



## **Parasha Korach**

**June 12, 2021**

*Torah:* Numbers 16:1-18:32

*Haftarah:* 1Samuel 11:14-12:22

*Ketuvim Shlichim:* 2Timothy 2:8-21

*Shabbat Shalom Mishpacha!* The events of today's *parasha*, *Parasha Korach*, seem to be a continuation of the rebellion which began following the evil report of the ten spies who were sent to reconnoiter Canaan. Now, just a few days after that happened, there is still unrest in the camp and even open rebellion against ADONAI's anointed leaders, Moses and Aaron. At first glance, these events of Israel in the wilderness do not seem to have application for us today, but in actuality this event and others in the *Torah* have been given to us as examples. King Solomon said: 9 "What has been is what will be, and what has been done will be done again. There is nothing new under the sun" (Ecclesiastes 1:9 TLV). This especially applies to what is in human hearts. What happened 3300 years with *Korach* and his followers has happened over and over again. We all have or have had some of these same evil intentions like the ones that *Korach* had in our hearts? I'm referring specifically to rebellion. I think that we could all answer honestly that each of us has some of this in us and at some point have even acted rebelliously.

What some call "the Old Testament" is important for us today and not just for history. To us, it is the *Tanakh*, the Hebrew Bible. Many have a negative opinion of the one whom they call "the G-d of the Old Testament," especially when they read events like these that we are discussing today. But, reading and understanding the *Tanakh*, and especially *Torah*, the Five Books of Moses, helps us to understand who ADONAI is and an understanding of His nature, not that we can understand Him completely. But, we learn enough about Him to know that He created mankind out of the great and overflowing love that He, Himself, is. He created a people to love, all of the people of the earth. He loves us all equally. His choice of Israel, the descendants of Abraham, was a further expression of that love. He chose Israel to serve Him as priests to the other nations and as His priests, to reveal Him, G-d, ADONAI, to every other people group in the earth. The people of Israel, the Jews of today, still have that priestly calling. They have revealed ADONAI as a G-d of love through *Torah*, the five books of Moses, and all the rest of the Hebrew Bible, the *Tanakh*. And, ADONAI has also been revealed as a G-d who loves us through the writings of Yeshua's Jewish disciples. The whole Bible was written by men, but everything written was inspired by ADONAI and all of our modern Bible, Genesis through Revelation is His Word. And His word reveals His great love for us.

Because He is love, we were created to love, not just our mates and family, but created to love our Creator. But, because forced love is not really love, He created us with a free will. We can choose to love Him or we can choose to reject Him. And, He has given us sufficient information in His Word to make a choice. We have the *Torah*, the five books of Moses, the *Nevi'im*, the Prophets and the *Ketuvim Shlichim*, the writings of Yeshua's disciples to guide us. It is the complete story of creation and the history of mankind with the Father.

We know that He loves us and wants us to come to Him. Yeshua, the Son of G-d sent to earth to represent Him said: 44 “No one can come to Me unless My Father who sent Me draws him—...” (John 6:44a TLV). Some people question as to whether ADONAI wants all to be saved or just some that He has chosen. Is it possible that a loving G-d who created us would not give us all the opportunity to come to Him? I believe that He draws us all. It is we who must open our hearts in order to hear Him. Speaking of ADONAI, *Sha'ul*, Paul, told Timothy: 4 “He desires all men to be saved and come into the knowledge of the truth.” (1Timothy 2:4 TLV). All men is pretty clear, isn't it? The underlying Greek word *anthrōpos* means men, but also humanity and mankind; women too. ADONAI's chosen doesn't mean those that He chose, but those who chose Him! Verses 5 and 6 go on to tell us that it was because ADONAI so much wanted us to choose Him, that Yeshua gave Himself as a ransom, the necessary sacrifice, so that all of us would know of ADONAI's great love for us. 5 “For there is one God and there is one Mediator between God and men—a human, Messiah Yeshua, 6 who gave Himself as a ransom for all—the testimony at the proper time” (1Timothy 4:5-6 TLV). We affirm this every *Shabbat*; we did today. Yeshua was given as a ransom because of ADONAI's, His Father's, great love. Is there any doubt that G-d has done everything possible to cause us to love Him and that He has not only given us the way, but shown us the way, the only way, to come to Him, through Yeshua. But we are not forced. Some people ask the question, “why would a loving G-d send people to Hell. The truth is that He doesn't send anyone to Hell. Having given us free will, He doesn't force us to come to Him. It is still our choice. We choose either G-d or Hell and a person who goes to Hell is by his choice, not ADONAI's. If a person does not know G-d and wants to know Him, he can. A prayerful calming of one's own spirit and waiting on G-d will prepare the person who sincerely seeks Him to feel and hear ADONAI's Spirit drawing him.

