



A Worship Study Guide for Individuals, Groups and Families: For the week of February 25, 2018

Note to Discussion Leaders: Have members read the Bible passage in the group meeting. This is a “worship discussion” guide, and our reflections and applications are grounded in Scripture. Read through this guide before meeting with the group. You do not need to work through the whole guide. Decide which points would be most helpful for the time of meeting together, and use them as a starting point for your time together.

Numbers 16:1-50 “Between the Dead & the Living”

- **Sinners need salvation. However, as sinners we try to make that salvation ourselves. What are some of the self-driven strategies we use to manage our sin?**

¹ Now Korah the son of Izhar, son of Kohath, son of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, and On the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men. ² And they rose up before Moses, with a number of the people of Israel, 250 chiefs of the congregation, chosen from the assembly, well-known men. ³ They assembled themselves together against Moses and against Aaron and said to them, “You have gone too far! For all in the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the LORD?” ⁴ When Moses heard it, he fell on his face, ⁵ and he said to Korah and all his company, “In the morning the LORD will show who is his, and who is holy, and will bring him near to him. The one whom he chooses he will bring near to him. ⁶ Do this: take censers, Korah and all his company; ⁷ put fire in them and put incense on them before the LORD tomorrow, and the man whom the LORD chooses shall be the holy one. You have gone too far, sons of Levi!” ⁸ And Moses said to Korah, “Hear now, you sons of Levi: ⁹ is it too small a thing for you that the God of Israel has separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to himself, to do service in the tabernacle of the LORD and to stand before the congregation to minister to them, ¹⁰ and that he has brought you near him, and all your brothers the sons of Levi with you? And would you seek the priesthood also? ¹¹ Therefore it is against the LORD that you and all your company have gathered together. What is Aaron that you grumble against him?”

- **Korah was a Levite who led the rebellion against Moses & Aaron described in this chapter. The Levites were worship assistants to Aaron & Israel’s other priests. What was Korah’s complaint against Moses & Aaron? (3)**
- **How did Moses respond to Korah’s complaint? (4-11)**
- **Why did Moses call for Korah and his company to come before the LORD in worship?**
- **Sin will make us proud & petty. How have you been tempted to grasp after status & glory that God has not given you?**

¹² And Moses sent to call Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, and they said, “We will not come up. ¹³ Is it a small thing that you have brought us up out of a land flowing with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, that you must also make yourself a prince over us?” ¹⁴ Moreover, you have not brought us into a land flowing with milk and honey, nor given us inheritance of fields and vineyards. Will you put out the eyes of these men? We will not come up.” ¹⁵ And Moses was very angry and said to the LORD, “Do not respect their offering. I have not taken one donkey from them, and I have not harmed one of them.”

- **Dathan and Abiram were leaders in the tribe of Reuben who joined Korah’s rebellion. What was their complaint against Moses?**
- **What was their unique twist on Israel’s history?**
- **Sin will make you forget God’s faithfulness & we are tempted to take matters into our own hands. How have you been tempted to forget God’s faithfulness this week?**

¹⁶ And Moses said to Korah, “Be present, you and all your company, before the LORD, you and they, and Aaron, tomorrow. ¹⁷ And let every one of you take his censer and put incense on it, and every one of you bring before the LORD his censer, 250 censers; you also, and Aaron, each his censer.” ¹⁸ So every man took his censer and put fire in them and laid incense on them and stood at the entrance of the tent of meeting with Moses and Aaron. ¹⁹ Then Korah assembled all the congregation against them at the entrance of the tent of meeting. And the glory of the LORD appeared to all the congregation.

²⁰ And the LORD spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying, ²¹ “Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment.” ²² And they fell on their faces and said, “O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, shall one man sin, and will you be angry with all the congregation?” ²³ And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²⁴ “Say to the congregation, Get away from the dwelling of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.”

²⁵ Then Moses rose and went to Dathan and Abiram, and the elders of Israel followed him. ²⁶ And he spoke to the congregation, saying, “Depart, please, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest you be swept away with all their sins.” ²⁷ So they got away from the dwelling of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. And Dathan and Abiram came out and stood at the door of

their tents, together with their wives, their sons, and their little ones. ²⁸ And Moses said, “Hereby you shall know that the LORD has sent me to do all these works, and that it has not been of my own accord. ²⁹ If these men die as all men die, or if they are visited by the fate of all mankind, then the LORD has not sent me. ³⁰ But if the LORD creates something new, and the ground opens its mouth and swallows them up with all that belongs to them, and they go down alive into Sheol, then you shall know that these men have despised the LORD.”

³¹ And as soon as he had finished speaking all these words, the ground under them split apart. ³² And the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, with their households and all the people who belonged to Korah and all their goods. ³³ So they and all that belonged to them went down alive into Sheol, and the earth closed over them, and they perished from the midst of the assembly. ³⁴ And all Israel who were around them fled at their cry, for they said, “Lest the earth swallow us up!” ³⁵ And fire came out from the LORD and consumed the 250 men offering the incense.

