

Message Eight
Authority, Rebellion,
the Vindication of Delegated Authority,
and a Proper Representative of God

RK Hymns: 984

Scripture Reading: Num. 12:1-15; 16:1—17:13; 20:2-13, 24; 27:12-14; 2 Cor. 10:8; 13:10

- Num 12:1 And Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Cushite woman whom he had married (for he had married a Cushite woman).
- Num 12:2 And they said, Has Jehovah indeed spoken only through Moses? Has He not also spoken through us? And Jehovah heard it.
- Num 12:3 Now the man Moses was very meek, more than anyone else who was on the face of the earth.
- Num 12:4 And suddenly Jehovah spoke to Moses and to Aaron and to Miriam, You three come out to the Tent of Meeting. So the three of them came out.
- Num 12:5 Then Jehovah came down in a pillar of cloud and stood at the entrance of the tent, and called Aaron and Miriam. And when they had both come forward,
- Num 12:6 He said, Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, / I, Jehovah, will make Myself known to him in a vision; / I will speak with him in a dream.
- Num 12:7 My servant Moses is not so; / He is faithful in all My house.
- Num 12:8 With him I speak face to face, even openly, and not in riddles; / And he beholds the form of Jehovah. Why then were you not afraid to speak against My servant, against Moses?
- Num 12:9 And the anger of Jehovah was kindled against them, and He departed.
- Num 12:10 And when the cloud had departed from over the tent; there Miriam was, leprous, as white as snow. And Aaron turned toward Miriam, and there she was, leprous.
- Num 12:11 And Aaron said to Moses, Oh, my lord, please do not lay this sin upon us that we have so foolishly committed.
- Num 12:12 Please do not let her be like one dead, whose flesh is half consumed when he comes out of his mother's womb.
- Num 12:13 And Moses cried to Jehovah, saying, Please heal her, O God, please.
- Num 12:14 And Jehovah said to Moses, If her father had just spat in her face, would she not bear her shame seven days? Let her be shut up outside the camp seven days, and after that she may be brought in again.
- Num 12:15 So Miriam was shut up outside the camp seven days, and the people did not set out until Miriam had been brought in again.
- Num 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, the sons of Reuben, took men
- Num 16:2 And rose up before Moses, with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred fifty leaders of the assembly, who were summoned to the meeting, well-known men.
- Num 16:3 And they assembled themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said to them, You take too much upon yourselves, for all the assembly are holy, every one of them, and Jehovah is among them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the congregation of Jehovah?
- Num 16:4 And when Moses heard this, he fell on his face.
- Num 16:5 And he spoke to Korah and to all his company, saying, In the morning Jehovah will make known 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.
- Num 16:6 Do this: Take censers for yourselves, Korah and all your company,
- Num 16:7 And put fire in them, and put incense on them before Jehovah tomorrow; and the man whom Jehovah chooses, he shall be holy. It is you who take too much upon yourselves, O sons of Levi!
- Num 16:8 And Moses said to Korah, Hear now, O sons of Levi:
- Num 16:9 Is it a small thing for you that the God of Israel has separated you from the assembly of Israel to bring you near to Himself to do the service of the tabernacle of Jehovah and to stand before the assembly to minister to them?
- Num 16:10 Or that He has brought you near, and all your brothers the sons of Levi with you? And do you seek the priesthood also?
- Num 16:11 Therefore you and all your company are gathered together against Jehovah; but Aaron, what is he that you murmur against him?
- Num 16:12 Then Moses sent word to call Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab; but they said, We will not come up!

Num 16:13 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 must you also lord it over us?

Num 16:14 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. Will you put out the eyes of these men? We will not come up!

Num 16:15 Then Moses became very angry and said to Jehovah, Do not regard their offering. I have not taken a single donkey from them, nor have I done harm to any of them.

Num 16:16 And Moses said to Korah, You and all your company be present before Jehovah, both you and they along with Aaron, tomorrow.

Num 16:17 And let each of you take his censer and put incense on them, and each of you present his censer before Jehovah, two hundred fifty censers; you also and Aaron shall each present his censer.

Num 16:18 So each took his censer and put fire in them and laid incense on them, and they stood at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting with Moses and Aaron.

Num 16:19 Thus Korah gathered the whole assembly against them at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, and the glory of Jehovah appeared to the whole assembly.

Num 16:20 Then Jehovah spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying,

Num 16:21 Separate yourselves from among this assembly, so that I may consume them in a moment.

Num 16:22 But they fell on their faces and said, O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, will one man sin and You be angry with the whole assembly?

Num 16:23 Then Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying,

Num 16:24 Speak to the assembly, saying, Get away from around the dwellings of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.

Num 16:25 Then Moses rose up and went to Dathan and Abiram, and the elders of Israel followed him.

Num 16:26 And he spoke to the assembly, saying, Depart now from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing which belongs to them, or you will be swept away with all their sins.

Num 16:27 So they got away from around the dwellings of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and Dathan and Abiram came out, and stood at the entrance of their tents, with their wives and their children and their little ones.

Num 16:28 And Moses said, By this you shall know that Jehovah has sent me to do all these works, for it is not of myself.

Num 16:29 If these people die as all human beings die, or if what befalls all human beings befalls them, then Jehovah has not sent me.

Num 16:30 But if Jehovah brings about a new thing, and the ground opens its mouth and swallows them up with all that belongs to them, and they descend alive into Sheol, then you will understand that these men have despised Jehovah.

Num 16:31 And as soon as he finished speaking all these words, the ground that was under them was split open.

Num 16:32 So the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, along with their households and everyone who belonged to Korah and all their possessions.

Num 16:33 So they and all that belonged to them descended alive into Sheol; and the earth closed over them, and they perished from the midst of the congregation.

Num 16:34 And all Israel who were around them fled at their outcry, for they said, The earth may swallow us up too!

Num 16:35 And fire came forth from Jehovah and consumed the two hundred fifty men who presented the incense.

Num 16:36 Then Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying,

Num 16:37 Tell Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest to take the censers up out of the burning and scatter the fire about; for they are holy.

Num 16:38 The censers of those who have sinned against their own lives, let them be made into beaten plates for a covering of the altar, for they presented them before Jehovah and they became holy. So they shall be a sign to the children of Israel.

Num 16:39 And Eleazar the priest took the bronze censers which those who were burned had offered; and they beat them out as a covering of the altar,

Num 16:40 As a reminder to the children of Israel that no stranger who is not of the seed of Aaron may come near to burn incense before Jehovah, so that he does not become like Korah and his company, just as Jehovah had spoken to him through Moses.

Num 16:41 But on the next day the whole assembly of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron, saying, You have caused the people of Jehovah to die.

Num 16:42 But when the assembly gathered against Moses and against Aaron, they looked toward the Tent of Meeting, and there the cloud was, covering it; and the glory of Jehovah appeared.

Num 16:43 And Moses and Aaron came to the front of the Tent of Meeting.

Num 16:44 Then Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying,

Num 16:45 Get away from the midst of this assembly that I might consume them in a moment. And they fell upon their faces.

Num 16:46 And Moses said to Aaron, Take the censer and put fire in it from the altar, and lay incense on it, and carry it quickly to the assembly, and make expiation for them. For wrath has gone forth from Jehovah; the plague has begun.

