

**Wilderness Wandering: Hope for a Future Generation (1444–1408 BC)**

Numbers 15:1–31

**Law Concerning the Meal and Drink Offerings to be Added to Every Appropriate Animal Sacrifice**

1 Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,

2 “Speak to the Israelites and say to them, ‘When you come into the land of your dwellings that I *am about* to give to you,

3 you will make an offering by fire for Yahweh from the cattle or from the flock, a burnt offering or a sacrifice to fulfill a vow, or as a freewill offering or at your feasts, to make a fragrance of appeasement for Yahweh.

4 And the one who presents an offering for Yahweh, he will present a grain offering *of* finely milled flour; a tenth will be mixed with a fourth of the liquid measure *of* oil;

5 and you will add a fourth of wine for the libation upon the burnt offering, or to the sacrifice for each ram-lamb.

6 Or for the ram you will make a grain offering *of* two-tenths of finely milled flour mixed into a third of a liquid measure of oil.

7 You will present a third of the liquid measure of wine for the libation, a fragrance of appeasement for Yahweh.

8 When you prepare a bull as a burnt offering or a sacrifice to fulfill a vow or *a* fellowship offering for Yahweh,

9 you will present with the bull a grain offering of three-tenths *of* finely milled flour mixed with half a liquid measure of oil,

10 and you will present half a liquid measure of wine as a libation, as an offering made by fire, a fragrance of appeasement for Yahweh.

11 “ ‘This is how it should be done for each bull, or for the each ram, or for the small four-footed mammal, or ram-lambs, or goats.

12 According to the number that you prepare, so should you do to each according to their number.

**The Law Applies to Foreigners and Israelites Alike**

13 Every native must do these *things* to present an offering made by fire, a fragrance of appeasement for Yahweh.

14 If an alien dwells among you, or whoever *is* in your midst throughout your generations, and prepares an offering made by fire, a fragrance of appeasement for Yahweh, he should do as you do.

15 *For* the assembly, there will be one decree for you and for the alien who dwells *among you*; *it is* an eternal decree for *all* your generations. You as well as the alien will be before Yahweh.

16 There will be one law and one stipulation for you and for the alien dwelling among you.”

**Contribution of the First of the Dough**

17 Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,

18 “Speak to the Israelites and say to them, ‘When you come into the land to which I *am about* to bring you,

19 whenever you eat from the food of the land, you will lift up a contribution to Yahweh.

20 You must lift up a contribution of the first *batch* of your ring-shaped dough bread; you must lift it up as a contribution of the threshing floor.

21 You will give to Yahweh a contribution from the first of your dough throughout your generations.

**Atonement for Inadvertent Sin by the Community**

22 “ ‘But if you go astray and you do not follow all these commandments that Yahweh commanded to Moses,

23 all that Yahweh commanded you by the hand of Moses from the day that Yahweh commanded and beyond, throughout your generations,

24 and if it was done unintentionally without the knowledge of the community, then the entire community must prepare one young bull as a burnt offering, as a fragrance of appeasement for Yahweh, and its grain offering and its libation, according to the stipulation, and one male goat as a sin offering.

25 The priest will make atonement for all of the community of the Israelites, and they will be forgiven because it *was* unintentional; they will bring their offering, an offering made by fire for Yahweh, their sin offering before Yahweh for their unintentional sin.

26 All of the community of the Israelites will be forgiven, as well as the alien that dwells in their midst, because the whole community *was involved* in the unintentional wrong.

**Atonement for Inadvertent Sin by the Individual**

27 “ ‘If one person sins unintentionally, that person will present a female goat in its first year as a sin offering.

28 And the priest will make atonement for the person who sinned unintentionally before Yahweh, to make atonement for him, and he will be forgiven.

29 *For* the native among the Israelites and the alien that dwells in their midst, there will be one law for anyone who commits an unintentional wrong.

**Death Penalty for High-handed Sins**

30 But the one who acts presumptuously from among the native or alien blasphemes against Yahweh, and that person must be cut off from the midst of the people.

31 Because he despised the word of Yahweh and broke his command, that person will be surely cut off and bear the guilt.”

## Wilderness Wandering: Case Law—Capital Punishment for Sabbath Violation (1444–1408 BC)

Numbers 15:32–41

### A Man is Stoned for Working on the Sabbath

32 When the Israelites were in the desert, they found a man who was gathering wood on the day of the Sabbath.  
 33 The ones who found him gathering wood brought him to Moses, Aaron, and to all the community.  
 34 And they put him under watch because it was not made clear what should be done to him.  
 35 And Yahweh said to Moses, “Surely the man must be put to death by stoning him; all the community *must stone him* with stones from outside the camp.”  
 36 So the entire community brought him out to a place outside the camp, and they stoned him to death just as Yahweh commanded Moses.

