

Tree of Life Messianic Ministries

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Message 6-27-09
Korach-Korah (Bald)
Numbers 16:1-18:32
1 Samuel 11:14-12:22
2 Peter 1:16-19

Introduction

This week's portion Korach tells of the rebellion against the leadership of Moses and Aaron.

Numbers 18:20-32

20 And the LORD said to Aaron, "You shall have no inheritance in their land, neither shall you have any portion among them. I am your portion and your inheritance among the people of Israel. **21** "To the Levites I have given every tithe in Israel for an inheritance, in return for their service that they do, their service in the tent of meeting, **22** so that the people of Israel do not come near the tent of meeting, lest they bear sin and die. **23** But the Levites shall do the service of the tent of meeting, and they shall bear their iniquity. It shall be a perpetual statute throughout your generations, and among the people of Israel they shall have no inheritance. **24** For the tithe of the people of Israel, which they present as a contribution to the LORD, I have given to the Levites for an inheritance. Therefore I have said of them that they shall have no inheritance among the people of Israel." **25** And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **26** "Moreover, you shall speak and say to the Levites, 'When you take from the people of Israel the tithe that I have given you from them for your inheritance, then you shall present a contribution from it to the LORD, a tithe of the tithe. **27** And your contribution shall be counted to you as though it were the grain of the threshing floor, and as the fullness of the winepress. **28** So you shall also present a contribution to the LORD from all your tithes, which you receive from the people of Israel. And from it you shall give the LORD's contribution to Aaron the priest. **29** Out of all the gifts to you, you shall present every contribution due to the LORD; from each its best part is to be dedicated.' **30** Therefore you shall say to them, 'When you have offered from it the best of it, then the rest shall be counted to the Levites as produce of the threshing floor, and as produce of the winepress. **31** And you may eat it in any place, you and your households, for it is your reward in return for your service in the tent of meeting. **32** And

you shall bear no sin by reason of it, when you have contributed the best of it. But you shall not profane the holy things of the people of Israel, lest you die."

This is the tithing system the way it was given by the Almighty. The tithes of the people would be given to the Levites, the Levites who served the Levitical Priesthood of the line of Aaron. Many people are confused about the Levites because they tend to think that all Levites were priests when they were not. Only those of the line of Aaron were priests while the rest of the Levites were assigned to one of the two remaining sons of Aaron to help them with their duties in the Tabernacle. The Levites received cities in each of the territories of all twelve tribes and the land immediate adjacent to the cities. The people would give their tithes to the Levites who in turn would give 10% of their tithes to the Priests.

The Tabernacle and the Temple were supported by the half-shekel Temple tax that we read about in Matthew.

Matthew 17:24 When they had come to Capernaum, those who received the *temple* tax came to Peter and said, "Does your Teacher not pay the *temple* tax?" **25** He said, "Yes." And when he had come into the house, Yeshua anticipated him, saying, "What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth take customs or taxes, from their sons or from strangers?" **26** Peter said to Him, "From strangers." Yeshua said to him, "Then the sons are free. **27** "Nevertheless, lest we offend them, go to the sea, cast in a hook, and take the fish that comes up first. And when you have opened its mouth, you will find a piece of money; take that and give it to them for Me and you."

Tithing was not used to support the Levites or the Priests. They were to depend on the Children of Israel, those of the remaining 11 tribes. The Priests in turn were to depend upon the Levites. This was a system that caused the Children of Israel to rely on one another rather than on ourselves. Tithing today takes on a different form altogether and that is due to the fact that we have no functioning Temple since the Romans destroyed it in 70CE. Since the destruction of the Temple we have presented our tithes to the congregations that we have chosen to become a part of or lacking that we choose ministries to support. Some do all but I would present to you that our tithes should go to the congregations we are a part of and offerings should go to ministries we have chosen to give to.

