

"YOU SHALL BE MY PEOPLE"

Wandering in the Wilderness

Lesson 9

December 13

We've listened in and watched as the children of Israel struggled with cravings and unmet expectations. We've heard them wrestle with whether or not the LORD really meant what he said. As they wander in the wilderness, **Numbers 16** contains a powerful reminder:

"...that no outsider, who is not of the descendants of Aaron, should draw near to burn incense before the LORD, lest he become like _____ and his company." (16:40)

So who was Korah and what was the problem?

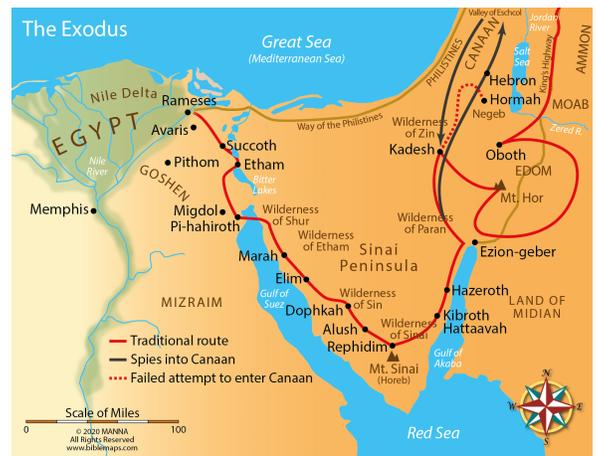
Now Korah the son of Izhar, son of Kohath, son of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, and On the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men. And they rose up before Moses, with a number of the people of Israel, _____ chiefs of the congregation, chosen from the assembly, well-known men. They assembled 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 _____ above the assembly of the LORD?" (16:1-3)

What these men failed to realize is, they were actually rebelling against the LORD (16:11) and the consequences turned out to be terrible.

In **Numbers 21**, as they were going around the land of Edom, "the people became _____ on the way. And the people spoke against God and against Moses, 'Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we loathe this _____ food' (21:4-5). And the consequences were terrifying. "The LORD sent fiery _____ among the people, and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died" (21:6).

Finally, in **Numbers 22**, as the people of Israel camped in the plains of Moab, the Moabite king Balak sent a message to a man named Balaam: "Behold, a people has come out of Egypt, and it covers the face of the earth. Now come, curse them for me. Perhaps I shall be able to fight against them and drive them out" (22:11-12). Things don't turn out the way Balak had hoped as Israel is blessed rather than cursed, but in **Numbers 25**, we find the people once again wandering dangerously away from God and his will. The Moabites "invited the people to the sacrifices of their _____, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. So Israel yoked himself to Baal of Peor" (25:2) and the consequences were devastating.

Throughout this study, we've reminded ourselves of what the LORD wanted (Lev 19:2; 26:11-12). But the people had a long way to go. What can we learn? Let's talk about it...



For Class & Family Discussion:

- Back in **Numbers 16**, what was the big deal with Korah wanting to be a high priest like Aaron? If he really wanted to and thought that the LORD would be okay with it, why not?
- What happened in **Numbers 16:28-35** as a result of Korah's rebellion?
- Korah is referenced in the New Testament book of **Jude 11**. Looking around at the surrounding context of that verse, what does the Holy Spirit still want us to see and understand?
- In **Numbers 21:4-5**, how did the people get themselves in trouble? What did the LORD do as a result?
- What happens in **Numbers 21:7**? What does the LORD have Moses do as a remedy?
- In **John 3:12-14**, as Jesus talks with a Pharisee named Nicodemus, he refers back to **Numbers 21** and makes a really important connection. What does the Son of God want us to see and understand?
- In **Numbers 22**, Balaam seems to have a heart set on money, rather than God's strict instructions. In **22:22-35**, what does it take to "open the eyes" of Balaam?
- Once again, this Old Testament example also shows up in the New Testament—**2 Peter 2:15**, **Jude 11**, and **Revelation 2:14**. What does the Holy Spirit still want us to see and understand?
- These are some ugly episodes in Israel's long journey to the Promised Land. What do we need to take away from these few chapters?