

קֹרַח

Korach

(Korah)

B'midbar [Numbers] 16:1-18:32

Thirteen Rods – Thirteen Names

B'midbar [Numbers] 17:1-3

1 And YHWH spoke to Moshe, saying,

2 "Speak to the children of Israel, and take of them rods, one for each fathers' house, of all their princes according to their fathers' houses, twelve rods; inscribe every man's name upon his rod.

3 And you shall inscribe Aharon's name upon the rod of Levi; for there shall be one rod for each head of their fathers' houses."

While we are not told specifically who each of the leaders of each of the twelve tribes were in this chapter, we can rightly surmise that these are the same leaders as named in the census of B'midbar chapter 1. They are as follows:

- 1) Eizur of the tribe of Rueven
- 2) Shelumiel of the tribe of Shimon
- 3) Nachshon of the tribe of Yehudah
- 4) Netanel of the tribe of Yissachar
- 5) Eliav of the tribe of Zevulun
- 6) Elishama of the tribe of Ephrayim
- 7) Gamaliel of the tribe of Manashshah
- 8) Avidan of the tribe of Benyamin
- 9) Ahiezer of the tribe of Dan
- 10) Pagiel of the tribe of Asher
- 11) Eliasaph of the tribe of Gad
- 12) Ahira of the tribe of Naptali

It is noticed immediately, that there seems to be discrepancy between the number of rods and the number of tribes. So, was it twelve rods as verse two indicates; or, was it thirteen as verse three suggests? It is important to note, that in most cases, there are twelve tribes spoken of in Scripture. The tribe of Levi was not numbered among the other twelve tribes. Please note this passage.

B'midbar [Numbers] 1:47-49

47 But the Levites after the tribe of their fathers were not numbered among them.

48 For YHWH spoke to Moshe, saying,

49 "Only the tribe of Levi you shall not number, neither shall you take the sum of them among the children of Israel."

So, when YHWH told Moshe to take one staff from each of the leaders of the twelve tribes, YHWH then had to add, that Moshe was also to take a staff from Aharon representing the Levites. This gives us a total of thirteen staffs that Moshe placed before YHWH in the sanctuary.

Moshe then either had the names inscribed upon each staff or perhaps even inscribed them himself. It is more likely that he had it done, rather than doing it himself. After the inscribing was done, then Moshe carried them into the sanctuary and placed them before the Ark of the Covenant.

Coming Before YHWH

B'midbar [Numbers] 17:4

4 "And you shall lay them up in the tent of meeting before the testimony, where I meet with you.

5 And it shall come to pass, that the rod of the man whom I shall choose shall bud; and I will make to cease from Me the grumbings of the children of Israel, which they grumble against you."

As one reads through the Scriptures, it does not take one long before he begins to see the importance of names. It is not just the meaning of a name that is important, but it is actually a representation of the person bearing the name as well. Quite literally, one becomes what they are named, and then further on in life, if YHWH adds another name, then He does so because

this new name is a more accurate representation of who and what that particular person has become.

So, when the names of each of these tribal leaders was inscribed upon their individual staffs and then placed before the Ark of the Covenant, it was as if these men themselves were standing before the Almighty One of Israel.

- 1) Eizur – El is a rock
- 2) Shelumiel – at peace with El
- 3) Nachshon – protection
- 4) Netanel – El has given
- 5) Eliav – El is Father
- 6) Elishama – El has heard
- 7) Gamaliel – El has rewarded
- 8) Avidan – Father is judge
- 9) Ahiezer – my brother is a help
- 10) Pagiel – El meets
- 11) Eliasaph – El has added
- 12) Ahira – my brother is restricted

When we look at the names of these men, and if their names are any indication of who they were as a person, then we can see, that surely these men were noble and worthy leaders in Israel. But YHWH chose none of them; but rather, He chose Aharon and caused his rod to put forth leaves, buds, blossoms, and fruit overnight.

Aharon's Rod

B'midbar [Numbers] 17:6-8

6 And Moshe spoke to the children of Israel; and all their princes gave him rods, for each prince one, according to their fathers' houses, even twelve rods; and the rod of Aharon was among their rods.

7 And Moshe laid up the rods before YHWH in the tent of the testimony.

8 And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moshe went into the tent of the testimony; and, behold, the rod of Aharon for the house of Levi was budded, and put forth buds, and produced blossoms, and bare ripe almonds.

These rods or staffs that these men carried with them daily, were what we might refer to as a walking stick. It was something that, wherever they went, they took along with them as a means of defense and protection, as well as support in rocky or uneven ground.

Tehillim [Psalm] 23:4

***Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil; for You are with me;
Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.***

These staffs were either from small trees or branches in which the bark would have been completely peeled off and the wood thoroughly dried. The staff would have been completely dead, devoid of all life.

In spite of this, please note what verse eight above describes for us as to what happened to Aharon's staff in the short span of overnight. His staff leafed out, budded, blossomed, and had ripe almonds upon it; all this in the short span of just a few hours.