Num 16:47 And Aaron took it as Moses had said and ran into the midst of the assembly. And indeed the plague had begun among the people. So he put on the incense and made expiation for the people.

Num 16:48 And he stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stopped.

Num 16:49 Now those who died by the plague were fourteen thousand seven hundred, besides those who died on account of Korah.

Num 16:50 So Aaron returned to Moses at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting when the plague had been stopped.

Num 17:1 Then Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying,

Num 17:2 Speak to the children of Israel, and take from them rods, one for each father's house, twelve rods from all their leaders according to their fathers' houses; you shall write everyone's name upon his rod.

Num 17:3 And you shall write Aaron's name upon the rod of Levi, for there shall be one rod for the head of each of their fathers' houses.

Num 17:4 And you shall place them in the Tent of Meeting before the Testimony, where I meet with you.

Num 17:5 And the rod of the man whom I choose shall bud, and I will put a stop to the murmurings of the children of Israel against Me, which they murmur against you.

Num 17:6 So Moses spoke to the children of Israel. And every one of their leaders gave him a rod, one rod for each leader according to their fathers' houses, twelve rods, with the rod of Aaron among their rods.

Num 17:7 And Moses placed the rods before Jehovah in the Tent of the Testimony.

Num 17:8 And on the next day Moses went into the Tent of the Testimony, and there was the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi: it had budded; it even put forth buds and produced blossoms and bore ripe almonds.

Num 17:9 And Moses brought out all the rods from before Jehovah to all the children of Israel, and they looked; and each one took his rod.

Num 17:10 Then Jehovah said to Moses, Put back the rod of Aaron before the Testimony to be kept as a sign against the rebels, so that you may put an end to their murmurings against Me, and they not die.

Num 17:11 And Moses did so; just as Jehovah commanded him, so he did.

Num 17:12 And the children of Israel spoke to Moses, saying, Alas, we die out; we perish; all of us perish.

Num 17:13 Everyone who comes near, who comes near to the tabernacle of Jehovah, dies. Are we to completely die out?

Num 20:2 And there was no water for the assembly, and they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron.

Num 20:3 And the people contended with Moses and spoke, saying, If only we had expired when our brothers expired before Jehovah!

Num 20:4 Why then have you brought the congregation of Jehovah into this wilderness for us and our livestock to die there?

Num 20:5 Why then did you bring us up out of Egypt, to bring us to this wretched place? It is not a place of grain or figs or vines or pomegranates, and there is not even water to drink.

Num 20:6 And Moses and Aaron went from before the congregation to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting and fell upon their faces, and the glory of Jehovah appeared to them.

Num 20:7 Then Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying,

Num 20:8 Take the rod, and gather the assembly, you and Aaron your brother, and speak to the rock before their eyes, so that it yields its water. Thus you shall bring forth water for them out of the rock and give the assembly and their livestock something to drink.

Num 20:9 And Moses took the rod from before Jehovah, as He had commanded him.

Num 20:10 And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said to them, Listen now, you rebels: Shall we bring forth water for you out of this rock?

Num 20:11 Then Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock with his rod twice; and abundant water came forth, and the assembly and their livestock drank.

Num 20:12 And Jehovah said to Moses and Aaron, Because you did not believe in Me, to sanctify Me in the sight of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.

Num 20:13 These are the waters of Meribah, where the children of Israel contended with Jehovah, and He was sanctified among them.

Num 20:24 Aaron shall be gathered to his people, for he shall not enter into the land which I have given to the children of Israel, because you rebelled against My word at the waters of Meribah.

- Num 27:12 And Jehovah said to Moses, Go up to this mountain of the Abarim and see the land which I have given to the children of Israel.
- Num 27:13 And when you have seen it, you also shall be gathered to your people, just as Aaron your brother was gathered,
- Num 27:14 Because you rebelled against My word in the wilderness of Zin, in the strife of the assembly, and failed to sanctify Me at the waters before their eyes. (These are the waters of Meribah-kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin.)
- 2 Cor 10:8 For even if I should boast somewhat more abundantly concerning our authority, which the Lord has given for building you up and not for overthrowing you, I will not be put to shame.
- 2 Cor 13:10 Therefore I write these things while being absent in order that when present I would not have to use severity, according to the authority which the Lord has given me for building up and not for overthrowing.

I. God is the supreme authority; He has all authority—Rom. 9:21-22:

- Rom 9:21 Or does not the potter have authority over the clay to make out of the same lump one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?
- Rom 9:22 And what if God, wishing to demonstrate His wrath and make His power known, endured with much long-suffering vessels of wrath fitted for destruction,
- A. God's authority represents God Himself; God's power only represents God's works—Acts 17:24.
Acts 17:24 The God who made the world and all things in it, this One, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands;
- B. God's authority is actually God Himself; authority issues out from God's own being—Rev. 22:1.
Rev 22:1 And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street.
- C. All authority—spiritual, positional, and governmental—derives from God—2 Cor. 10:8; 13:10; John 19:10-11; Gen. 9:6.
2 Cor 10:8 For even if I should boast somewhat more abundantly concerning our authority, which the Lord has given for building you up and not for overthrowing you, I will not be put to shame.
2 Cor 13:10 Therefore I write these things while being absent in order that when present I would not have to use severity, according to the authority which the Lord has given me for building up and not for overthrowing.
John 19:10 Therefore Pilate said to Him, You do not speak to me? Do You not know that I have authority to release You and I have authority to crucify You?
John 19:11 Jesus answered him, You would have no authority against Me if it were not given to you from above; for this reason, he who has delivered Me to you has the greater sin.
Gen 9:6 Whoever sheds man's blood, / By man shall his blood be shed, / For in the image of God / He made man.
- D. When we touch God's authority, we touch God Himself—Isa. 6:1-5:
Isa 6:1 In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting on a high and lofty throne, and the train of His robe filled the temple.
Isa 6:2 Seraphim hovered over Him, each having six wings: With two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew.
Isa 6:3 And one called to the other, saying: Holy, holy, holy, Jehovah of hosts; / The whole earth is filled with His glory.
Isa 6:4 And the foundations of the threshold shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke.
Isa 6:5 Then I said, Woe is me, for I am finished! / For I am a man of unclean lips, / And in the midst of a people of unclean lips I dwell; / Yet my eyes have seen the King, Jehovah of hosts.
1. Meeting God's authority is the same as meeting God—Amos 4:12.
Amos 4:12 Therefore this is what I will do to you, O Israel; / And because I will do this to you, / Prepare to meet your God, O Israel.
 2. Offending God's authority is the same as offending God Himself.
- E. In our relationship with God, nothing is more important than touching authority—Acts 9:5; Matt. 11:25.
Acts 9:5 And he said, Who are You, Lord? And He said, I am Jesus, whom you persecute.
Matt 11:25 At that time Jesus answered and said, I extol You, Father, Lord of heaven and of earth, because You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants.

