

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 Now the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,
 2 “Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, ‘When you enter the land where you are to live, which I am giving you,
 3 then make an offering by fire to the LORD, a burnt offering or a sacrifice to fulfill a special vow, or as a freewill offering or in your appointed times, to make a soothing aroma to the LORD, from the herd or from the flock.
 4 The one who presents his offering shall present to the LORD a grain offering of one-tenth *of an ephah* of fine flour mixed with one-fourth of a hin of oil,
 5 and you shall prepare wine for the drink offering, one-fourth of a hin, with the burnt offering or for the sacrifice, for each lamb.
 6 Or for a ram you shall prepare as a grain offering two-tenths *of an ephah* of fine flour mixed with one-third of a hin of oil;
 7 and for the drink offering you shall offer one-third of a hin of wine as a soothing aroma to the LORD.
 8 When you prepare a bull as a burnt offering or a sacrifice, to fulfill a special vow, or for peace offerings to the LORD,
 9 then you shall offer with the bull a grain offering of three-tenths *of an ephah* of fine flour mixed with one-half a hin of oil;
 10 and you shall offer as the drink offering one-half a hin of wine as an offering by fire, as a soothing aroma to the LORD.
 11 ‘Thus it shall be done for each ox, or for each ram, or for each of the male lambs, or of the goats.
 12 According to the number that you prepare, so you shall do for everyone according to their number.

The Law Applies to Foreigners and Israelites Alike

- 13 All who are native shall do these things in this manner, in presenting an offering by fire, as a soothing aroma to the LORD.
 14 If an alien sojourns with you, or one who may be among you throughout your generations, and he *wishes to* make an offering by fire, as a soothing aroma to the LORD, just as you do so he shall do.
 15 *As for* the assembly, there shall be one statute for you and for the alien who sojourns *with you*, a perpetual statute throughout your generations; as you are, so shall the alien be before the LORD.
 16 There is to be one law and one ordinance for you and for the alien who sojourns with you.”

Contribution of the First of the Dough

- 17 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,
 18 “Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, ‘When you enter the land where I bring you,
 19 then it shall be, that when you eat of the food of the land, you shall lift up an offering to the LORD.
 20 Of the first of your dough you shall lift up a cake as an offering; as the offering of the threshing floor, so you shall lift it up.
 21 From the first of your dough you shall give to the LORD an offering throughout your generations.

Atonement for Inadvertent Sin by the Community

- 22 ‘But when you unwittingly fail and do not observe all these commandments, which the LORD has spoken to Moses,
 23 *even* all that the LORD has commanded you through Moses, from the day when the LORD gave commandment and onward throughout your generations,
 24 then it shall be, if it is done unintentionally, without the knowledge of the congregation, that all the congregation shall offer one bull for a burnt offering, as a soothing aroma to the LORD, with its grain offering and its drink offering, according to the ordinance, and one male goat for a sin offering.
 25 Then the priest shall make atonement for all the congregation of the sons of Israel, and they will be forgiven; for it was an error, and they have brought their offering, an offering by fire to the LORD, and their sin offering before the LORD, for their error.
 26 So all the congregation of the sons of Israel will be forgiven, with the alien who sojourns among them, *for it happened* to all the people through error.

Atonement for Inadvertent Sin by the Individual

- 27 ‘Also if one person sins unintentionally, then he shall offer a one year old female goat for a sin offering.
 28 The priest shall make atonement before the LORD for the person who goes astray when he sins unintentionally, making atonement for him that he may be forgiven.
 29 You shall have one law for him who does *anything* unintentionally, for him who is native among the sons of Israel and for the alien who sojourns among them.

Death Penalty for High-handed Sins

- 30 But the person who does *anything* defiantly, whether he is native or an alien, that one is blaspheming the LORD; and that person shall be cut off from among his people.
 31 Because he has despised the word of the LORD and has broken His commandment, that person shall be completely cut off; his guilt *will be* on him.”

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 Now while the sons of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man gathering wood on the sabbath day.

33 Those who found him gathering wood brought him to Moses and Aaron and to all the congregation;

34 and they put him in custody because it had not been declared what should be done to him.

35 Then the LORD said to Moses, “The man shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall stone him with stones outside the camp.”

36 So all the congregation brought him outside the camp and stoned him to death with stones, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

Tassels—A Visual Reminder to Serve Yahweh

37 The LORD also spoke to Moses, saying,

38 “Speak to the sons of Israel, and tell them that they shall make for themselves tassels on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and that they shall put on the tassel of each corner a cord of blue.

39 It shall be a tassel for you to look at and remember all the commandments of the LORD, so as to do them and not follow after your own heart and your own eyes, after which you played the harlot,

40 so that you may remember to do all My commandments and be holy to your God.

41 I am the LORD your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt to be your God; I am the LORD 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 the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, with Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took *action*,

2 and they rose up before Moses, together with some of the sons of Israel, two hundred and fifty leaders of the congregation, chosen in the assembly, men of renown.

3 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, and the LORD is in their midst; so why do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the LORD?”

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 spoke to Korah and all his company, saying, “Tomorrow morning the LORD will show who is His, and who is holy, and will bring *him* near to Himself; even the one whom He will choose, He will bring near to Himself. [\[2 Tim 2:19\]](#)

6 “Do this: take censers for yourselves, Korah and all your company,

7 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. You have gone far enough, you sons of Levi!”

Moses Reveals the True Motive Behind Korah’s Rebellion

8 Then Moses said to Korah, “Hear now, you sons of Levi,

9 is it not enough for you that the God of Israel has separated you from the *rest* of the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to Himself, to do the service of the tabernacle of the LORD, and to stand before the congregation to minister to them;

10 and that He has brought you near, *Korah*, and all your brothers, sons of Levi, with you? And are you seeking for the priesthood also?