Truly, this was no small miracle that occurred!

Rejected Rods – Rejected Names

B'midbar [Numbers] 17:9

And Moshe brought out all the rods from before YHWH to all the children of Israel; and they looked, and every man took his rod.

Can you imagine the thoughts and feelings of these men who each had a rod/staff with his own name on it placed in the sanctuary before the Ark of the Covenant and then to receive that same staff back, but nothing had happened? Can you imagine them looking at their own staffs and then looking at Aharon's staff? Again and again they looked in disbelief.

These men were leaders in Israel, each in his own right. YHWH had appointed each one of them through Moshe. It was no small thing, the load that they helped Moshe to carry. However, now, before all the people as witnesses, YHWH quite literally rejected them. How low they each must have felt at that very moment! Surely, this is a lesson for all of us to learn: that there is NO place for self-exaltation in His kingdom.

Aharon's Rod – A Sign

B'midbar [Numbers] 17:10

And YHWH said to Moshe, "Put back the rod of Aharon before the testimony, to be kept for a sign against the children of rebellion; that you may make an end of their grumbings against Me, that they die not."

Aharon's rod that budded, YHWH commanded Moshe to take back into the sanctuary and place before the Ark of the Covenant. YHWH wanted it to remain there perpetually as a reminder to the people of their rebellious heart and grumbling and complaining against Him. This rod was to be a witness against Israel.

Please note what happens with this very rod in the not too distant future from this incident.

B'midbar [Numbers] 20:8-9

8 "Take the rod, and assemble the congregation, you, and Aharon your brother, and speak to the rock before their eyes, that it give forth its water; and you shall bring forth to them water out of the rock; so you shall give the congregation and their cattle drink."

9 And Moshe took the rod from before YHWH, as He commanded him.

It seems that many simply assume that the rod that Moshe struck the rock with, was his own rod or staff. However, please carefully note what verse nine says. It states that Moshe took the rod from before YHWH. And what rod was before YHWH? It was Aharon's rod that put forth leaves, buds, blossoms, and ripe fruit. YHWH now considered this rod to be a qodesh (holy) object because of what He had done to it and through it.

However, Moshe did not treat this object, the rod that budded, as qodesh, for he struck the rock with it. YHWH commanded Moshe to bring this budded rod out before the people as a reminder and a witness and testimony against them that they had not changed in their rebellious ways against Him.

Oh, Woe is Me!

B'midbar [Numbers] 17:11-13

11 Thus Moshe did; as YHWH commanded him, so did he.

12 And the children of Israel spoke to Moshe, saying, "Behold, we perish, we are undone, we are all undone."

13 Every one that comes near, that comes near to the tabernacle of YHWH, dies; shall we all perish?"

The people, being led by the twelve leaders of the twelve tribes, are now scared. Rather than understanding this event in its proper context, they once again went too far. They could not see how any man could come near the presence of YHWH in the tent of meeting without perishing. They just *knew* that since their staffs had not budded in the same fashion as Aharon's staff, that they were completely rejected by YHWH and were about to die! After all, look what happened to Korach who challenged Moshe. Not only did he die, but his entire family perished as well. They were certain that judgment was about to fall upon them as well.

What these leaders did not understand was YHWH's great compassion.

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 7:9

"Know therefore that YHWH your Elohim, He is Elohim, the faithful Elohim, who keeps covenant and lovingkindness with them that love Him and keep His commandments to a thousand generations,"

In addition to this, YHWH was also about to do something quite astonishing. Let us examine the very next verse in this week's parasha.

B'midbar [Numbers] 18:1

And YHWH said to Aharon, "You and your sons and your fathers' house with you shall bear the iniquity of the sanctuary; and you and your sons with you shall bear the iniquity of your priesthood."

YHWH, in one short sentence, lays all the sin of the people, via the sanctuary, upon the priesthood in general, but specifically upon the kohen gadol. This is a foreshadowing of the Great High Priest who was to come, Yeshua our Mashiach, in that YHWH would lay upon Him all the sins of humanity.

Ivrim [Hebrews] 9:28

so Mashiach also, having been once offered to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time, apart from sin, to them that wait for Him, to salvation.

Yeshua, as our great High Priest, bore our sins into the very sanctuary of heaven.

Ivrim [Hebrews] 9:24-26

24 For Mashiach entered not into a holy place made with hands, like in pattern to the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear before the face of Elohim for us;

25 nor yet that He should offer himself often, as the high priest enters into the holy place year by year with blood not his own;

26 else must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world; but now once at the end of the ages has He been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

May each one of us grasp the fullness of this truth and follow fully after Yeshua our Mashiach, and be careful not to follow a man or teacher or leader, who may unknowingly or knowingly, lead His people astray through the deception of empty words that have no power.

ABBA YHWH, please open the eyes of Your servants, that we may follow Yeshua in the fullness of Your truth all the days of our lives; in His precious name, the name of Yeshua our Mashiach we pray. Amein.

Shabbat Shalom

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