- F. Knowing authority is an inward revelation rather than an outward teaching—Acts 22:6-16.
- Acts 22:6 And as I journeyed and drew near to Damascus about midday, suddenly a great light flashed out of heaven around me;
- Acts 22:7 And I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?
- Acts 22:8 And I answered, Who are You, Lord? And He said to me, I am Jesus the Nazarene, whom you persecute.
- Acts 22:9 And those who were with me beheld the light, but did not hear the voice of the One who was speaking to me.
- Acts 22:10 And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said to me, Rise up and go into Damascus, and there it will be told to you concerning all the things which have been appointed to you to do.
- Acts 22:11 And as I could not see because of the glory of that light, I was led by the hand by those who were with me and came into Damascus.
- Acts 22:12 And a certain Ananias, a devout man according to the law, well attested to by all the Jews dwelling there,
- Acts 22:13 Came to me, and standing by, said to me, Saul, brother, receive your sight! And in that very hour I looked up at him.
- Acts 22:14 And he said, The God of our fathers has previously appointed you to know His will and to see the righteous One and to hear the voice from His mouth;
- Acts 22:15 For you will be a witness to Him unto all men of the things which you have seen and heard.
- Acts 22:16 And now, why do you delay? Rise up and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on His name.
- G. Only God is the direct authority to man; all other authorities are indirect authorities—delegated authorities, deputy authorities, appointed by God—Dan. 4:32, 34-37:
- Dan 4:32 And from among mankind you shall be driven out, and with the beasts of the field shall your dwelling place be; you shall be made to eat grass as bulls do; and seven periods of time will pass over you, until you come to know that the Most High is the Ruler over the kingdom of men and gives it to whomever He wills.
- Dan 4:34 And at the end of those days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted up my eyes to heaven, and reason returned to me; and I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honored the ever-living One; For His dominion is an eternal dominion, / And His kingdom is from generation to generation;
- Dan 4:35 And all the inhabitants of earth are considered as nothing, / But He does according to His will in the army of heaven / And among the inhabitants of the earth; / And there is no one who can resist His hand / Or say to Him, What are You doing?
- Dan 4:36 At that time my reason returned to me; and for the glory of my kingdom, my majesty and my splendor returned to me; and my counselors and my lords sought me out, and I was established in my kingdom, and surpassing greatness was added to me.
- Dan 4:37 Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and exalt and honor the King of the heavens, because all His works are truth and His ways justice, and because He is able to abase those who walk in pride.
1. Only when we meet God’s authority can we submit to the delegated authority whom God appoints—Matt. 28:18; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 5:5.

Matt 28:18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

Heb 13:17 Obey the ones leading you and submit to them, for they watch over your souls as those who will render an account, that they may do this with joy and not groaning; for this would be unprofitable to you.

1 Pet 5:5 In like manner, younger men, be subject to elders; and all of you gird yourselves with humility toward one another, because God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.
 2. God requires that we submit not only to Him but to all delegated authorities—Rom. 13:1-7; 2 Cor. 10:8; 13:10; Heb. 13:17.

Rom 13:1 Let every person be subject to the authorities over him, for there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are ordained by God.

- Rom 13:2 So then he who resists the authority opposes God's ordination, and those who oppose will receive judgment to themselves.
- Rom 13:3 For the rulers are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil. Do you want to have no fear of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from him;
- Rom 13:4 For he is a servant of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, fear; he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is a servant of God, an avenger for wrath to him who practices evil.
- Rom 13:5 Therefore it is necessary to be subject, not only because of wrath but also because of conscience.
- Rom 13:6 For because of this you also pay taxes; for they are God's officers, attending constantly to this very thing.
- Rom 13:7 Render to all the things due: tax to whom tax is due, custom to whom custom is due, fear to whom fear is due, honor to whom honor is due.
- 2 Cor 10:8 For even if I should boast somewhat more abundantly concerning our authority, which the Lord has given for building you up and not for overthrowing you, I will not be put to shame.
- 2 Cor 13:10 Therefore I write these things while being absent in order that when present I would not have to use severity, according to the authority which the Lord has given me for building up and not for overthrowing.
- Heb 13:17 Obey the ones leading you and submit to them, for they watch over your souls as those who will render an account, that they may do this with joy and not groaning; for this would be unprofitable to you.
3. Those who do not submit to God's indirect authority cannot submit to God's direct authority.
 4. God wants us to submit to indirect authority—delegated authorities—so that we may receive spiritual supply.
- H. We all must meet authority, be restricted by God, and be led by His delegated authority—Isa. 37:16; Phil. 2:12; Heb. 13:17.
- Isa 37:16 O Jehovah of hosts, God of Israel, who dwells between the cherubim, You alone are God of all the kingdoms of the earth; You made the heavens and the earth.
- Phil 2:12 So then, my beloved, even as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only but now much rather in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;
- Heb 13:17 Obey the ones leading you and submit to them, for they watch over your souls as those who will render an account, that they may do this with joy and not groaning; for this would be unprofitable to you.

II. There are two great principles in the universe—God's authority and Satan's rebellion; the unique controversy between God and Satan concerns authority and rebellion—Acts 26:18; Col. 1:13:

- Acts 26:18 To open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.
- Col 1:13 Who delivered us out of the authority of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,
- A. Rebellion is the denial of God's authority and the rejection of God's rule:
1. Satan was originally an archangel created by God, but due to his pride he uplifted himself, violated God's sovereignty, rebelled against God, became God's adversary, and established his own kingdom—Isa. 14:12-14; Ezek. 28:2-19; Matt. 12:26.
- Isa 14:12 How you have fallen from heaven, / O Daystar, son of the dawn! / How you have been hewn down to earth, / You who made nations fall prostrate!
- Isa 14:13 But you, you said in your heart: / I will ascend to heaven; / Above the stars of God / I will exalt my throne. / And I will sit upon the mount of assembly / In the uttermost parts of the north.
- Isa 14:14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; / I will make myself like the Most High.

Ezek 28:2 Son of man, say to the prince of Tyre, Thus says the Lord Jehovah, Because your heart is lifted up, and you have said, I am a god-I sit in the seat of God in the midst of the seas; yet you are a man and not a god, although you set your heart as if it were the heart of God.

Ezek 28:3 Indeed you are wiser than Daniel; there is no secret hidden from you;

Ezek 28:4 By your wisdom and by your understanding you have made your wealth and accumulated gold and silver in your treasuries.

Ezek 28:5 By your great wisdom and by your trading you have increased your wealth, but your heart has become lifted up because of your wealth.

Ezek 28:6 Therefore thus says the Lord Jehovah, Because you have set your heart as if it were the heart of God,

Ezek 28:7 Therefore I am about to bring strangers upon you, the most ruthless of the nations; and they will draw their swords against the beauty of your wisdom, and they will defile your splendor.

Ezek 28:8 To the pit they will bring you down, and in the heart of the seas you will die the death of those who are slain.

Ezek 28:9 Will you indeed say in the presence of the one who slays you, I am God? But you are a man and not a god in the hand of the one who wounds you.

Ezek 28:10 You will die the death of the uncircumcised by the hand of strangers, for I have spoken, declares the Lord Jehovah.

