being Reubenites? Is that an accident? What do you think is significant about them being Reubenites? Who is Reuben? He was the firstborn. He's the oldest son.

You know, this is something that's just true in the kingdom. Anytime a firstborn son is passed over for someone younger, you're going to find envy in the Scripture. Remember what David's brother Eliab said to him when he came down to bring the food? His father sent him to take food to his brothers who were waiting, standing out there, where Goliath was challenging, had been challenging the Israelites for 40 days.

And David's just bringing food down to his brothers. But, you know, David's been anointed king in front of all of his brothers. And so Eliab meets him and Eliab hears him asking questions, conversing about what's going on with this Philistine out there.

And Eliab comes up to him and says, what are you doing here? Who'd you leave your little sheep out there with? I know how wicked you are, how conceited you are in your heart. That's an older brother. An older brother to a younger brother, envious.

And an envious person thinks evil of another when they're struggling and being passed over. This is just, it's happened in the Scripture all the time. Turn cell phones off, please.

So it's no accident that Korah, who doesn't get chosen directly for the priesthood, that he finds men not chosen to be the leaders who have a sense of somewhat right that they should be. Now, who else do they gather? Look in verse 2. And they rose up against Moses. And with what? Two hundred and fifty Israelite men.

In the Hebrew it says princes, hand-picked community leaders. Now, this is quite a group. So we have Korah, we have two of the first-born Reubenites, and we have two hundred and fifty princes who are hand-chosen.

And you notice what it says what they come to do. Do they come to ask Moses what's going on? Do they come with questions? Do they come to say, Moses, we're not quite sure about something. Things don't appear to be going the way... They come to oppose him.

So sounds like they had had a meeting, didn't they? They had talked among themselves. You'll find something about the Israelites. And you'll find something particularly about anyone who is struggling with unbelief.

They like to hold discussions. But where are the discussions usually held? In their homes. In their tents.

Moses was left out of the discussion, evidently, because they came to him, not to question him, they came to him to oppose him. And look what they say. What's verse 3? They came as a group to oppose Moses.

And what do they tell him? What's the King James say? You take too much upon yourself. The NIV says, you've gone too far. Now, what do you think they mean by that? You've gone too far what? What had just happened? He had just made the entire assembly stone somebody.

And I think God's wanting to reveal something. So God chooses probably the source of the contention in these group of Israelites all along. And He picks something.

He causes an event to happen that He knows will draw out the hearts of men who think they know better. Then God. You see what he's doing? He sets up a circumstances and sets up these men.

And you know what? What would you and I be thinking, honestly? Moses, the guy just picked up sticks on the Sabbath. Give him a break. Doesn't he get another chance? Shouldn't you be merciful? Moses, that was not a good idea.

The Lord told me this. We don't believe you. You've gone too far.

You take too much upon yourself. And a matter of fact, look what they said. What's the next thing they said? In verse three, after they say, after they said, you've gone too far.

You've taken too much upon yourself. What's the next thing they said? The entire congregation is holy. Is that true here? But these are princes in Israel.

These are handpicked chosen men. And they're saying the entire assembly is holy. Is that God's opinion of this assembly? You know what God has said in chapter 14? He says, how long will these people treat me with contempt? How long will they refuse to believe in me? In spite of all the miraculous signs I have performed among them, I will strike them down with a plague and destroy them.

But what happened? Moses pled with them and said no. Then another thing happened again. The Lord said to Moses and Aaron, how long will this wicked community grumble against me? I've heard the complaint of these grumbling Israelites.

So tell them as surely as I live declares the Lord, I will do to you the very thing I heard you say. The very things I heard you say in this desert, your bodies will fall. Every one of you 20 years old or more who has grumbled against me.

So is this whole community holy? No. But it's interesting how someone who begins to doubt what God's doing and what he leads God's servant to do. Older men, well-chosen, well-respected men, they know Moses is wrong because you know why? Moses is too hard.

He's gone too far. He's taken too much upon himself. What did Moses do in verse 4? He falls down and look what he says.