There was a time in the history of Israel that the Temple stopped operating for a time because the people were not helping to support the Temple, the Levites or the Priests. In our day there is no functioning Temple or Priesthood. There will be a day when there will once again be a Temple where we can go to,

Ezekiel 44:9 "Thus says the Lord GOD: No foreigner, uncircumcised in heart and flesh, of all the foreigners who are among the people of Israel, shall enter my sanctuary. **10** But the Levites who went far from me, going astray from me after their idols when Israel went astray, shall bear their punishment. **11** They shall be ministers in my sanctuary, having oversight at the gates of the temple and ministering in the temple. They shall slaughter the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people, and they shall stand before the people, to minister to them. **12** Because they ministered to them before their idols and became a stumbling block of iniquity to the house of Israel, therefore I have sworn concerning them, declares the Lord GOD, and they shall bear their punishment. **13** They shall not come near to me, to serve me as priest, nor come near any of my holy things and the things that are most holy, but they shall bear their shame and the abominations that they have

committed. **14** Yet I will appoint them to keep charge of the temple, to do all its service and all that is to be done in it. **15** "But the Levitical priests, the sons of Zadok, who kept the charge of my sanctuary when the people of Israel went astray from me, shall come near to me to minister to me. And they shall stand before me to offer me the fat and the blood, declares the Lord GOD.

This passage is speaking about the third Temple which will be built in the last days prior to Yeshua's return. Sacrifices will take place once again in the Temple. Many Believers do not feel they will need to offer up sacrifices in the third Temple because of Yeshua. Yet nowhere does it say that the disciples of the Master stopped going to the Temple or offering sacrifices. In fact the evidence points in the opposite direction.

Acts 3:1 One afternoon at three o'clock, the hour of *minchah* prayers, as Kefa and Yochanan were going up to the Temple.

Acts 18:18 After this, Paul stayed many days longer and then took leave of the brothers and set sail for Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila. At Cenchreae he had cut his hair, for he was under a vow.

In the first passage we see that Peter (Kefa) and John (Yochanan) were in the Temple for afternoon prayer when an offering would be made by the Priests as part of their duty to the Almighty. In the second passage we see that Shaul (Paul) cut his hair because he was under a vow. Now what type of a vow would require Shaul to do this? Only a Nazirite vow would do this because when you are under a Nazirite vow you do not cut your hair for a specified period of time and then when the time is up you cut your hair and bring the hair to the Temple in Jerusalem where you made an offering. This is confirmed by James (Yaakov).

Acts 21:23 Do therefore what we tell you. We have four men who are under a vow; **24** take these men and purify yourself along with them and pay their expenses, so that they may shave their heads. Thus all will know that there is nothing in what they have been told about you, but that you yourself also live in observance of the Torah.

Shaul was being instructed to go to the Temple and take the four men with him, who were also under a Nazirite vow, and pay for the expenses associated with completing the vow. If Shaul no longer believed he was bound to the Torah he could have simply refused but he didn't – he agreed and went to the Temple and we know the rest of the story of what took place there.

The point to all of this is that tithing under Torah has not been done away with and neither has the taking of vows. The problem with vows since the destruction of the Temple is we cannot complete the vow because we cannot bring our offerings to the place where He chose to place His name but the day is coming when we will be able to follow in the footsteps of our Master – Yeshua.

1 Samuel 12:1-225

15 But if you will not obey the voice of the LORD, but rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then the hand of the LORD will be against you and your king. **16** Now therefore stand still and see this great thing that the LORD will do before your eyes. **17** Is it not wheat harvest today? I will call upon the LORD, that he may send thunder and rain. And you shall know and see that your wickedness is great, which you have done in the sight of the LORD, in asking for yourselves a king." **18** So Samuel called upon the LORD, and the LORD sent thunder and rain that day, and all the

people greatly feared the LORD and Samuel. **19** And all the people said to Samuel, "Pray for your servants to the LORD your God, that we may not die, for we have added to all our sins this evil, to ask for ourselves a king." **20** And Samuel said to the people, "Do not be afraid; you have done all this evil. Yet do not turn aside from following the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart. **21** And do not turn aside after empty things that cannot profit or deliver, for they are empty. **22** For the LORD will not forsake his people, for his great name's sake, because it has pleased the LORD to make you a people for himself.