Ezek 28:11 Moreover the word of Jehovah came to me, saying,

Ezek 28:12 Son of man, take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say to him, Thus says the Lord Jehovah, O you who sealed up perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty,

Ezek 28:13 You were in Eden, the garden of God. Every precious stone was your covering, sardius, topaz, diamond, chrysolite, onyx, jasper, sapphire, carbuncle, and emerald, with gold. The workmanship of your tambourines and your pipes was prepared with you on the day that you were created.

Ezek 28:14 You were the anointed cherub who covered the Ark; indeed I set you, so that you were upon the holy mountain of God; you walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.

Ezek 28:15 You were perfect in your ways from the day that you were created, until unrighteousness was found in you.

Ezek 28:16 By the abundance of your trading they filled your midst with violence, and you sinned. So I cast you out as profane from the mountain of God, and I destroyed you, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.

Ezek 28:17 Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom by reason of your brightness. I cast you to the ground; I presented you before kings that they may look at you.

Ezek 28:18 By the multitude of your iniquities in the unrighteousness of your trading you have profaned your sanctuaries. Therefore I sent forth fire from your midst; it consumed you, and I reduced you to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all those who look at you.

Ezek 28:19 All who know you among the peoples are astonished at you. You have become a source of terror, and you will be no more forever.

Matt 12:26 And if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand?

2. When man sinned, he rebelled against God, denied God's authority, and rejected God's rule; at Babel men rebelled collectively against God to abolish God's authority from the earth—Gen. 3:1-6; 11:1-9.

Gen 3:1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any other animal of the field that Jehovah God had made. And he said to the woman, Did God really say, You shall not eat of any tree of the garden?

Gen 3:2 And the woman said to the serpent, Of the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat;

Gen 3:3 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, You shall not eat of it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.

Gen 3:4 And the serpent said to the woman, You shall not surely die!

- Gen 3:5 For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will become like God, knowing good and evil.
- Gen 3:6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make oneself wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband with her, and he ate.
- Gen 11:1 And the whole earth had one language and the same speech.
- Gen 11:2 And as they journeyed east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there.
- Gen 11:3 And they said to one another, Come, let us make bricks and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and they had tar for mortar.
- Gen 11:4 And they said, Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower whose top is in the heavens; and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered over the surface of the whole earth.
- Gen 11:5 And Jehovah came down to see the city and the tower which the children of men had built.
- Gen 11:6 And Jehovah said, Behold, they are one people, and they all have one language; and this is only the beginning of what they will do; and now nothing which they purpose to do will be kept from them.
- Gen 11:7 Come, let Us go down and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.
- Gen 11:8 So Jehovah scattered them from there over the surface of all the earth, and they ceased building the city.
- Gen 11:9 Therefore its name was called Babel, because there Jehovah confounded the language of all the earth, and from there Jehovah scattered them over the surface of all the earth.

B. Although Satan rebelled against God's authority and although man violates His authority by rebelling against Him, God will not let this rebellion continue; He will establish His kingdom on the earth—Rev. 11:15.

Rev 11:15 And the seventh angel trumpeted; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign forever and ever.

C. The center of dispute in the universe relates to who has authority—4:2-3:

Rev 4:2 Immediately I was in spirit; and behold, there was a throne set in heaven, and upon the throne there was One sitting;

Rev 4:3 And He who was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance, and there was a rainbow around the throne like an emerald in appearance.

1. We must contend with Satan by asserting that authority is with God—Acts 17:24, 30.

Acts 17:24 The God who made the world and all things in it, this One, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands;

Acts 17:30 Therefore, having overlooked the times of ignorance, God now charges all men everywhere to repent,

2. We need to set ourselves to submit to God's authority and uphold God's authority—Matt. 11:25.

Matt 11:25 At that time Jesus answered and said, I extol You, Father, Lord of heaven and of earth, because You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants.

D. The sin of rebellion is more serious than any other kind of sin—1 Sam. 15:23.

1 Sam 15:23 For rebellion is like the sin of divination, / And insubordination is like idolatry and teraphim. / Because you have rejected the word of Jehovah, / He has also rejected you from being king.

III. Chapters 12 and 16 of Numbers speak of rebellion against God's delegated authority:

Num 12 be omitted.

Num 16 be omitted.

A. In speaking against Moses, Miriam and Aaron were speaking against the deputy authority of God—12:1-15:

- Num 12:1 And Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Cushite woman whom he had married (for he had married a Cushite woman).
- Num 12:2 And they said, Has Jehovah indeed spoken only through Moses? Has He not also spoken through us? And Jehovah heard it.
- Num 12:3 Now the man Moses was very meek, more than anyone else who was on the face of the earth.
- Num 12:4 And suddenly Jehovah spoke to Moses and to Aaron and to Miriam, You three come out to the Tent of Meeting. So the three of them came out.
- Num 12:5 Then Jehovah came down in a pillar of cloud and stood at the entrance of the tent, and called Aaron and Miriam. And when they had both come forward,
- Num 12:6 He said, Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, / I, Jehovah, will make Myself known to him in a vision; / I will speak with him in a dream.
- Num 12:7 My servant Moses is not so; / He is faithful in all My house.
- Num 12:8 With him I speak face to face, even openly, and not in riddles; / And he beholds the form of Jehovah. Why then were you not afraid to speak against My servant, against Moses?
- Num 12:9 And the anger of Jehovah was kindled against them, and He departed.
- Num 12:10 And when the cloud had departed from over the tent; there Miriam was, leprous, as white as snow. And Aaron turned toward Miriam, and there she was, leprous.
- Num 12:11 And Aaron said to Moses, Oh, my lord, please do not lay this sin upon us that we have so foolishly committed.
- Num 12:12 Please do not let her be like one dead, whose flesh is half consumed when he comes out of his mother's womb.
- Num 12:13 And Moses cried to Jehovah, saying, Please heal her, O God, please.
- Num 12:14 And Jehovah said to Moses, If her father had just spat in her face, would she not bear her shame seven days? Let her be shut up outside the camp seven days, and after that she may be brought in again.
- Num 12:15 So Miriam was shut up outside the camp seven days, and the people did not set out until Miriam had been brought in again.

1. God had appointed Moses to be His deputy authority, His representative authority on earth; the authority that Moses represented was the authority of God—Exo. 3:10-18a; 7:1.

- Exo 3:10 So come now, and I will send you to Pharaoh, that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.
- Exo 3:11 But Moses said to God, Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and that I should bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?
- Exo 3:12 And He said, Surely I will be with you, and this shall be the sign for you that I have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will serve God upon this mountain.
- Exo 3:13 Then Moses said to God, If I come to the children of Israel and say to them, The God of your fathers has sent me to you, and they say to me, What is His name? what shall I say to them?
- Exo 3:14 And God said to Moses, I AM WHO I AM. And He said, Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, I AM has sent me to you
- Exo 3:15 And God also said to Moses, Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, Jehovah, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My name forever, and this is My memorial from generation to generation.
- Exo 3:16 Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say to them, Jehovah, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, has appeared to me, saying, I have surely visited you and seen what is being done to you in Egypt.
- Exo 3:17 And I say, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, to a land flowing with milk and honey.
- Exo 3:18a And they will listen to your voice. ...
- Exo 7:1 And Jehovah said to Moses, See, I have made you God to Pharaoh; and Aaron your brother will be your prophet.