He says to Korah, in the morning the Lord will show who belongs to him. If you ever wondered about whether the Lord, the early Christian in the first century used the Septuagint, he realized that when he says the Lord knows who are his, this is found in 1 Timothy, actually 2 Timothy, for the Lord knoweth who are his. The solid foundation of the Lord stands firm, sealed with this inscription.

The Lord knows who are his. That's where this statement comes from. The solid foundation of the Lord stands secure, sealed with this inscription.

God knows who are his all right. Not these 250 men. Not Dathan and Abiram and certainly not Korah.

The Lord knows Korah. He'll show who belongs to him. And the man he chooses will come near to him.

You believe in election? Some of us are Calvinist here. It's fine. I have no beef with Calvinist.

But let me just tell you, if you're really elect, you know how you can tell who the elect are? They live very near God. Those he chooses come near to him. And if you claim to be a Calvinist and you live far away from God, you're just a liar.

If God chooses you, you'll come near to him. You're not chosen to go live your own life and do your own things. That's not why God chooses men.

God chooses men to love him and serve him. God could fill heaven with stones. He doesn't need men who don't want to love him and serve him with all their life.

Okay. He could make rocks praise him, didn't he? You know what he said? Jesus said, the rocks cry out. So, I mean, if you really are one of God's chosen, it's going to fruit itself and you're going to be living very near him.

That's how you'll know. Verse 8, Moses also said to Korah, Now listen, you Levites, isn't it enough for you that God... This is where he begins to deal with Korah's heart. You see, isn't it enough for you that God of Israel has separated you from the rest of the Israelite community and brought you near himself to do the work of the Lord's tabernacle and to stand before the community and minister to them? He's brought you and your fellow Levites near himself, but now you're trying to get the priesthood too.

He says, is it against the Lord? Oh, no, not is it? Not a question, is it? It is against the Lord that you and all your followers have banded together. Who is Aaron that you should grumble against him? You see the insinuation here? Why are they grumbling with Aaron? What do you think Korah has assumed? What do you think Korah has assumed about Aaron? Who was Aaron? No, no, no, no. Aaron was Moses' brother.

What do you think they're assuming? Why do you think Aaron gets the priesthood? God is infinitely wise. God knows how to draw out of the hearts of men what's there. Who's Aaron? You remember how Aaron got chosen? Did Moses ask for Aaron? No.

If you go back and read the story of the book, here's what Moses... I can't speak, Lord, I can't... Send somebody else. That's all Moses said. The Lord said, your brother Aaron is already on the way.

Aaron was God's choice. But that's not how it looked to Korah, did it? It looked like favoritism. Here is these two guys and they've just taken too much upon themselves.

They have become hard. They're making all the decisions. They're telling us to do things we cannot stand doing.

That's it. We have had enough. And Moses is just telling it like it is.

Look, you've gone too far. It's not against me. Did Moses volunteer for this position? Does Moses want to be in this position? Did Moses? No.

Moses tried to get out of the position and he can't. And here are these men thinking he and his brother are in this together. So then Moses turns to the Reubenites, these firstborn older brothers.

Then Moses summoned Dathan and Abiram, sons of Eliab. By the way, Eliab was also the name of David's older brother. You know, the Scripture fascinates me.

The Scripture fascinates me, especially when the God of the universe opens it to me. There is so much awesome truth packed in the Scripture. If you're not finding it, you don't know Him.

All this is, is the Holy Spirit opening the Scripture. It's opening the Scripture. These are not incidentals.

These are to show us that the divine hand of God has been at work and will be at work. Moses summoned Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab. But they said, we will not come.

Isn't it enough that you have brought us up out of where? Notice this. What are they insinuating? Moses, it's your fault we didn't get to go in the promised land. Aren't they? Isn't what they're talking about? Remember, they went in there, but they couldn't stay.

God made them turn around because the people murmured and complained. And here are these, these Dathan and Abiram. And they're saying your fault, Moses.