³⁶ Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ³⁷ “Tell Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest to take up the censers out of the blaze. Then scatter the fire far and wide, for they have become holy. ³⁸ As for the censers of these men who have sinned at the cost of their lives, let them be made into hammered plates as a covering for the altar, for they offered them before the LORD, and they became holy. Thus they shall be a sign to the people of Israel.” ³⁹ So Eleazar the priest took the bronze censers, which those who were burned had offered, and they were hammered out as a covering for the altar, ⁴⁰ to be a reminder to the people of Israel, so that no outsider, who is not of the descendants of Aaron, should draw near to burn incense before the LORD, lest he become like Korah and his company—as the LORD said to him through Moses.

- **What judgment was given to the households of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram? Why?**
- **What judgment was given to the 250 offering fire in their censers before God? Why?**
- **What became of the censers of those consumed by fire? Why?**

⁴¹ But on the next day all the congregation of the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and against Aaron, saying, “You have killed the people of the LORD.”

- **How does Israel react to God’s judgments?**
- **Sin will make you blind. What did Israel fail to see? When does your vision of God at work grow dim?**

⁴² And when the congregation had assembled against Moses and against Aaron, they turned toward the tent of meeting. And behold, the cloud covered it, and the glory of the LORD appeared. ⁴³ And Moses and Aaron came to the front of the tent of meeting, ⁴⁴ and the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ⁴⁵ “Get away from the midst of this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment.” And they fell on their faces. ⁴⁶ And Moses said to Aaron, “Take your censer, and put fire on it from off the altar and lay incense on it and carry it quickly to the congregation and make atonement for them, for wrath has gone out from the LORD; the plague has begun.” ⁴⁷ So Aaron took it as Moses said and ran into the midst of the assembly. And behold, the plague had already begun among the people. And he put on the incense and made atonement for the people. ⁴⁸ And he stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stopped. ⁴⁹ Now those who died in the plague were 14,700, besides those who died in the affair of Korah. ⁵⁰ And Aaron returned to Moses at the entrance of the tent of meeting, when the plague was stopped.

- **Aaron is given a remarkable ministry as the High Priest of Israel. What about his ministry strikes you?**
- **Aaron’s temporary ministry as High Priest points us to the permanent ministry of Jesus, our Great High Priest. What are some of the ways Jesus’ ministry is greater than Aaron’s?**
- **Take time to pray together. Thank God for the ministry of Jesus for His people.**

Sermon Notes

This week, Kevin Greene preached on [Numbers 16:1-50](#).

More Rebellion

- Numbers 16 is used as warning in the Old Testament (Psalm 106:16-18) and New Testament (Jude 11)
- What do sinners need?

Sin makes us Proud (1-11)

- Korah grasps after God & builds an alliance with leaders from the tribe of Reuben: “You have gone too far! For all in the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them.” (3)
- Korah is proud & petty, and accuses Moses of the same
- We are a kingdom of priests (Exodus 19:6; I Peter 2:5), but not autonomous
- “The one whom he chooses he will bring near to him” (5)
- “Is it too small a thing for you?” (9)
- Have you been tempted to grasp after status & glory that God has not given you?

Sin makes us Forget (12-15)

- Dathan & Abiram rewrite the history: "Is it a small thing that you have brought us up out of a land flowing with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, that you must also make yourself a prince over us?" (13)
- Sin twists our view of reality & we take matters into our own hands
- Have you forgotten that God is good & faithful?

God must deal with Sin (16-40)

- The Grave (Sheol) & The Fire
- The Sons of Korah seem to have taken this warning to heart (Numbers 26:11); Gatekeepers, Singers and Musicians in the Temple
- "I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness" (Psalm 84:10)
- Redemption: censers salvaged and pounded into a memorial (37)

Sin makes us Blind (41)

- Israel cannot see God cannot learn from Korah's rebellion: "You have killed the people of the LORD."
- Has your vision of God at work grown dim?

Aaron, the High Priest (42-50)

- Aaron was a rebel, now he stands in the gap. He knows sinners. He lost two sons (Nadab & Abihu, Leviticus 10:1-3)
- "Take your censer" (46). What kind of risk would this be? He just saw 250 consumed by fire.
- Aaron "stood between the dead and the living" (48)

Jesus, our Great High Priest

- Sinners need Jesus
- Jesus knows & intercedes for sinners
- "Upon a life I did not live, Upon a Death I did not die, Another's Life; Another's Death: I stake my whole eternity." (Bonar)
- Jesus went down to Sheol. The plague was stopped.
- Jesus suffered the burning fire of God's wrath. God's justice is satisfied.

*Questions about this week's study guide? Contact Kevin Greene, kevin@wepc.org
To hear sermons and access past study guides visit www.wepc.org/archivedsermons*