What happens in this passage is very similar in tone to what happened at Mount Sinai when the Almighty gave the Torah to Israel.

Exodus 20:18 Now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid and trembled, and they stood far off **19** and said to Moses, "You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, lest we die." **20** Moses said to the people, "Do not fear, for God has come to test you, that the fear of him may be before you, that you may not sin."

The people have always been in fear of the Holy One of Israel but rather than this fear being a reverence for the Creator of the universe we have been afraid of Him and have needed an intermediary between us and Him or else we could die. The need for an intermediary is seen many times in Scripture. We see it with the Priesthood, the Angel of the Lord, the One who stood before Abram, and the One who stood at the top of the ladder in Jacob's dream, the man who wrestled with Jacob. The list goes on and on but I think you get my point – at least I hope you do? Yeshua stands between us and the Father – interceding on our behalf when the Adversary flings accusations against us but we need to remember that the Almighty also uses Satan to test our resolve to walk in the ways of the Holy One of Israel. The Torah is the rule book and Yeshua is our foundation. Upon these two the kingdom of the Almighty is being built one stone at a time just as Jerusalem was rebuilt.

2 Peter 1:16-19

16 For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. **17** For when he received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased," **18** we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain. **19** And we have something more sure, the prophetic word, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

They were on the holy mountain when the Almighty spoke with His Son. They were witnesses of what had happened – Peter (Kefa), James (Yaakov), and John (Yochanan). Isn't it amazing at how many things they were allowed to experience and until the day the Ruach HaKodesh came down in power to fill those gathered that day of Shavuot 2,000 years ago were they able to boldly go out and share their faith. This is what we all need in our lives today. We need a shot of the Ruach HaKodesh (the Holy Spirit) so we can become the witnesses of the Master that He desires us to be. Think about it my friends – the power these men and women of the Almighty possessed is ours for the asking if we step out in faith. I don't preach a power that will bring you power, wealth, material possessions or anything like that.

What we are promised is that we will have the power to go out and share our testimony of our personal experience with the Master. The Shaliach Shaul had his experience on the road to Damascus.

Acts 9:3 Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. **4** And falling to the ground he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" **5** And he said, "Who are you, Lord?" And he said, "I am Yeshua, whom you are persecuting. **6** But rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do." **7** The men who were traveling with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one. **8** Saul rose from the ground, and although his eyes were opened, he saw nothing. So they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. **9** And for three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank. **10** Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Here I am, Lord." **11** And the Lord said to him, "Rise and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul, for behold, he is praying, **12** and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight." **13** But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints at Jerusalem. **14** And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on your name." **15** But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. **16** For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name."

In verse 16 the Holy One says that Shaul will suffer greatly for the sake of His name. Being a talmid (student or disciple) of the Master is not an easy thing to do. It is not a walk in cool of the day in the Garden of Eden – it is a walk upon this earth that He has cursed because of our sin. When our parents, Adam and Chava, sinned against Him we sinned as well. As it was that day when Moses stood before the Children of Israel before his death he told them that they were not the only ones gathered there that day, that all of us were as well. In the days of our father and mother they did not sin against the Holy One on their own – we sinned with them. It was not an isolated incident that we read about in the pages of the Bible. All of our sin is joined together which is why the Cohen HaGadol (the High Priest) has to make atonement for us as a group on Yom Kippur and we have to make atonement for ourselves as individuals as well. Yeshua offered Himself up as our Passover (Pesach) sacrifice but it only works if we admit we are sinners. How could we be anything but sinners? There was only One who was found to be completely righteous.

Romans 5:18 Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. **19** For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. **20** Now the Torah came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, **21** so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Yeshua the Messiah our Lord.

O Holy One of Israel there are times when I can hold my head up, in the knowledge that I have done the right thing, even to my own hurt. O Almighty One let today be one of those times.

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Ardelle Brody [abrody@mchsi.com](posted on Mordecai's website along with his Torah commentary-an excellent woman's perspective)

May the Lord bless you and yours... *Mordecai Silver*

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