We're in the predicament we are in because of you. Isn't it enough that you brought us up out of the land flowing with milk and honey to kill us in the desert? And now what do you want to do? You want to lord it over us. You know, it's interesting.

Anytime, I mean, in the Scripture, just go look and see. Anytime in the Scripture, God chooses a man. He calls him to do something.

Nehemiah. Who is Nehemiah? He's a, he's a man who's a, he serves the, the king of, what's he do? He's a cup bearer to the king. And he hears a report about Jerusalem and he just weeps.

That's what he does. He's guilty of weeping and caring about God's name and honor. And so God tells him, I'm going to send you to Jerusalem and you're going to rebuild the wall.

So he goes there at his own personal expense and he's living in a palace. And he goes, like he goes to the desert, the backside of the desert, to some forsaken hole where there's a pile of ruins. And he pours himself out to rebuild them for the honor of God.

But what are the people around him say about it? Why is he doing it? He's doing it to make a name for himself. And he plans to proclaim himself king. You know, have you ever noticed something? It seems like it doesn't matter what it comes from.

It seems like when God has a man and calls him to do something, he raises up someone else. His name is accuser of the brethren. But he's going to draw out the hearts of men through this.

So these now follow this also in verse 14. You know, I said that in my mind, I just believe I received by the spirit of the Lord, that it was this, the judgment on this Sabbath breaker, this horrific entire stoning by the whole assembly. It causes, and you're going to see this in this next phrase, I believe.

Moreover, verse 14, Moreover, you haven't brought us into a land flowing with milk and honey or given us an inheritance of fields and vineyards. Will you gouge out the eyes of these men? Why do you think that they could believe that Moses would be capable of such a thing? They just brutally stoned someone to death. Did they hear God tell Moses to tell them to that? Do you think they really enjoyed being a part of that? Do you think they understood what God was doing? Seemed cruel to them.

And if Moses had the capability of doing that kind of cruelty once, they're just speaking their heart. Their opinions about him are just coming out. No, we will not come.

Then we find that Moses is human. Next verse. What happens? He's angry.

And I mean, out of his heart, he said, Lord, don't even accept a donkey from them. I've not wronged any of them. Then Moses said to Korah, Okay, here's what you're to do.

And you know this. You know that you can feel the details. 250 men.

All of you get your own individual censors. These censors were something you held when you made prayers. You're going to go before the Lord and you're going to pray.

Each of you can have your own censors. And the censors represent as a smoke comes up, the prayers to send to heaven. We'll see.

Because here's what the Lord said. That they're going to meet at the entrance of the tent of the meeting. Verse 18.

So each man took his censor, put fire and incense in it, and stood with Moses and Aaron at the entrance to the tent of meeting. And when Korah had gathered all his followers in opposition to them at the entrance to the tent of the meeting, the glory of the Lord appeared to the entire assembly. To this entire assembly who remember this whole congregation of men.

What have they said about this assembly? The whole assembly. Not just that they're holy and the Lord is with them. Now God's going to express his own opinion about the assembly.

Separate yourselves from this assembly so I can put an end to them at once. Verse 22. Moses and Aaron do what they do all the time.

What else can they do? What else can Moses and Aaron do? What can they do when they're accused of being mean? What can they do when they're obedient to God and the result of obedience to God is some older brothers think they're being hard? What can they do? How can they defend themselves? They have nothing left to do but to fall down on their face before God. That's all they can do. What are they going to do? Tell them you're wrong.

You didn't hear me. I wish you could have heard. Look, they know that the attitude towards them is already gone so far.

There's nothing they can say. So they fall on their face. What do they do? They do like Jesus did.

Who when he was reviled, he reviled not return. But what did he do? He entrusted himself to him who judges justly. That's all you can do.

You just fall on your face before God. You're obedient to God. That's all you can do.

And then not only do that, they show the true heart of a genuine leader. Oh, God, God of the spirits of all mankind. Now, follow this.