But, many people want G-d on their own terms. They want to decide what the rules are and how they will relate to Him. But it doesn't work that way. He is the Creator. He makes the rules; and we must follow them. Our *parasha* today makes it clear that ADONAI is the one who decides who will lead and who will follow and what the rules are for doing it.

*Korach*, *Dathan*, *Abiram* and *On* rebelled against Moses and brought with them 250 Israelite leaders who accused Moses and Aaron of exalting themselves above the other members of the congregation. Moses told them to bring their incense burners the next morning and ADONAI would reveal who is to serve Him in the Tabernacle, Aaron or one of these men. *Korach* was also of the Tribe of *Levi*, the tribe of the priests and the Levites and he seemed to think that it was he who should be High Priest and not Aaron. *Dathan*, *Abiram* and *On* were from the Tribe of *Rueben* and they, *Korach* and the 250 leaders from various tribes were challenging Moses' and Aaron's leadership. 8 Moses also said to *Korach*, “Listen now, sons of *Levi*! 9 Isn't it enough that the God of Israel has set you apart from the community of Israel to bring you near to Him to do the work of the Tabernacle of Adonai and to stand before the community to minister to them? 10 So He brought you close, along with all your fellow sons of *Levi*. But you are seeking the priesthood, too” (Numbers 16:8-10 TLV)! Moses said: “Your rebellion is really against ADONAI, against G-d.” Moses sent for *Dathan* and *Abiram* to come to the Tabernacle, but they would not come. Moses told *Korach* a second time to appear tomorrow along with all his followers. They were to put coals and incense in their censers and to come and present incense to ADONAI. Aaron would also present incense to ADONAI and ADONAI would choose between them.

The next morning *Korach* and his followers gathered at the entrance to the Tabernacle and the glory of ADONAI appeared to the whole group. ADONAI was very angry and told

Moses and Aaron to move away so that He could consume all of them at once. But Moses and Aaron interceded and cried out to Him not to do this. Then ADONAI told Moses to tell all of the congregation to move away from the tents of *Korach*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*. Moses went from the Tabernacle to their tents and told everyone to move away. He told the rebellion leaders that what was about to happen would prove that ADONAI had sent him to lead Israel and that the things which he, Moses, said and the rulings which he made were not from him, but from ADONAI. And then the ground split and swallowed *Dathan*, *Abiram*, and *Korach* and all of their families and possessions. Back at the Tabernacle, fire came out from ADONAI and burned up the 250 men who were waiting there with their incense burners. But that was not the end of it. You would think that after those frightening things happened that the people would have gotten the message. But the next day all of the people grumbled against Moses and Aaron and accused them of killing ADONAI's people. And as a crowd assembled and began to approach the Tabernacle, the cloud covered it and ADONAI's glory appeared. ADONAI told Moses and Aaron to move away so that He could consume all of them. Always the intercessor for his people, Moses quickly took action: 46 *Then Moses said to Aaron, "Take the censer, put into it fire from the altar and put in incense. Get going and hurry to the assembly and make atonement for them, because wrath has come out from Adonai and the plague has started."* 47 *Aaron did just as Moses had said, and ran into the middle of the assembly. Behold, the plague had already started among the people. But he offered the incense and made atonement for the people.* 48 *He stood between the dead and the living and the plague stopped.* 49 *However, there were 14,700 dead from the plague, besides those who died because of Korah* (Numbers 16:46-49 TLV). Many more than 14,700 would have died from this plague if Moses hadn't sent Aaron out to make atonement. All of these deaths were ADONAI's judgment against rebellion. But, He is a righteous judge and he must judge sin. He loved those people who died. And, He loves those who today reject His Son and He grieves over the eternal death which they have chosen.