2. According to God's governmental administration, Miriam and Aaron should have submitted themselves to Moses, but they rebelled—Num. 12:1-2.
 - Num 12:1 And Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Cushite woman whom he had married (for he had married a Cushite woman).
 - Num 12:2 And they said, Has Jehovah indeed spoken only through Moses? Has He not also spoken through us? And Jehovah heard it.
 3. Neither Aaron nor Miriam knew authority; instead, they fostered a rebellious heart—vv. 1-2.
 - Num 12:1 And Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Cushite woman whom he had married (for he had married a Cushite woman).
 - Num 12:2 And they said, Has Jehovah indeed spoken only through Moses? Has He not also spoken through us? And Jehovah heard it.
 4. The words of rebellion ascended upward and were heard by God—v. 2b:
 - Num 12:2b ... Has He not also spoken through us? And Jehovah heard it.
 - a. When Miriam and Aaron offended Moses, they offended God in Moses; therefore, God became angry.
 - b. Once a person touches delegated authority, he touches God in that delegated authority.
 - c. To offend the delegated authority is to offend God—vv. 4-10.
 - Num 12:4 And suddenly Jehovah spoke to Moses and to Aaron and to Miriam, You three come out to the Tent of Meeting. So the three of them came out.
 - Num 12:5 Then Jehovah came down in a pillar of cloud and stood at the entrance of the tent, and called Aaron and Miriam. And when they had both come forward,
 - Num 12:6 He said, Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, / I, Jehovah, will make Myself known to him in a vision; / I will speak with him in a dream.
 - Num 12:7 My servant Moses is not so; / He is faithful in all My house.
 - Num 12:8 With him I speak face to face, even openly, and not in riddles; / And he beholds the form of Jehovah. Why then were you not afraid to speak against My servant, against Moses?
 - Num 12:9 And the anger of Jehovah was kindled against them, and He departed.
 - Num 12:10 And when the cloud had departed from over the tent; there Miriam was, leprous, as white as snow. And Aaron turned toward Miriam, and there she was, leprous.
 5. Miriam's becoming leprous was God's governmental dealing—v. 10.
 - Num 12:10 And when the cloud had departed from over the tent; there Miriam was, leprous, as white as snow. And Aaron turned toward Miriam, and there she was, leprous.
- B. The rebellion recorded in chapter 16 was a corporate rebellion:
- Num 16 be omitted.
1. The rebellion in this chapter was a widespread, universal rebellion among God's people—v. 19a.
 - Num 16:9a Is it a small thing for you that the God of Israel has separated you from the assembly of Israel to bring you near to Himself to do the service of the tabernacle of Jehovah ...?
 2. Numbers 16:3, 9, and 10 show that the root of this rebellion was ambition, the struggle for power and for a higher position:
 - Num 16:3 And they assembled themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said to them, You take too much upon yourselves, for all the assembly are holy, every one of them, and Jehovah is among them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the congregation of Jehovah?
 - Num 16:9 Is it a small thing for you that the God of Israel has separated you from the assembly of Israel to bring you near to Himself to do the service of the tabernacle of Jehovah and to stand before the assembly to minister to them?
 - Num 16:10 Or that He has brought you near, and all your brothers the sons of Levi with you? And do you seek the priesthood also?
 - a. Ambition undermines God's plan and damages His people.

- b. Throughout the centuries many problems among Christians have been caused by ambition—cf. Matt. 20:20-28; 3 John 9-11.

Matt 20:20 Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to Him with her sons, worshipping and asking something of Him.

Matt 20:21 And He said to her, What do you want? She said to Him, Say that these two sons of mine will sit, one on Your right and one on Your left, in Your kingdom.

Matt 20:22 But Jesus answered and said to them, You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup which I am about to drink? They said to Him, We are able.

Matt 20:23 He said to them, My cup you shall indeed drink, but to sit on My right and on My left, this is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by My Father.

Matt 20:24 And when the ten heard this, they were indignant concerning the two brothers.

Matt 20:25 But Jesus called them to Him and said, You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and the great exercise authority over them.

Matt 20:26 It shall not be so among you; but whoever wants to become great among you shall be your servant,

Matt 20:27 And whoever wants to be first among you shall be your slave;

Matt 20:28 Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many.

3 John 9 I wrote something to the church; but Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, does not receive us.

3 John 10 For this reason, if I come, I will bring to remembrance his works which he does, babbling against us with evil words; and not being satisfied with these, neither does he himself receive the brothers, and those intending to do so he forbids and casts out of the church.

3 John 11 Beloved, do not imitate the evil, but the good. He who does good is of God; he who does evil has not seen God.

3. Although Moses was humble in falling on his face (Num. 16:4), he did not give up his God-given position as God's deputy authority (vv. 5-11, 16-18):

Num 16:4 And when Moses heard this, he fell on his face.

Num 16:5 And he spoke to Korah and to all his company, saying, In the morning Jehovah will make known 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.

Num 16:6 Do this: Take censers for yourselves, Korah and all your company,

Num 16:7 And put fire in them, and put incense on them before Jehovah tomorrow; and the man whom Jehovah chooses, he shall be holy. It is you who take too much upon yourselves, O sons of Levi!

Num 16:8 And Moses said to Korah, Hear now, O sons of Levi:

Num 16:9 Is it a small thing for you that the God of Israel has separated you from the assembly of Israel to bring you near to Himself to do the service of the tabernacle of Jehovah and to stand before the assembly to minister to them?

Num 16:10 Or that He has brought you near, and all your brothers the sons of Levi with you? And do you seek the priesthood also?

Num 16:11 Therefore you and all your company are gathered together against Jehovah; but Aaron, what is he that you murmur against him?

Num 16:16 And Moses said to Korah, You and all your company be present before Jehovah, both you and they along with Aaron, tomorrow.

Num 16:17 And let each of you take his censer and put incense on them, and each of you present his censer before Jehovah, two hundred fifty censers; you also and Aaron shall each present his censer.

Num 16:18 So each took his censer and put fire in them and laid incense on them, and they stood at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting with Moses and Aaron.

- a. Moses did not fight back; rather, he brought the rebels and the ones against whom they rebelled to God—v. 5.