11 Therefore you and all your company are gathered together against the LORD; but as for Aaron, who is he that you grumble against him?”

Moses Tries to Talk With Dathan and Abiram But They Refuse

12 Then Moses sent a summons to Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab; but they said, “We will not come up.

13 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?

14 Indeed, you have not brought us into a land flowing with milk and honey, nor have you given us an inheritance of fields and vineyards. Would you put out the eyes of these men? We will not come up!”

15 Then Moses became very angry and said to the LORD, “Do not regard their offering! I have not taken a single donkey from them, nor have I done harm to any of them.”

Moses Repeats Yahweh's Instructions

16 Moses said to Korah, "You and all your company be present before the LORD tomorrow, both you and they along with Aaron.

17 Each of you take his firepan and put incense on it, and each of you bring his censer before the LORD, two hundred and fifty firepans; also you and Aaron *shall* each *bring* his firepan."

18 So they each took his *own* censer and put fire on it, and laid incense on it; and they stood at the doorway of the tent of meeting, with Moses and Aaron.

Yahweh Prepares to Kill the Entire Community

19 Thus Korah assembled all the congregation against them at the doorway of the tent of meeting. And the glory of the LORD appeared to all the congregation.

20 Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying,

21 "Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that I may consume them instantly."

22 But they fell on their faces and said, "O God, God of the spirits of all flesh, when one man sins, will You be angry with the entire congregation?"

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

23 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

24 "Speak to the congregation, saying, 'Get back from around the dwellings of Korah, Dathan and Abiram.'"

25 Then Moses arose and went to Dathan and Abiram, with the elders of Israel following him,

26 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."

27 So they 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.

Yahweh Kills the Assembly of Korah

28 Moses said, "By this you shall know that the LORD has sent me to do all these deeds; for this is not my doing.

29 If these men die the death of all men or if they suffer the fate of all men, *then* the LORD has not sent me.

30 But if the LORD brings about an entirely new thing and the ground opens its mouth and swallows them up with all that is theirs, and they descend alive into Sheol, then you will understand that these men have spurned the LORD."

31 As he finished speaking all these words, the ground that was under them split open;

32 and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, and their households, and all the men who belonged to Korah with *their* possessions.

33 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. [[Jude 1:4, 10-13](#)]

34 All Israel who *were* around them fled at their outcry, for they said, "The earth may swallow us up!"

35 Fire also came forth from the LORD and consumed the two hundred and fifty men who were offering the incense.

Korah's Censers Turned Into a Covering for the Altar

36 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

37 "Say to Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, that he shall take up the censers out of the midst of the blaze, for they are holy; and you scatter the burning coals abroad.

38 As for the censers of these men who have sinned at the cost of their lives, let them be made into hammered sheets for a plating of the altar, since they did present them before the LORD and they are holy; and they shall be for a sign to the sons of Israel."

39 So Eleazar the priest took the bronze censers which the men who were burned had offered, and they hammered them out as a plating for the altar,

40 as a reminder to the sons of Israel that no layman who is not of the descendants of Aaron should come near to burn incense before the LORD; so that he will not become like Korah and his company—just as the LORD had spoken to him through Moses.

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

41 But on the next day all the congregation of the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron, saying, "You are the ones who have caused the death of the LORD's people."

Yahweh Sends a Plague Against the Entire Community

42 It came about, however, when the congregation had assembled against Moses and Aaron, that they turned toward the tent of meeting, and behold, the cloud covered it and the glory of the LORD appeared.

43 Then Moses and Aaron came to the front of the tent of meeting,

44 and the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

45a "Get away from among this congregation, that I may consume them instantly."

Yahweh Permits Moses and Aaron to Save the People

45b Then they fell on their faces.

46 Moses said to Aaron, “Take your censer and put in it fire from the altar, and lay incense *on it*; then bring it quickly to the congregation and make atonement for them, for wrath has gone forth from the LORD, the plague has begun!”

47 Then Aaron took *it* as Moses had spoken, and ran into the midst of the assembly, for behold, the plague had begun among the people. So he put *on* the incense and made atonement for the people.

48 He took his stand between the dead and the living, so that the plague was checked.

49 But those who died by the plague were 14,700, besides those who died on account of Korah.

50 Then Aaron returned to Moses at the doorway of the tent of meeting, for the plague had been checked.

Yahweh Instructs Moses to Prepare a Ceremony of Confirmation

17:1 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

2 “Speak to the sons of Israel, and get from them a rod for each father’s household: twelve rods, from all their leaders according to their fathers’ households. You shall write each name on his rod,

3 and write Aaron’s name on the rod of Levi; for there is one rod for the head *of each* of their fathers’ households.

4 You shall then deposit them in the tent of meeting in front of the testimony, where I meet with you.

5 It will come about that the rod of the man whom I choose will sprout. Thus I will lessen from upon Myself the grumbings of the sons of Israel, who are grumbling against you.”

6 Moses therefore spoke to the sons of Israel, and all their leaders gave him a rod apiece, for each leader according to their fathers’ households, twelve rods, with the rod of Aaron among their rods.

7 So Moses deposited the rods before the LORD in the tent of the testimony.

Yahweh Confirms His Selection of the Aaronic Priesthood

8 Now on the next day Moses went into the tent of the testimony; and behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi had sprouted and put forth buds and produced blossoms, and it bore ripe almonds.

9 Moses then brought out all the rods from the presence of the LORD to all the sons of Israel; and they looked, and each man took his rod.

10 But the LORD said to Moses, “Put back the rod of Aaron before the testimony to be kept as a sign against the rebels, that you may put an end to their grumbings against Me, so that they will not die.” [[Heb 9:3–4](#)]

11 Thus Moses did; just as the LORD had commanded him, so he did.

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