As a side note, we see that On, a man of the Tribe of Reuben, was a part of the rebellion. We never hear from him after the initial rebellion. We don't know what happened to him. Possibly, he repented.

Because *Korach* rebelled against the leadership of Moses and Aaron, ADONAI destroyed all those who sided with him. Some were swallowed up by the earth and some were destroyed by fire. Their rebellion followed that which we read about last week in *Parasha Shelach*; the rebellion of the 10 spies and all of the people that sided with them against Joshua and Caleb. As Solomon said: "there is nothing new under the sun." Rebellion is as old as Cain, as old as the people who died in the great flood and as old as *Korach* and his followers.

What is rebellion? Is it an emotion or a sentiment, or is it something else? By definition, it is "the open resistance against the orders of an established authority." In the case of *Korach*, it began as an emotion within his own spirit, his heart, which progressed to the point of verbal proclamation of his dissatisfaction and then was passed on to those around him. At that point, his personal rebellion had become a movement. His initial rebellion drew others in and together they created a movement against G-d. They rejected ADONAI's choice of leaders because of what was in their hearts, jealousy and rebellion. The rebellion of *Korach* and his followers was a picture of much of what we see in the world today.

But is rebellion really the problem? It's like the old, old question, "which came first, the chicken or the egg?" Was rebellion first or was it something else? A related word is "lawlessness," acting without regard for the law. That ADONAI had appointed Moses and Aaron to lead Israel was law, law given by G-d. They had His authority over the group which

they led. Rebellion and lawlessness by *Korach* was acting against righteous authority. And anyone who acts in unlawful opposition to righteous authority, rebels; is a rebel. They are violators of the law, whether it be within a family, a government, or against spiritual authority.

Let's look at it on a spiritual level. It begins with sin. Sin is described in the Bible as transgression of the law of God: 4 *"Everyone practicing sin also practices lawlessness—indeed, sin is lawlessness"* (1John 3:4 TLV). I have read several different Bible commentators who said that there is a difference between sin and lawlessness. They say that a lawless person is one who has given himself or herself over completely to a sinful lifestyle. In their understanding, lawless people either do not believe in G-d or refuse to acknowledge His right to rule their lives. But, Scripture is very clear that that is not the case. "Sin is lawlessness" and lawlessness can occur even within those who profess to follow Yeshua.

Sin began with *HaSatan*, an angel who desired to be higher than ADONAI, his Creator. He brought sin to the human race in the Garden of Eden when he tempted Adam and Eve and enticed them to be like G-d: 5 *"For God knows that when you eat of it, your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil"* (Genesis 3:5 TLV). And sin which began with our ancestors has been passed down through all the generations of mankind. *Sha'ul* clarifies this for us: 12 *"So then, just as sin came into the world through one man and death through sin, in the same way death spread to all men because all sinned"* (Romans 5:12 TLV). We, Adam and Eve's descendants, inherited sin from them. In Romans 6:23, *Sha'ul* also tells us that "the wages of sin is death." What he means is that without the only righteous sacrifice, Yeshua, to save us, spiritual death is what happens to us when we die a human death. But even if we have trusted in Yeshua and been promised eternal life, we still can and do sin. And, when we sin, we are being lawless.

I am old enough to have been able to witness a very big change in the spirituality of the American people. At least, I have witnessed it in the south, the Bible belt. And, we have been blessed to live in this part of the world. When the majority of the world had already reverted to secularism, we continued to remain the Bible belt, a majority Christian area which faithfully continued going to church every Sunday. But that has changed. We are not like that anymore. When I was a child in the 1940s and a young person in the early 1950s things were much different. We went to church every Sunday. And not only that, but we didn't buy or sell on Sunday. We couldn't go to the grocery store or movies. They were closed. Why did we go to Sunday school and church every Sunday? It was because that's what the Bible taught us to do. Stores were closed because our governing officials believed the Bible and passed laws regulating what could be open. And when we did these things, we were being lawful, not lawless.

