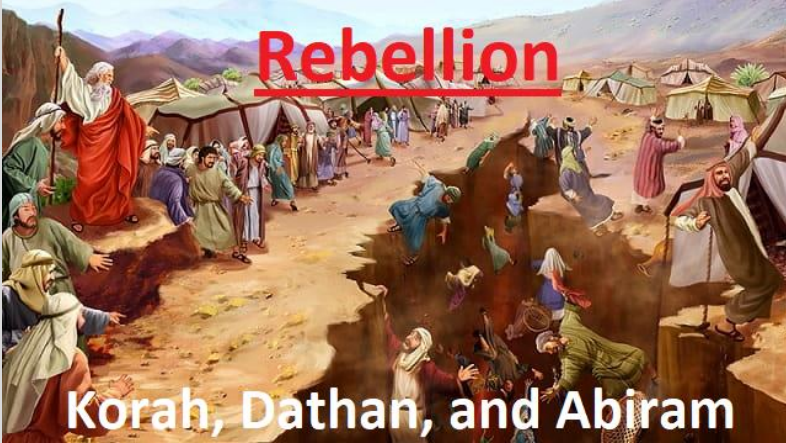


**Text: Numbers 16:1-35 NAU (New American Standard, 1995 Version)**

**Series: Making Our Sin Okay**



**Wednesday, February 24 at 11:00 & 7:00**

**Second Wednesday in Lent – 2021**

**Introduction:** Dear friends in Christ: Last Wednesday we focused on how temptation works. We learned that God does not tempt us, but He does **control the severity of our temptations** and **provide a way for us to escape**. We also learned about our natural tendency to justify our sins; in other words, **we know something is a sin, yet we are clever at coming up with reasons to make our sin seem okay**. In today's interesting true story, recorded in **Numbers 16**, let us notice how they *tried to make their rebellion seem right!*

- Rebellion:** <sup>1</sup> **Now Korah... with Dathan and Abiram... took action,** <sup>2</sup> **and they rose up before Moses, together with some of the sons of Israel, two hundred and fifty leaders of the congregation...** <sup>3</sup> **They assembled together against Moses and Aaron, and said to them, "You have gone far enough, for all the congregation are holy, every one of them...; so why do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the LORD?"** // What were those men really

saying: Regarding your leadership, Moses, ✦we don't like it **and** ✦we don't have to follow it – **because we are all equal, God has NOT chosen you over us!** Was that true?

- a. Burning bush – God spoke to Moses!
- b. “Let my people go!” – God through Moses to Pharaoh!
- c. Red Sea – God used Moses to lead the people to safety!
- d. Water from a rock – God used Moses!
- e. Ten Commandments – God gave them to Moses!
- f. Moses' shining face – From being in God's presence!  
***It is obvious that God chose Moses to be the leader!***

2. **Korah:** <sup>4</sup> When Moses heard *this*, he fell on his face; <sup>5</sup> and he spoke to Korah and all his company, saying, “Tomorrow morning the LORD will show who is His, and who is holy... <sup>6</sup> Do this: take censers [*pans for coals in the offering of incense*] for yourselves... <sup>7</sup> and put fire in them, and lay incense upon them in the presence of the LORD tomorrow; and the man whom the LORD chooses ***shall be the one who is holy.***” ... // The plan was simple; show up tomorrow with your ✦censers, ✦coals, and ✦incense; then the LORD will make His choice. **Since Korah felt okay with his rebellion, he was confident he would be chosen!** What about us, are we rebelling against God in some way right now? Have we convinced ourselves that it is okay?

3. **Dathan and Abiram:** <sup>12</sup> Then Moses sent a summons to Dathan and Abiram...; but they said, “We will not come up. <sup>13</sup> Is it not enough that you have brought us up out of a land flowing with milk and honey to have us die in the wilderness, but you would also lord it over us? ... We will not come up!” ... // Did you notice how twisted those rebels had become... calling Egypt, the place of their

slavery, “a land flowing with milk and honey”? When we justify our sins, *then our vision becomes distorted*; bad things look good, while good things look bad.

4. **Two Opposing Groups:** <sup>16</sup> Moses said to Korah, “You and all your company be present before the LORD tomorrow, both you and they along with Aaron.... <sup>19</sup> Thus Korah assembled all the congregation against [Moses and Aaron] at the doorway of the tent of meeting. // Both sides gathered because **both** were confident that they would be chosen. However, **the confidence** of Moses rested on God’s truth, of the others on their sinful hearts.
5. **Warning:** And the glory of the LORD appeared to all the congregation.... <sup>23</sup> Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>24</sup> “Speak to the congregation, saying, ‘Get back from around the dwellings of Korah, Dathan and Abiram.’” <sup>25</sup> Then Moses arose and went to Dathan and Abiram, with the elders of Israel following him, <sup>26</sup> and he spoke to the congregation, saying, “Depart now from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing that belongs to them, or you will be swept away in all their sin.” // Even those who followed the rebel leaders *were literally in grave trouble*. We may not be leaders, but who are we following, where are they leading us, should we repent?
6. **Proof:** <sup>27</sup> So they [listened and] got back from around the dwellings of Korah, Dathan and Abiram; and Dathan and Abiram came out *and* stood at the doorway of their tents, along with their wives and their sons and their little ones. <sup>28</sup> Moses said, “By this you shall know that the LORD has sent me to do all these deeds; for this is not my doing. <sup>29</sup> If these men die the death of all men..., *then* the LORD has not sent me. <sup>30</sup> But if... the ground opens its

mouth and swallows them up with all that is theirs, and they descend alive into Sheol [the dwelling place of the dead], then you will understand that these men have spurned the LORD." // What Moses said, no person could make that happen on demand; therefore, if it happens, it must be the LORD! The Bible proves itself to be from God Almighty through its prophecy and miracles. Therefore, let us put away every sin that rebels against God's Holy Word!

7. **Action:** <sup>31</sup> As he finished speaking all these words, the ground that was under them split open; <sup>32</sup> and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, and their households, and all the men who belonged to Korah with *their* possessions. <sup>33</sup> So they and all that belonged to them went down alive to Sheol; and the earth closed over them, and they perished from the midst of the assembly. <sup>34</sup> All Israel who *were* around them fled at their outcry... <sup>35</sup> Fire also came forth from the LORD and consumed the two hundred and fifty men who were offering the incense. // The LORD's choice was clear and thorough; *the evil leaders and followers were destroyed!*

### **Conclusion:**

- **Truth** – Those who rebel against the LORD will fail.
- **Relevance** – Do personal assessment and repentance.
- **Inspiration** – Go forward with agreement and peace.

**Let Us Pray:** Dear LORD, we are constantly being tempted to make our sins seem okay, so **show** us Your truth, **make** us sorry, **focus** us on Jesus, and **change** our ways *to Your glory!*