Num 16:5 And he spoke to Korah and to all his company, saying, In the morning Jehovah will make known 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.
- b. As God's deputy, or delegated, authority, Moses referred this case to God as the highest authority, for His speaking, exposing, and judging—vv. 6-35.
- Num 16:6 Do this: Take censers for yourselves, Korah and all your company,
 Num 16:7 And put fire in them, and put incense on them before Jehovah tomorrow; and the man whom Jehovah chooses, he shall be holy. It is you who take too much upon yourselves, O sons of Levi!
- Num 16:8 And Moses said to Korah, Hear now, O sons of Levi:
 Num 16:9 Is it a small thing for you that the God of Israel has separated you from the assembly of Israel to bring you near to Himself to do the service of the tabernacle of Jehovah and to stand before the assembly to minister to them?
- Num 16:10 Or that He has brought you near, and all your brothers the sons of Levi with you? And do you seek the priesthood also?
- Num 16:11 Therefore you and all your company are gathered together against Jehovah; but Aaron, what is he that you murmur against him?
- Num 16:12 Then Moses sent word to call Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab; but they said, We will not come up!
- Num 16:13 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 must you also lord it over us?
- Num 16:14 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. Will you put out the eyes of these men? We will not come up!
- Num 16:15 Then Moses became very angry and said to Jehovah, Do not regard their offering. I have not taken a single donkey from them, nor have I done harm to any of them.
- Num 16:16 And Moses said to Korah, You and all your company be present before Jehovah, both you and they along with Aaron, tomorrow.
- Num 16:17 And let each of you take his censer and put incense on them, and each of you present his censer before Jehovah, two hundred fifty censers; you also and Aaron shall each present his censer.
- Num 16:18 So each took his censer and put fire in them and laid incense on them, and they stood at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting with Moses and Aaron.
- Num 16:19 Thus Korah gathered the whole assembly against them at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, and the glory of Jehovah appeared to the whole assembly.
- Num 16:20 Then Jehovah spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying,
 Num 16:21 Separate yourselves from among this assembly, so that I may consume them in a moment.
- Num 16:22 But they fell on their faces and said, O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, will one man sin and You be angry with the whole assembly?
- Num 16:23 Then Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying,
 Num 16:24 Speak to the assembly, saying, Get away from around the dwellings of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.
- Num 16:25 Then Moses rose up and went to Dathan and Abiram, and the elders of Israel followed him.
- Num 16:26 And he spoke to the assembly, saying, Depart now from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing which belongs to them, or you will be swept away with all their sins.
- Num 16:27 So they got away from around the dwellings of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and Dathan and Abiram came out, and stood at the entrance of their tents, with their wives and their children and their little ones.
- Num 16:28 And Moses said, By this you shall know that Jehovah has sent me to do all these works, for it is not of myself.
- Num 16:29 If these people die as all human beings die, or if what befalls all human beings befalls them, then Jehovah has not sent me.

- Num 16:30 But if Jehovah brings about a new thing, and the ground opens its mouth and swallows them up with all that belongs to them, and they descend alive into Sheol, then you will understand that these men have despised Jehovah.
- Num 16:31 And as soon as he finished speaking all these words, the ground that was under them was split open.
- Num 16:32 So the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, along with their households and everyone who belonged to Korah and all their possessions.
- Num 16:33 So they and all that belonged to them descended alive into Sheol; and the earth closed over them, and they perished from the midst of the congregation.
- Num 16:34 And all Israel who were around them fled at their outcry, for they said, The earth may swallow us up too!
- Num 16:35 And fire came forth from Jehovah and consumed the two hundred fifty men who presented the incense.
- c. In a struggle for power, the only One who can judge and expose the real situation is God Himself—vv. 30-33.
- Num 16:30 But if Jehovah brings about a new thing, and the ground opens its mouth and swallows them up with all that belongs to them, and they descend alive into Sheol, then you will understand that these men have despised Jehovah.
- Num 16:31 And as soon as he finished speaking all these words, the ground that was under them was split open.
- Num 16:32 So the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, along with their households and everyone who belonged to Korah and all their possessions.
- Num 16:33 So they and all that belonged to them descended alive into Sheol; and the earth closed over them, and they perished from the midst of the congregation.
4. The murmuring of the people against Moses and Aaron proves that their rebellious nature had not been subdued—v. 41.
- Num 16:41 But on the next day the whole assembly of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron, saying, You have caused the people of Jehovah to die.

IV. Numbers 16 speaks of man's rebellion against God's deputy authority and how man opposed God's deputy authority; chapter 17 speaks of God's vindication of His appointed authority:

Num 16, 17 be omitted.

- A. God vindicated to everyone that deputy authority is according to His appointment—v. 5.
- Num 17:5 And the rod of the man whom I choose shall bud, and I will put a stop to the murmurings of the children of Israel against Me, which they murmur against you.
- B. Since the rebellion of Korah and his company was related to the priesthood (16:3, 8-10), the budding of Aaron's rod was a vindication indicating that Aaron was the one accepted by God as having authority in the God-given ministry of the priesthood (17:2-10).
- Num 16:3 And they assembled themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said to them, You take too much upon yourselves, for all the assembly are holy, every one of them, and Jehovah is among them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the congregation of Jehovah?
- Num 16:8 And Moses said to Korah, Hear now, O sons of Levi:
- Num 16:9 Is it a small thing for you that the God of Israel has separated you from the assembly of Israel to bring you near to Himself to do the service of the tabernacle of Jehovah and to stand before the assembly to minister to them?
- Num 16:10 Or that He has brought you near, and all your brothers the sons of Levi with you? And do you seek the priesthood also?

- Num 17:2 Speak to the children of Israel, and take from them rods, one for each father's house, twelve rods from all their leaders according to their fathers' houses; you shall write everyone's name upon his rod.
- Num 17:3 And you shall write Aaron's name upon the rod of Levi, for there shall be one rod for the head of each of their fathers' houses.
- Num 17:4 And you shall place them in the Tent of Meeting before the Testimony, where I meet with you.
- Num 17:5 And the rod of the man whom I choose shall bud, and I will put a stop to the murmurings of the children of Israel against Me, which they murmur against you.
- Num 17:6 So Moses spoke to the children of Israel. And every one of their leaders gave him a rod, one rod for each leader according to their fathers' houses, twelve rods, with the rod of Aaron among their rods.
- Num 17:7 And Moses placed the rods before Jehovah in the Tent of the Testimony.
- Num 17:8 And on the next day Moses went into the Tent of the Testimony, and there was the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi: it had budded; it even put forth buds and produced blossoms and bore ripe almonds.
- Num 17:9 And Moses brought out all the rods from before Jehovah to all the children of Israel, and they looked; and each one took his rod.
- Num 17:10 Then Jehovah said to Moses, Put back the rod of Aaron before the Testimony to be kept as a sign against the rebels, so that you may put an end to their murmurings against Me, and they not die.
- C. The budding rod of Aaron typifies the resurrected Christ—the budding, blossoming, and fruit-bearing Christ—who imparts life to others—v. 8:
- Num 17:8 And on the next day Moses went into the Tent of the Testimony, and there was the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi: it had budded; it even put forth buds and produced blossoms and bore ripe almonds.
1. Christ, the greatest budding rod in the universe, imparts life to others; He always flows out life to enliven others—John 12:24; 1 Pet. 1:3.

John 12:24 Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.

1 Pet 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has regenerated us unto a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,
 2. Today Christ is still budding, and we are the fruit, the almonds, of His budding.
- D. In typology a rod signifies authority—cf. 1 Cor. 4:21:
- 1 Cor 4:21 What do you want? Should I come to you with a rod or in love and a spirit of meekness?
1. In Numbers 17 the rods represented the leaders of the twelve tribes (v. 2), and Aaron's rod represented the tribe of Levi (v. 3).

Num 17 be omitted.

Num 17:2 Speak to the children of Israel, and take from them rods, one for each father's house, twelve rods from all their leaders according to their fathers' houses; you shall write everyone's name upon his rod.

Num 17:3 And you shall write Aaron's name upon the rod of Levi, for there shall be one rod for the head of each of their fathers' houses.
 2. It was God's intention that the budding of a dead rod would cause the murmurings of the people to cease.
 3. Through the budding of the rod, God spoke to the Israelites and also to Aaron—v. 8.