Will you be angry with the entire assembly when what you see why Korah is singled out? You see, Moses knows where it started. Korah had enlistment. He enlisted others.

And it's interesting who gets enlisted. Someone who is who has a sense that their role is not important enough. Someone who's someone who has a sense that they're being left out.

Someone who's a sense that they're being passed over, that their wisdom and their expertise and their usefulness is not being fully appreciated. And that kind of person finds it. That kind of group of people.

They're just waiting for someone to come alongside and stroke stroke that a little bit. You remember what? Remember how Absalom stole the heart of Israel? You poor guys. If someone just understood you.

David just too busy. He just don't understand you. Satan is sinister.

He's sinister, but God only uses him to draw out the hearts of men. Okay. Moses and Aaron, they're the ones that love the people.

They're pleading with God for the people. Then the Lord said to Moses, verse 23, say to the assembly, move away from the tents of Korah, Dathan and Abiram. So Moses got up and went to Dathan and Abiram and the elders of Israel followed him.

And he warned the assembly, move back away from the tents of these wicked men. Do not touch anything belonging to them or you will be swept away because of all of their sins. Sins.

So they moved away from the tents of Korah, Dathan and Abiram and Dathan and Abiram had come out and were standing with their wives and children and little ones at the entrance to their tent. You know, let me tell you something about families, guys. They will stick together to their own destruction.

Man, the wives stood by their men. And the children stood by their parents with hell hanging over them. The wrath of God is coming down.

And they're sitting there in their hearts, confident that this cocky man, Moses and his brother is about to get their coming. Don't you know that they're confident that Moses is about to be put in his place? You think they have any sense that the wrath of God is about that far from their head? They've already gone too far in this. Verse 28.

Before I go to verse 28, do you think it's any accident that Jesus said, if anyone loves father or mother or brother or sister more than me, he's not worthy of me? You want to stand with a rebel against God? You want to stand with someone defiant of God? Families stick together. Is that always a good thing? It is in America. Is it always a good thing? No, it's not.

Verse 28. Then Moses said, this is how you will know that the Lord has sent me to do all these things. And that it was not my idea if these men die a natural death and experience only what usually happens to men, then the Lord has not sent me.

But if the Lord brings about something totally new and the earth opens its mouth and swallows them with everything that belongs to them and they go down alive to the grave, then you will know that these men have treated Moses with contempt. But wait, but wait, Lord. How can it be that they treated you with contempt? They just didn't understand.

That's a traumatic experience, stoning a young man. That's traumatic. Lord, they didn't hear you tell Moses, don't you think they deserve another chance? Lord, they weren't treating you with contempt.

No, Lord, they were just treating your messenger with contempt. It's just they despised your instruction, Lord. They just disagree with you.

I mean, after all, it was his first time to break the Sabbath. They didn't even had it that long, Lord. We didn't mean to treat you with contempt.

All of our grumblings and murmurings against Moses, they weren't against you. You think the Bible says without warning that men are going to give an account on the day of judgment for every idle word spoken? You think the Bible says without reason to do everything without murmuring and complaining so that you can be blameless and pure children of God? Don't you think, aren't you glad that there were some Israelites here who did not participate in the constant murmuring and grumbling of these men? Their blamelessness and purity saved their life. And let me tell you something, saints, for your good.

I love you. Get away from the grumblers. Get away from the murmurers.

Flee them. Leave them be. Flee them.

Get away from them. Don't listen to them. Lest you be swept away in their sins.

Be careful. Verse 31, As soon as he finished saying all this, the ground under them split apart, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them with their households and all Korah's men and all their possessions. And they went down alive into the grave with everything they owned.

That means, remember, where were these people? And who was there together? The husband. Where was the wife? Where were the children? So they all went down together. Then the Lord's judgment came upon the entire household at their cries.

Verse 34, All the Israelites around them fled, shouting, The earth is going to swallow us too. And at the same time, fire came out from the Lord and consumed the 250 men who were offering the incense. Who were these 250 men again? Princes.