Our nation today is a picture of lawlessness. People shoot and kill people just because they anger them for some reason. Within the last week, we have seen a 6 year old California boy killed in a road rage shooting. A man jogging in Buckhead was wounded when a car pulled up and the driver shot him three times for no apparent reason. Thankfully, he survived. Tallahassee usually has at least one or two shootings and deaths every week. Sometimes, it is almost every day. That's happening in our small south Georgia, north Florida neighborhood. Think what is happening in Chicago, Baltimore and New York. It is greatly multiplied there and is happening all over our nation. This is lawlessness, "the open resistance against the orders of an established authority." And, that's just the tip of the iceberg. We live in a nation which is rapidly progressing toward loss of control.

Why is it that way? There are probably all sorts of reasons, but I can think of one really big one. The Church, the body of Messiah, has itself become lawless. It started in a small way forty or fifty years ago. People began dropping out of churches. One reason they gave was because there were so many hypocrites there. As more and more dropped out, it became a movement. The people who left later followed the example of the earlier ones. In 2020, church membership dropped below 50% in the United States for the first time in the eighty year history of tracking it. With greatly reduced church attendance already here, a recent survey tells that only 52% of those who are either not attending personally now or attending online, say they will go back to attending church after Covid is over. The already reduced attendance will be reduced by another 50%. I believe that the lawlessness within the Church has led the way to the present increased lawlessness of our nation. And, although Messianic Judaism is only an infinitesimal part of the whole of the body of Messiah, we are doing the same thing. That same lawlessness is found in our body.

King Saul was questioned by Samuel regarding his failure to carry out ADONAI's instructions to destroy the Amalekites. He made excuses. Samuel then said this to him: 23 "For rebellion is like the sin of divination and stubbornness is like iniquity and idolatry" (1Samuel 15:23 TLV). The sin of divination is also called sorcery or witchcraft. Rebellion is like it because of the spirit behind it. Pagan cultures practiced divination hoping to communicate with spirits that would provide them answers. ADONAI warned Israel that those practices were forbidden because He is their source. Our stubbornness, our refusal to follow ADONAI's Torah, is seen by Him as idol worship. The sin of rebellion is based on pride, human pride, which says that "I don't need you G-d. I can find answers without your help." People often don't realize that when they reject ADONAI's authority and direction, that their rejection is based upon a spirit similar to the one behind divination or witchcraft. It's interesting that iniquity, *aven* in Hebrew, אָוֶן, is translated "stubbornness" in the *Mechon Mamre* Hebrew Bible. We are stubborn and ADONAI equates our stubbornness with idol worship.

We do see a revival coming. It has been prophesied and it has been taught. I have said that I believe it is on our horizon. And, it seems very clear to me that the revival which many of us are seeing in our near future must have foundation. What will cause it. What is it to be based upon? Will it just happen? No, it won't. It will happen, but it must be based upon a turning away from the lawlessness which has so pervaded Yeshua's body of followers. We are praying for revival, but how will it come? Will it be a supernatural move of G-d, a supernatural outpouring out of His Spirit as a response to prayer? I don't believe that that is the way that it will happen. I very strongly believe that the coming revival will be based upon repentance within the body and a turning away from the lawlessness which is now so ingrained in both Church and Messianic Jewish bodies. Repentance must begin and then spread broadly throughout the body. Once Yeshua's body has turned away from lawlessness, then, ADONAI will pour out His *Ruach!*

What does a turning away from lawlessness mean? It will mean different things to the two primary groups of Yeshua's followers. The leadership of the Church and individual churches will have to decide what a turning away from lawlessness means to them. It is very obvious that what it means to obey G-d has drastically changed from the Church's former position. And, through the guidance of the Holy Spirit they will have to determine what a return to lawfulness means.