### Tassels—A Visual Reminder to Serve Yahweh

37 Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,  
 38 “Speak to the Israelites, and tell them to make for themselves tassels on the hems of their garments throughout their generations and to put a blue cord on the tassel of the hem.  
 39 You will have a tassel for you to look at and remember all the commands of Yahweh and do them, and not follow after the unfaithfulness of your own heart and eyes,  
 40 so that you will remember and do all my commandments, and you will be holy for your God.  
 41 I *am* Yahweh your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God; I *am* Yahweh your God.”

## Wilderness Wandering: Korah Incites Rebellion (1444–1408 BC)

Numbers 16:1–17:11

### Korah Covets the Priesthood and Incites a Rebellion to Get It

16:1 Now Korah son of Izhar, son of Kohath, son of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram sons of Eliab, and On son of Peleth, the descendants of Reuben,  
 2 took two hundred and fifty men from the Israelites, leaders of the community summoned from the assembly, renowned men, and they confronted Moses.  
 3 They were assembled in front of Moses and Aaron, and they said to them, “You take too much upon yourselves! All of the community is holy, every one of them, and Yahweh *is* in their midst, so why do you raise yourselves over the assembly of Yahweh?”

### Moses Inquires of Yahweh (see Numbers 20:6)

4 When Moses heard *this*, he fell on his face.

### Moses Tells Korah Yahweh’s Decision

5 And he said to Korah and to his entire company, saying, “*Tomorrow* morning Yahweh will make known who *is* his and *who* is holy, and he will bring him near to him, whomever he chooses he will bring near to him. [\[2 Tim 2:19\]](#)  
 6 Do this: take for yourselves censers, Korah and all of your company;  
 7 tomorrow put fire in them and place incense on them before Yahweh; the man whom Yahweh chooses *will be* the holy *one*. You take too much upon yourselves, sons of Levi!”

### Moses Reveals the True Motive Behind Korah’s Rebellion

8 And Moses said to Korah, “Please listen, sons of Levi!  
 9 *Is it* too little for you that the God of Israel set you apart from the community of Israel to allow you to approach him to do the work of the tabernacle of Yahweh, to stand before the community to serve them?  
 10 He has allowed you to approach him, you with all your brothers, the descendants of Levi, but yet you also seek the priesthood.  
 11 Therefore you and your company that has banded together against Yahweh. What is Aaron that you grumble against him?”

### Moses Tries to Talk With Dathan and Abiram But They Refuse

12 Moses sent to call *for* Dathan and Abiram son of Eliab, but they said, “We will not come!  
 13 Is it too little that you have brought us from a land that flows with milk and honey to kill us in the desert, and that you also appoint yourself as a ruler over us?  
 14 Surely, you have not brought us to a land that flows with milk and honey, and you have not given us the inheritance of fields and a vineyard. Will you gouge out the eyes of these men? We will not come!”  
 15 Then Moses became angry, and he said to Yahweh, “Do not notice their grain offering. I have not offered one donkey from them, and I have not mistreated one of them.”

**Moses Repeats Yahweh's Instructions**

16 And Moses said to Korah, "You and your entire company will be before Yahweh tomorrow, you and they and Aaron.

17 Each one take his censer, and put incense on it and you will present it before Yahweh, and each of you bring his censer, two hundred and fifty censers, you and Aaron, each his censer."

18 So each of them took his censer, and they put fire on them, and they placed incense on them; they stood *at the* doorway of the tent of the assembly of Moses and Aaron.

**Yahweh Prepares to Kill the Entire Community**

19 And Korah summoned them, the entire community, by the doorway of the tent of assembly, and the glory of Yahweh appeared to all the community.

20 And Yahweh spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying,

21 "Separate yourselves from the midst of this community, that I can destroy them in a moment."

22 And they fell on their faces, and they said, "God, God of the spirits of all flesh, will one man sin and you become angry toward the entire community?"

**Yahweh Permits the People to Separate Themselves from Korah's Assembly**

23 Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,

24 "Speak to the community, saying, 'Move away from the dwelling of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.'"

25 So Moses stood up and went to Dathan and Abiram; the elders of Israel followed after him.

26 He said to the community, saying, "Please turn away from the tents of these wicked men, and do not touch anything that belongs to them, or you will be destroyed with all their sins."