Hand-picked leaders. They were men recognized for their wisdom. They were men recognized for their exemplary walk.

But they were also men who did not know what God was doing and opposed the Lord's direction for His people. And God was tired of their influence, and He drew it out of their heart and He put an end to it. Now, why did He do that? Why does God do such things? Because He likes cruelty? What happens if your arm gets gangrene? What happens if your arm gets gangrene? What are you going to tell the doctor? No, no, no, no, please.

That's cruel. I've got to cut it off. Didn't the Lord Jesus say, If your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out.

If your hand causes you to sin, pluck it out, cut it off. God will bring judgment on the rebels, and the rebellious, and the sinful, and the stubborn within a fellowship for the sake of the fellowship. And we need to beware, lest we're the wise, older ones that perceive that that's cruel, that that's mean, that that's not kind, and that's not loving.

And that attitude allows them to sit there and continue their stubborn defiance of God. You know, it's not without reason that Paul had to warn the Thessalonians, quench not the spirit. And what's the next statement? Say it louder, Joe.

Despise not prophecy. What kind of prophecy do you think men tend to despise? Oh, no. Prophecy means foretelling the future.

You know, when someone stands up and they say in 10 years, we're going to see creatures from Mars bringing us a New Testament. No, that's not what he's talking about. Who prophesies? Prophets.

Let's see, who were the prophets? It says that no Scripture is subject to private interpretation, but holy men of God spake as they were carried along by how? By who? What? The Holy Spirit. You mean not the same Holy Spirit we have? Because he certainly doesn't. He certainly never expresses himself in an angry or wrathful way.

Not the Holy Spirit we have. I mean, that was certainly not the same spirit of God in those prophets that we have. No way.

Because we know. We've learned that the Holy Spirit is gentle. We know that the Holy Spirit just expresses Himself in a new way.

Do we? Do we really know that? Well, how about this? Have you ever thought that maybe Satan might appear as a messenger of light? How do you think light appears to everybody? Pleasant? Friendly? Warm? And what if Satan, just to cut out the ministry of reproof in the church, blesses us with this revelation that the Holy Spirit doesn't speak like Isaiah spoke. The Holy Spirit doesn't speak like Jeremiah. He doesn't speak like Malachi or Ezekiel or Habakkuk.

But I thought the Scripture says that they spoke by the Holy Spirit. And I thought there was another man so filled with the Holy Spirit that he was actually filled with the Holy Spirit from... From where? From his mother's womb. Do you think the Holy Spirit spoke through him? Was he gentle? Did the Holy Spirit express God's kindness and His love for Israel? Wasn't He tender with them? You brood of vipers.

Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? My brethren. You know, I'm being a little facetious, but I'm trying to expose a lie that this messenger of light has done to God's people to cause them to despise the needed ministry of prophecy. Why were the prophets needed in Israel? Because Israel had rejected the law of God.

Does God want to send prophets? No. God would rather lead every one of us by how? His Holy Spirit. But God's a loving Father.

And I don't know about you guys, but when my children were not wise and they were persistent in doing something that I felt was not good, that if they continued in it and it went even further along, you know, they sassed mom a little bit. If I saw that attitude, I'm sorry, I just went and I just grabbed them. I just grabbed them and I intentionally... Intentionally, I was mean.

I used a rod. You know, Jesus says, I will strike the earth with what? The rod of my mouth. But somehow in the church, that's not appropriate anymore.

That's not the kind of meetings we enjoy. We don't enjoy. We don't enjoy.

I mean, after all, I mean, we need prophets on the street. I mean, after all, isn't that where judgment should begin where all the wicked people are out there? What now? No, no, no, no, no. You misunderstood.

I'm talking about judgment. I'm talking about judgment. Now, judgment must begin out there where the wicked people are.

But brothers and sisters, you laugh and you shake your head, but think, has the enemy been deceiving us? Ask yourself, do you enjoy it? Do you enjoy it? Do you enjoy it? I don't. Do you enjoy seeing God spank his people? You know, doesn't the Scripture say, no discipline seemeth joyful wind in the present. I don't think any of my children ever had the privilege of enjoying a spanking.