What it means to Messianic Judaism will also have to be determined by its leaders. But, what it means to us who profess to follow *Torah* is a much clearer picture. We must just do it! We understand G-d's laws, His *Torah*, and already believe it is for us today.

We can't leave *HaSatan* out of this picture. He and his demonic army are working overtime, particularly on those who are not following Yeshua. Prayer including the exhortation of Ephesians 6 is most important. 11 "Put on the full armor of God, so that you are able to stand against the schemes of the devil. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the worldly forces of this darkness, and against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 6:11-12 TLV). The devil, *HaSatan*, is the origin of all evil. And, he is the spirit behind the anti-messiah. John tells us that there were many anti-messiahs in his day, human beings who were formerly a part of their fellowship: 18 "Children, it is the last hour. Just as you heard that the anti-messiah is coming, even now many anti-messiahs have come—by this we know that it is the last hour. 19 They left us, but they didn't really belong to us. If they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us" (1John 2:18-19 TLV). There are some today who once were with us but left us and turned away from G-d and Yeshua. There is nothing new under the sun.

But John also speaks of "the anti-messiah." It is not a physical anti-messiah as some say, but a spirit which emanates from *HaSatan*. And this spirit is in the world today. It is particularly working among the unbelievers who are rapidly becoming what seems to be a majority in our nation. 22 "Who is the liar, if not the one who denies that Yeshua is the Messiah? This one is the anti-messiah—the one who denies the Father and the Son" (1John 2:22 TLV). That's been *HaSatan*'s plan from the beginning. He is the original rebel, the original lawless one. He exalts himself above ADONAI and seeks to destroy Yeshua's work among men.

We must also mention 2Thessalonians 2:1-12 which speaks of a lawless one who will be revealed. It is not the one whom many call the anti-christ. There is no physical anti-christ who will rule the earth in the last days. We have discussed these verses before and I am adding some additional information about them as an addendum to this written message on our website.

Rebellion, the spirit-child of lawlessness, begins in the human heart. It then progresses from one person to another until it becomes a movement, a movement of rebellion based upon lawlessness. This movement of lawlessness has progressed greatly in recent years among Yeshua's followers, movement away from commitment to non-commitment. Now is the time for repentance and a turning back to following ADONAI's specific directions for those who profess to be Yeshua's. And, revival will happen when the body of Messiah gets desperate enough with the situation around them to cry out to G-d and return.

For those of us who have been called into Messianic Judaism, our way is clear. We must just do what we say that we believe. Psalm 119, particularly the first stanza, tells us exactly what ADONAI wishes us to do. It is divided into 22 stanzas of eight verses each. An acrostic Psalm, the first letter of each stanza begins with one of the 22 letters of the Hebrew *alefbet* in order. The first verse begins with the letter *alef* as the first letter of the word *ashrei*, אֲשֶׁרִי. You all know this word which is usually translated happy, but sometimes, blessed as it is in the TLV. *Ashrei* is the same word which begins both verses 1 and 2 but is translated differently in each verse in the TLV. I have inserted the Hebrew for *ashrei* into this Psalm for clarification. 1 Blessed (אֲשֶׁרִי) are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the Torah of Adonai. 2 Happy (אֲשֶׁרִי) are those who keep His testimonies, who seek Him with a

*whole heart, 3 who also do no injustice, but walk in His ways. 4 You have commanded that Your precepts be kept diligently. 5 Oh that my ways were steadfast to observe Your decrees! 6 Then I would not be ashamed, when I consider all Your mitzvot. 7 I will praise You with an upright heart as I learn Your righteous judgments. 8 I will observe Your statutes. Never abandon me utterly (Psalm 119:1-8 TLV)! I have underlined eight words, *Torah*, testimonies, ways, precepts, decrees, *mitzvot*, judgments, and statutes. The psalmist used eight different words to describe what ADONAI wants us to do. We are to return. Great return, great repentance, has happened before and it will happen again. There is nothing new under the sun! Revival is coming! It will come when the people come back to ADONAI and say “we have turned away from your Word and we repent! *Shabbat shalom!*”*

Addendum A- “2Thessalonians 2: The Man of Lawlessness).