27 And so they moved away from around the dwellings of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram; and Dathan and Abiram came out standing *at* the doorway of their tents, with their wives, sons, and little children.

**Yahweh Kills the Assembly of Korah**

28 And Moses said, "In this you will know that Yahweh has sent me to do all these works; *it is* not from my heart.

29 If they die a natural death or if a natural fate is visited upon them, Yahweh has not sent me.

30 But if Yahweh creates something new, and the ground opens its mouth and swallows them up and all that belongs to them, and they go down alive *to* Sheol, and you will know that these men have despised Yahweh."

31 And it happened, as soon as he finished speaking all these words, the ground that *was* under them split open.

32 The land opened its mouth and swallowed them up with their houses and every person that belonged to Korah and all the property.

33 They went down alive *to* Sheol, they and all that belonged to them, and the land covered over them, and they perished from the midst of the assembly. [[Jude 1:4, 10-13](#)]

34 All Israel who *were* around them fled at their cry, because they said, "Lest the land swallow us up!"

35 And fire went out from Yahweh, and it consumed the two hundred and fifty men presenting the incense.

**Korah's Censers Turned Into a Covering for the Altar**

36 And Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,

37 "Say to Eleazar son of Aaron the priest, 'Take out the censers from among the place of burning because they are sacred, and scatter the fire outside.

38 The censers of these who have sinned at the cost of their lives, let them be made into gilded leafing plating for the altar; because they presented them before Yahweh, they are holy; and they will be a sign for the Israelites.'"

39 Eleazar the priest took the bronze censers that the ones who were burned presented, and they hammered them out thinly *as* plating for the altar;

40 *it was* a memorial for the Israelites, so that no strange man who is not from the offspring of Aaron should approach the presence of Yahweh to burn a smoke offering; he will not be like Korah and his company, just as Yahweh had spoken to him by the hand of Moses.

**The People Are Angered by Korah's Death and Assemble Against Moses and Aaron**

41 The next day all the community of the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron, saying, "You have killed the people of Yahweh!"

**Yahweh Sends a Plague Against the Entire Community**

42 Then, when the community had gathered against Moses and Aaron, they turned to the tent of assembly, and behold, the cloud covered it, and the glory of Yahweh appeared.

43 And Moses and Aaron came to the front of the tent of assembly,

44 and Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,

45a “Get away from the midst of this community, and I will finish them in an instant,”

#### **Yahweh Permits Moses and Aaron to Save the People**

45b but they fell on their faces.

46 And Moses and Aaron said, “Take the censer, and put fire on it from the altar. Place incense *on it*, and bring it quickly to the community, and make atonement for them, because wrath went out from the presence of Yahweh, and a plague has begun.”

47 And so Aaron took *it* just as Moses had spoken, and he ran into the midst of the assembly, for behold, the plague had begun among the people; so he gave the incense and made atonement for the people.

48 He stood between the dead and between the living, and the plague was stopped.

49 Those who died by the plague were fourteen thousand seven hundred, besides those who died on account of Korah.

50 Then Aaron returned to Moses at the doorway of the tent of assembly, and the plague was stopped.

#### **Yahweh Instructs Moses to Prepare a Ceremony of Confirmation**

17:1 Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,

2 “Speak to the Israelites, and take from among them twelve staffs, a staff from each family from among all their leaders according to their families’ households. Write the name of each man on his staff,

3 and the name of Aaron on the staff of Levi, because one staff *is* for the head of *each of* their families.

4 You must then put them in the tent of assembly before the testimony where I meet with you.

5 And it will happen, the man whom I will choose, his staff will blossom, and so I will rid from upon myself the grumblings of the Israelites, who *are* grumbling against you.”

6 Moses spoke to the Israelites, and all their leaders gave him a staff for each leader, one from each of their families, twelve staffs, and the staff of Aaron *was* in the midst of their tribes.

7 And Moses put the staffs before Yahweh in the tent of testimony.

#### **Yahweh Confirms His Selection of the Aaronic Priesthood**

8 Then the next day, Moses went into the tent of the testimony, and behold the staff of Aaron for the house of Levi blossomed and put forth a flower and produced blossoms, and it produced almonds.

9 Then Moses brought out to all the Israelites all the staffs before the presence of Yahweh, and they saw, and each man took his staff.

10 And Yahweh said to Moses, “Bring back the staff of Aaron before the testimony as a guard and sign for the children of rebellion, and let them finish their grumblings before me and not die.” [[Heb 9:3–4](#)]

11 So Moses did; just as Yahweh commanded him, so he did.

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