But you know what the Bible says? Punish your son with the rod and do not be a willing party to his death. So in my mind, he who loves his son is the one who disciplines his son. But he who spares the rod is the one who hates his son.

Because, you know, we have this false mentality. And I want to read it to you. I want to express it in the book of Proverbs.

Turn to Proverbs 11. We'll go back to numbers. I'm not quite finished.

But in Proverbs chapter 11, verse 30. Now I'm going to read it in the King James. I'd like someone to read it.

I mean, I'm going to read it in the NIV. I would like someone to read it in the King James. And then I want to actually translate it from the Septuagint.

Proverbs 11.30 in the NIV says, The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life and he who wins souls is wise. Someone want to read it from the King James, please. Okay.

Now, the reason I'm going to have to say this, if you understand how many times the Septuagint is quoted in the New Testament, you'll find that this is very interesting from the Septuagint. It reads quite differently. The Old Testament is written in three languages, Hebrew, Aramaic, and they also made a copy of it in Greek.

It's called the Septuagint. The Greek version, the Septuagint, reads this way, the same verse. The fruit of righteousness germinates unto life but a lawless souls will be borne away before their time.

You see how they can translate that the he who wins souls is wise in Hebrew? In the Greek, it's a little bit more specific. Lawless souls will be borne away before their time. Let me tell you the lie that many of us have been operating under.

You think you have a lot of time. You think your children will grow up out of their rebellion. Let me tell you, children don't grow up out of rebellion.

They repent out of it. You understand that? There are young men here not even afraid to curse their father. You know what the Bible said in the Old Testament? If a young man cursed his father, his eyes would be pecked out in the valley.

And we have young men sitting right here so bold and brazen they can curse their father directly. Because they don't fear God. And you know why they don't fear God? Because parents, you haven't taught them the fear of God because you don't have the fear of God.

And that lack of fear is going to be the damnation of their soul. You're going to piece them right into hell. You know the most merciful thing for God to do is to turn a wicked man from his wicked ways.

Can God show mercy to the wicked? The Scripture says there is no hope for the wicked. He must repent. Of his wickedness.

He must leave his simple ways to live. He must humble himself in order to receive grace. And if you or I do not realize that this lawless one might be born away out of their season.

Doesn't it say that the days of the wicked are what? They're cut short. And to think about how Satan comes along and how he tries to undermine God's very loving attempt. When God tries to love people, what does he want to do? He seeks to reprove them.

He seeks to expose their heart. He seeks to challenge them and show them you are living in rebellion. You're stubborn.

You're proud. You're abusive. Repent.

The wrath of God is on you. It's not out there someday. He that hath the Son hath life.

He that hath not the Son what? Hath not life. And the wrath of God abides on him presently. So the person pleading with their soul to leave the state of wrath that they're on is undermined by the loving older one who said that's mean.

That's unkind. I'll tell you, God will decide who has the real unkind one. God will decide who's the real unkind one.

Because there are young men and young women in danger of eternal damnation, separation from God. And you know what happens when God burdens someone for the true state of their souls? Older brothers come alongside and say, this is not good. We don't enjoy this.

This doesn't edify us. God have mercy. God have mercy.

Is it sad? For any of us to give the impression that the urgency of the hour to repent is not immediately, we do not understand the gospel. We don't understand the wrath of God. Today.

Today if you hear his voice, what? Let's go back and finish, okay? Number 16. You think that story would be over? Wouldn't you? Well, we are. The earth is opened up.

It swallowed all the families of Dathan and Abiram, their whole families, all their tents, everything they own has gone down alive into hell. Fire from the Lord has come out and consumed 250 men. There's nothing but a pile of ashes and censers sitting there.

And the story's not over. Not over. Look in verse 41.