Num 17:8 And on the next day Moses went into the Tent of the Testimony, and there was the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi: it had budded; it even put forth buds and produced blossoms and bore ripe almonds.
- E. The budding rod signifies our experience of Christ in His resurrection as our authority in the God-given ministry—Heb. 9:4; Num. 17:1-10:
- Heb 9:4 Having a golden altar and the Ark of the Covenant covered about everywhere with gold, in which were the golden pot that had the manna and Aaron's rod that budded and the tablets of the covenant,
- Num 17:1 Then Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying,

- Num 17:2 Speak to the children of Israel, and take from them rods, one for each father's house, twelve rods from all their leaders according to their fathers' houses; you shall write everyone's name upon his rod.
- Num 17:3 And you shall write Aaron's name upon the rod of Levi, for there shall be one rod for the head of each of their fathers' houses.
- Num 17:4 And you shall place them in the Tent of Meeting before the Testimony, where I meet with you.
- Num 17:5 And the rod of the man whom I choose shall bud, and I will put a stop to the murmurings of the children of Israel against Me, which they murmur against you.
- Num 17:6 So Moses spoke to the children of Israel. And every one of their leaders gave him a rod, one rod for each leader according to their fathers' houses, twelve rods, with the rod of Aaron among their rods.
- Num 17:7 And Moses placed the rods before Jehovah in the Tent of the Testimony.
- Num 17:8 And on the next day Moses went into the Tent of the Testimony, and there was the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi: it had budded; it even put forth buds and produced blossoms and bore ripe almonds.
- Num 17:9 And Moses brought out all the rods from before Jehovah to all the children of Israel, and they looked; and each one took his rod.
- Num 17:10 Then Jehovah said to Moses, Put back the rod of Aaron before the Testimony to be kept as a sign against the rebels, so that you may put an end to their murmurings against Me, and they not die.

1. The budding, blossoming, fruit-yielding rod signifies the resurrection life of Christ with its authority—v. 8; John 11:25.

Num 17:8 And on the next day Moses went into the Tent of the Testimony, and there was the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi: it had budded; it even put forth buds and produced blossoms and bore ripe almonds.

John 11:25 Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes into Me, even if he should die, shall live;

2. Resurrection is the basis of authority—2 Cor. 1:8-9; 10:8; 13:4, 10:

2 Cor 1:8 For we do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, of our affliction which befell us in Asia, that we were excessively burdened, beyond our power, so that we despaired even of living.

2 Cor 1:9 Indeed we ourselves had the response of death in ourselves, that we should not base our confidence on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead;

2 Cor 10:8 For even if I should boast somewhat more abundantly concerning our authority, which the Lord has given for building you up and not for overthrowing you, I will not be put to shame.

2 Cor 13:4 For indeed He was crucified out of weakness, but He lives by the power of God. For indeed we are weak in Him, but we will live together with Him by the power of God directed toward you.

2 Cor 13:10 Therefore I write these things while being absent in order that when present I would not have to use severity, according to the authority which the Lord has given me for building up and not for overthrowing.

a. The budding rod indicates that authority is based on resurrection—Num. 17:8.

Num 17:8 And on the next day Moses went into the Tent of the Testimony, and there was the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi: it had budded; it even put forth buds and produced blossoms and bore ripe almonds.

b. The basis of God's appointment of authority is resurrection—2 Cor. 1:8-9; 10:8; 13:10.

2 Cor 1:8 For we do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, of our affliction which befell us in Asia, that we were excessively burdened, beyond our power, so that we despaired even of living.

2 Cor 1:9 Indeed we ourselves had the response of death in ourselves, that we should not base our confidence on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead;

2 Cor 10:8 For even if I should boast somewhat more abundantly concerning our authority, which the Lord has given for building you up and not for overthrowing you, I will not be put to shame.

2 Cor 13:10 Therefore I write these things while being absent in order that when present I would not have to use severity, according to the authority which the Lord has given me for building up and not for overthrowing.

c. The basis of God's vindication of His appointed authority is resurrection—Num. 17:5, 8.

Num 17:5 And the rod of the man whom I choose shall bud, and I will put a stop to the murmurings of the children of Israel against Me, which they murmur against you.

Num 17:8 And on the next day Moses went into the Tent of the Testimony, and there was the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi: it had budded; it even put forth buds and produced blossoms and bore ripe almonds.

V. One who has been appointed by God to be a deputy authority must be a proper representative of God—12:3-8; 16:1-5, 28; 2 Cor. 5:20:

Num 12:3 Now the man Moses was very meek, more than anyone else who was on the face of the earth.

Num 12:4 And suddenly Jehovah spoke to Moses and to Aaron and to Miriam, You three come out to the Tent of Meeting. So the three of them came out.

Num 12:5 Then Jehovah came down in a pillar of cloud and stood at the entrance of the tent, and called Aaron and Miriam. And when they had both come forward,

Num 12:6 He said, Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, / I, Jehovah, will make Myself known to him in a vision; / I will speak with him in a dream.

Num 12:7 My servant Moses is not so; / He is faithful in all My house.

Num 12:8 With him I speak face to face, even openly, and not in riddles; / And he beholds the form of Jehovah. Why then were you not afraid to speak against My servant, against Moses?

Num 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, the sons of Reuben, took men

Num 16:2 And rose up before Moses, with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred fifty leaders of the assembly, who were summoned to the meeting, well-known men.

Num 16:3 And they assembled themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said to them, You take too much upon yourselves, for all the assembly are holy, every one of them, and Jehovah is among them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the congregation of Jehovah?

Num 16:4 And when Moses heard this, he fell on his face.

Num 16:5 And he spoke to Korah and to all his company, saying, In the morning Jehovah will make known 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.

Num 16:28 And Moses said, By this you shall know that Jehovah has sent me to do all these works, for it is not of myself.

2 Cor 5:20 On behalf of Christ then we are ambassadors, as God entreats you through us; we beseech you on behalf of Christ, Be reconciled to God.

A. In Exodus and in Numbers 12 and 16, Moses represented God in a proper way.

Num 12, 16 be omitted.

B. We need to learn a serious lesson from the one time that Moses failed to represent God—20:2-13:

Num 20:2 And there was no water for the assembly, and they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron.

Num 20:3 And the people contended with Moses and spoke, saying, If only we had expired when our brothers expired before Jehovah!

Num 20:4 Why then have you brought the congregation of Jehovah into this wilderness for us and our livestock to die there?

Num 20:5 Why then did you bring us up out of Egypt, to bring us to this wretched place? It is not a place of grain or figs or vines or pomegranates, and there is not even water to drink.

Num 20:6 And Moses and Aaron went from before the congregation to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting and fell upon their faces, and the glory of Jehovah appeared to them.

Num 20:7 Then Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying,

Num 20:8 Take the rod, and gather the assembly, you and Aaron your brother, and speak to the rock before their eyes, so that it yields its water. Thus you shall bring forth water for them out of the rock and give the assembly and their livestock something to drink.