*1 Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, concerning the coming of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah and our gathering together to Him, 2 not to get shaken out of your mind or disturbed—either by a spirit or a word or a letter as if through us—as though the Day of the Lord has come. 3 Let no one deceive you in any way, for the Day will not come unless the rebellion comes first and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the one destined to be destroyed. 4 He opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he sits in the Temple of God, proclaiming himself that he is God. 5 Don’t you remember that when I was still with you I was telling you these things? 6 And you know what now holds back, for him to be revealed in his own time. 7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already operating; only there is one who holds back just now, until he is taken out of the way. 8 Then the lawless one will be revealed. The Lord Yeshua will slay him with the breath of His mouth and wipe him out with the appearance of His coming. 9 The coming of the lawless one is connected to the activity of satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, 10 and with every kind of wicked deception toward those who are perishing. They perish because they did not accept the love of the truth so as to be saved. 11 For this reason God sends them a delusional force, to lead them to believe what is false, 12 so that they may be judged—all those who did not believe the truth but delighted in wickedness (2Thessalonians 2:1-12 TLV).*

The man of lawlessness in the TLV is called the man of sin in the KJV, but man of lawlessness in most every other version. Can we assume that the “man of lawlessness” of 2Thessalonians 2 is the anti-christ of Dispensationalism? No, we can’t. To begin with, there are only four mentions of the anti-messiah in all of Scripture and they are all in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> John. And, these verses in 2Thessalonians don’t tell us that “the man of lawlessness” is the anti-messiah. I personally believe that this “man” is a personification of a worship system and not a man at all. Adolph Hitler and Mao Zedong come to mind as possible candidates but they were not associated with a worship system. Mohammed, the false prophet of Allah, and Allah, *HaSatan* himself, get my vote. Allah, the false god of Islam, symbolically sits in the Temple of God in the form of the buildings, the Dome of the Rock and the Mosque of Omar. Their presence is the Abomination of Desolation spoken of by both Daniel and Yeshua. Their presence makes the mount desolate for the Jews and the rebuilding of the Temple. “The man of lawlessness” of 2Thessalonians 2 is the personification of Islam which Yeshua will destroy when He returns.

Dispensationalism says that “the man of lawlessness is the anti-christ, a physical man who will appear in the last days and rule the world. A part of their evidence is Daniel 9:27. Can we insert “the anti-christ” in place of “he” in the following verse? 27 “Then he **(the anti-christ)** will make a firm covenant with many for one week, but in the middle of the week he

*will put an end to sacrifice and offering*" (Daniel 9:27 TLV). Supposedly, he does this in the rebuilt temple in the last days. But, we can't insert "anti-christ" in this verse because the "he" is Yeshua. Yeshua put an end to sacrifice and offering, that is, stopped the effectiveness of the sacrifices in the Temple, when he died on the stake in the middle of His last week on earth. Thereafter, only His sacrificial death was effective for sin.

The question is really this: Is Daniel 9:27, four mentions of anti-christ in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> John and the man of lawlessness in 2Thessalonians 2 enough to develop a doctrine about a physical anti-messiah coming to rule the world? My opinion is no. It has only been accepted by many Christians today because of the one hundred plus years addition of the non-scriptural teachings of Darby to the Scofield Bible (1909) and their continued emphasis by modern Dispensationists. This is not an attack on them. They are sincere Christians who really believe that this is true.

The primary reasons for rejecting Dispensationalism are (1) that Darby's theory is based almost completely upon the writings of two Jesuit priests, (2) Daniel 9:26 is incorrectly translated by Dispensationists, (3) the anti-christ mentioned by John is a spirit and not a man and (4) the man of lawlessness in 2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians is actually *HaSatan* in the guise of Allah (my interpretation), Islam personified. There is obviously much more to understand about the false theology of Dispensationalism. See Addendum A of *Parasha Ekev*, August 8, 2020 for additional information.