So the next day, the whole Israelite community, what do they do? They still don't get it. Now whose fault is it? Still Moses' fault? They're all still... Now the whole community. I mean, they've gone through this horrific stoning of someone who's been a Sabbath breaker.

Entire families have swallowed up by this guy who must be some kind of magician or something. This cruel hearted bigot and his brother. I mean, innocent little women and children have gone to hell.

And men, princes in the community, handpicked leaders, they're dead. So they come and say, you, you've killed the Lord's people. Verse 42, And when the assembly gathered in opposition to Moses and Aaron and turned toward the tent of meeting, suddenly the cloud covered it and the glory of the Lord appeared.

Then Moses and Aaron went in front of the tent of the meeting and the Lord said to Moses, Get away from this assembly so I can put an end to them at once. You realize this is the fourth time God has said this about this assembly? And every time, the only reason that this assembly still exists is because of Moses. And the oldest people in the community, the most respected people in the community think he's the problem.

Isn't that clear from the past? Do y'all see this? I'm not making this up, am I? So when the assembly gathered in opposition to Moses and Aaron, verse 32, and turned toward the tent of meeting, suddenly the cloud covered it and the glory of the Lord appeared. Then Moses and Aaron went to the front of the tent of meeting and the Lord said to Moses again, Get away from this assembly so I can put an end to them at once. And they fell face down again.

What else can they do? What else can they do? Now the whole community, now it's a hundred percent. I wonder where Joshua is. When it says the whole community, it must be, we have to kind of read between the lines here.

I don't think Joshua and Caleb, I sure hope they're not involved in this. But it says here the whole community. They probably were not involved in this.

But anyway, they fall face down and listen, Moses immediately, Moses knows the heart of God. Now this time, God has not said anything. But Moses knows God.

Now what is, Moses had been figuring out what God's doing by now. Moses knowing that God is trying to rid himself of the constant grumbling and murmuring among the Israelites. So they murmur again and Moses immediately has a sense of the imminent danger.

You know what Moses knows about God that some of us need to wake up to? God is severe. God is severe. Behold the kindness and the severity of God.

Kindness to you. Severity to them. But that kindness is to you is provided that what? That you continue in His kindness.

Otherwise, you too should be cut off. Everyone is only cut off because of unbelief. Everyone in this story was cut off because they did not believe Moses was God's hand-picked man.

They did not believe that God had told Moses to stone that Sabbath breaker, to have everyone involved. They did not believe that it was Moses had nothing to do with his own calling. He had nothing to do with

errands being chosen.

That he had nothing to do with these things. Moses knew that. So Moses knows that the people's anger and their grumbling and murmuring is against God.

And he knows God's severity. And he tells Aaron, you better hurry up. You better get a sensor.

You better put smoke on it. And you better run because wrath from God is going to break out. The wrath of God is about to happen.

And Aaron literally has to run because a wave of death has started to go to the community. And he eventually gets in front of the wave of death. And he stops the plague.

But not before 14,700 people died. Did they die simply for not understanding that it wasn't Moses? Do we understand? Oh, before I finish that, I am finished. Look at the epitaph, the end of this story.

Verse 49, it's 14,700 people died from the plague in addition to those who had died because of, who's mentioned? One man. I said that I would end and I will. And for all of us, Paul said there was something unique about this man's name.

You know what's unique about his name? You know what his name means in Hebrew? It means ice. Why is that significant? You think it's without accident that the Scripture says above all else, have fervent charity in your heart for the brethren. Watch and see.

Watch and see who has a spirit of envy. Watch and see who has a spirit of being passed over. Watch and see and see if it will not produce coolness towards their brothers and see if it won't lead to a spirit of rebellion breaking out amongst the fellowship.

God wants to instruct us. In this book 16, in this story, what was the instruction to everyone who wanted to save their lives? The instruction is the same. Move away from those who have coldness in their hearts toward their brothers.

Move away from the murmurers and the complainers. Move away from those who are accusing God's servants of being hard and being wrong. Move away from them.

Save yourself. Okay, let's pray.

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