- Num 20:9 And Moses took the rod from before Jehovah, as He had commanded him.
- Num 20:10 And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said to them, Listen now, you rebels: Shall we bring forth water for you out of this rock?
- Num 20:11 Then Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock with his rod twice; and abundant water came forth, and the assembly and their livestock drank.
- Num 20:12 And Jehovah said to Moses and Aaron, Because you did not believe in Me, to sanctify Me in the sight of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.
- Num 20:13 These are the waters of Meribah, where the children of Israel contended with Jehovah, and He was sanctified among them.

1. In striking the rock twice and in calling the people rebels, Moses did not sanctify God in the sight of the people of Israel—vv. 10-12:

- Num 20:10 And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said to them, Listen now, you rebels: Shall we bring forth water for you out of this rock?
- Num 20:11 Then Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock with his rod twice; and abundant water came forth, and the assembly and their livestock drank.
- Num 20:12 And Jehovah said to Moses and Aaron, Because you did not believe in Me, to sanctify Me in the sight of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.
- a. To sanctify God is to make Him holy, that is, separate from all the false gods; to fail to sanctify God is to make Him common—v. 12.
 - Num 20:12 And Jehovah said to Moses and Aaron, Because you did not believe in Me, to sanctify Me in the sight of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.
- b. In being angry with the people and in wrongly striking the rock twice, Moses failed to sanctify God—vv. 10-11.
 - Num 20:10 And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said to them, Listen now, you rebels: Shall we bring forth water for you out of this rock?
 - Num 20:11 Then Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock with his rod twice; and abundant water came forth, and the assembly and their livestock drank.
- c. In being angry when God was not angry, Moses failed to represent God rightly in His holy nature, and in striking the rock twice, he did not keep God’s word in His economy—vv. 10-12.
 - Num 20:10 And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said to them, Listen now, you rebels: Shall we bring forth water for you out of this rock?
 - Num 20:11 Then Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock with his rod twice; and abundant water came forth, and the assembly and their livestock drank.
 - Num 20:12 And Jehovah said to Moses and Aaron, Because you did not believe in Me, to sanctify Me in the sight of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.
- d. Moses offended both God’s holy nature and His divine economy; he condemned the people as rebels, but he was the one who rebelled against God’s word—vv. 10, 24; 27:12-14.
 - Num 20:10 And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said to them, Listen now, you rebels: Shall we bring forth water for you out of this rock?
 - Num 20:24 Aaron shall be gathered to his people, for he shall not enter into the land which I have given to the children of Israel, because you rebelled against My word at the waters of Meribah.
 - Num 27:12 And Jehovah said to Moses, Go up to this mountain of the Abarim and see the land which I have given to the children of Israel.
 - Num 27:13 And when you have seen it, you also shall be gathered to your people, just as Aaron your brother was gathered,

- Num 27:14 Because you rebelled against My word in the wilderness of Zin, in the strife of the assembly, and failed to sanctify Me at the waters before their eyes. (These are the waters of Meribah-kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin.)
2. In all that we say and do concerning God's people, our attitude must be according to God's holy nature, and our actions must be according to His divine economy.
- C. The apostle Paul was an ambassador of Christ, representing God—2 Cor. 5:20:
- 2 Cor 5:20 On behalf of Christ then we are ambassadors, as God entreats you through us; we beseech you on behalf of Christ, Be reconciled to God.
1. A new covenant minister is one who has been authorized with the heavenly authority to represent the highest authority—3:6; 5:20.

2 Cor 3:6 Who has also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant, ministers not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

2 Cor 5:20 On behalf of Christ then we are ambassadors, as God entreats you through us; we beseech you on behalf of Christ, Be reconciled to God.
 2. Paul exercised his apostolic authority not for ruling over the believers but for building them up—10:8; 13:10; 1:24.

2 Cor 10:8 For even if I should boast somewhat more abundantly concerning our authority, which the Lord has given for building you up and not for overthrowing you, I will not be put to shame.

2 Cor 13:10 Therefore I write these things while being absent in order that when present I would not have to use severity, according to the authority which the Lord has given me for building up and not for overthrowing.

2 Cor 1:24 Not that we lord it over your faith, but we are fellow workers with you for your joy; for by faith you stand.
 3. Paul exercised the authority inherent in his apostleship by teaching, by engaging in spiritual warfare, by moving within the measure of God's rule, and by his jealousy for Christ over the believers—1 Cor. 4:17; 2 Cor. 10:3-4, 13; 11:2.

1 Cor 4:17 Because of this I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways which are in Christ, even as I teach everywhere in every church.

2 Cor 10:3 For though we walk in flesh, we do not war according to flesh;

2 Cor 10:4 For the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly but powerful before God for the overthrowing of strongholds,

2 Cor 10:13 But we will not boast beyond our measure but according to the measure of the rule which the God of measure has apportioned to us, to reach even as far as you.

2 Cor 11:2 For I am jealous over you with a jealousy of God; for I betrothed you to one husband to present you as a pure virgin to Christ.
- D. A person who represents God rightly must submit to authority (Matt. 8:8-9), realize that in himself he has no authority (28:18; 2 Cor. 10:8; 13:10), and be a person in resurrection, living in the resurrection life of Christ (1:9; 4:14; Num. 17:1-10).
- Matt 8:8 But the centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not fit for You to enter under my roof; but only speak a word, and my servant will be healed.
- Matt 8:9 For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, Go, and he goes; and to another, Come, and he comes; and to my slave, Do this, and he does it.
- Matt 28:18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.
- 2 Cor 10:8 For even if I should boast somewhat more abundantly concerning our authority, which the Lord has given for building you up and not for overthrowing you, I will not be put to shame.
- 2 Cor 13:10 Therefore I write these things while being absent in order that when present I would not have to use severity, according to the authority which the Lord has given me for building up and not for overthrowing.
- 2 Cor 1:9 Indeed we ourselves had the response of death in ourselves, that we should not base our confidence on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead;

- 2 Cor 4:14 Knowing that He who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and will make us stand before Him with you.
- Num 17:1 Then Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying,
- Num 17:2 Speak to the children of Israel, and take from them rods, one for each father's house, twelve rods from all their leaders according to their fathers' houses; you shall write everyone's name upon his rod.
- Num 17:3 And you shall write Aaron's name upon the rod of Levi, for there shall be one rod for the head of each of their fathers' houses.
- Num 17:4 And you shall place them in the Tent of Meeting before the Testimony, where I meet with you.
- Num 17:5 And the rod of the man whom I choose shall bud, and I will put a stop to the murmurings of the children of Israel against Me, which they murmur against you.
- Num 17:6 So Moses spoke to the children of Israel. And every one of their leaders gave him a rod, one rod for each leader according to their fathers' houses, twelve rods, with the rod of Aaron among their rods.
- Num 17:7 And Moses placed the rods before Jehovah in the Tent of the Testimony.
- Num 17:8 And on the next day Moses went into the Tent of the Testimony, and there was the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi: it had budded; it even put forth buds and produced blossoms and bore ripe almonds.
- Num 17:9 And Moses brought out all the rods from before Jehovah to all the children of Israel, and they looked; and each one took his rod.
- Num 17:10 Then Jehovah said to Moses, Put back the rod of Aaron before the Testimony to be kept as a sign against the rebels, so that you may put an end to their murmurings against Me, and they not die.