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Psalm 117, praise, grace, truth, Deuteronomy 6, Shema, God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, commandments, Levites, Aaron, rebellion, complaining, worship.

SPEAKERS

Baruch Korman

Well, we're going to look at a very interesting passage today from the book of Numbers. Now I would invite you to take out your Bible and look with me, if you would, to the book of Numbers. And we see that in the Hebrew text, there is a different ordering. We talked about that last week, where in the Hebrew we are in chapter 17. We're going to complete it at this time, and next week we'll enter into chapter 18. But when we look at the English translations, we find a different ordering of verses. So in this week, just like last week, I'm not going to give you the verses. We're just going to go in order for where we begin. So with that said, I will invite you to take out your Bible and look with me, according to your numbering, the book of Numbers, and chapter 17, the book of Numbers. And chapter 17, we're going to begin in the first verse and then continue throughout this short chapter. And what do we see here? Well, we need to remember the context. There was a challenge to not only Moses and Aaron, remember these two men, Moshe, Rabbeinu, Moses and Aaron, the priest. And we could even be more specific, that he is the high priest. Remember that there were the sons of Korah, and they were saying that Moses and Aaron took too much upon themselves, that they were not following God, that they were doing what they wanted. And of course, what is God going to do? God is going to show the children of Israel that this was a false accusation against Moses and Aaron and against the Levites. Now remember, there are priests and there are Levites. They both come from the same tribe, but priests are from the household of Aaron. He was the first high priest, and it's his sons that carry on the priesthood. But everyone from that tribe of Levite is a servant of God. They have a responsibility to participate and lead the people in worshipping God. So let's begin. Let's go to this chapter, chapter 17, and let's begin with verse one, where it says, And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, now again, that expression I've mentioned this many times has to do with Revelation. Moses is receiving revelation from God, and what is he going to do with that revelation? Hopefully, you remember, he is going to share that with the children of Israel. And that's exactly what we see in the next verse, where it says, Speak to the Children of Israel. Moses received the revelation in order to speak to the children of Israel. And what are they supposed to do the children of Israel? Well, it says take from with them, meaning, take, we might say, from them, a rod. Now notice it says a rod to the house of the Father. Now, what we're seeing is that every house, and when we mean house, we're talking about a tribe in this context that will be proven in a moment. So every tribe is going to be represented by what's called a Nasi, which is in most Bibles, translated a leader today in modern Hebrew, a Nasi is a president. It's someone who has been lifted up with the privilege of a call upon their life, a divine call. They are called

to serve God and represent him in this world. So we have that same expression. Look again, take, we might say, from them, a rod, a rod for the house of the father from all and we have that word nisaham. That is all their presidents, and this is all their leaders of the tribe, for a house of their fathers, 12 rods, or 12 staffs a man his name, you shall write upon his rod or staff. Now this staff represents each of the 12 Tribes. We'll see that clearly in a moment. But let's press on to our next verse, where it says and the name of Aaron, or Aharon in Hebrew, you shall write upon the tribe of Levi. Now we're going to see something remember the context. We began this a few weeks ago, but there were the sons of Korok, and they were against Moses and against Aaron. And. And they were against this unique call that the Levites had upon them. They challenged that, and we're going to see that God we saw this a few weeks ago, punish those individuals, his congregation, that is the congregation of of Korah, and they were destroyed, and some of the children of Israel also suffered in this punishment. So notice again where it says and the name of Aharon you shall write upon the staff or rod of Levi for and we have the phrase mate Ahad one staff. Now we might better understand that this word Echad one as each staff, so each staff to the head of the house of their fathers. And again, this house represents a shevet a tribe. And therefore what we see here is that each of the 12 Tribes are going to be represented in this where God is going to demonstrate, again, that he has selected, uniquely the tribe of Levi or the Levites, to represent him in a special way, and not just represent God, but also be a representative from the children of Israel, who are called to serve God in this unique way. Let's move on to the next verse. It says here and you shall place them in the Tent of Meeting. Now this word, Ohel moed, is the appointed tent. I realize that most Bibles call it the Tent of Meeting, but it's literally the appointed tent before thee. And we have a word, ha edut. That word edut is a word for witness or testimony. And again, we need to remember something because of redemption, we are a new creation through the blood of the Lamb. And ultimately, the blood of the lamb is our Lord and Savior, the Messiah, who is called Yeshua, or Jesus. And what we find here is that he appoints us to serve Him through faith in Messiah, we as well, receive a call upon our life. And ultimately, we know something. Remember what it says in Exodus, chapter 19 and verse six, where it says that we are going to be a molecular koanim, a

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royal priesthood, we might say, and a holy nation, meaning holy, has to do with the purposes of God. Through redemption, we find the strength and the perspective and the ability to participate in God's will. And in this case, we find the tribe of Levi is being singled out in order that they might participate with God. So look at it again, it says, And he shall place them in the appointed tent before the testimony. And this is the Ark of testimony, which it says I have designated for you there. Now, what does that mean? Well, God has placed His presence upon that location inside the Holy of Holies, upon the Ark of the Covenant, or in this case, the Ark of the testimony. This is where the presence of God rested, and therefore he says, I have designated this place. Well, this is a place that God has designated for himself, that he would dwell there so the people would experience God, His presence, His power, His provision. Then it says, Look now to the next verse, And it shall come about a man whom I will choose. Him. How does God choose this one? Now every man is representing a tribe. We talked about the fact how the 12 Tribes are being represented, and there's a leader of each tribe. So God's going to demonstrate the tribe that he's going to choose to serve Him in a unique way. And they are going to be given, as we'll see, this royal priesthood. They are going to be servants or a priesthood. And it says here, I will choose him. And it says his rod is going to do something. His rod is going to blossom and

notice what he says he's going to do, that he is going to in this next word is a very unique Hebrew word. It talks about bringing it in or a ceasing to something. Saying. Now the term Shabbat also means to cease or to stop, but this is a different word, but it simply means that God's going to do something that he is going to cause to stop from upon myself, meaning God's not going to tolerate anymore. What is he not going to tolerate? Well, we have the word *telunot*, which is complaining he's not going to tolerate any longer. He's going to bring it in to this complaining of the children of Israel, which they and then we see something. It's the same word for in modern Hebrew, a hotel. What do you do in a hotel? You lodge there. You stay there. And what God is saying is this, that they have lodged against you. Now it's not against God. They are complaining against against Moses and Aaron, and that's why it says that they have lodged against you, the you there is in the plural, and it's referring to both Moses and Aaron. This is at the heart of what the Sons of Korah did in accusing Moses and Aaron, taking too much responsibility upon themselves, exalting themselves, rather than listening to God and submitting to him. Well, we know something. This scripture is important because it's going to show how God's going to reaffirm and make clear to the children of Israel and everyone else that he has indeed chosen the tribe of Levi to serve Him in a unique way. Let's look at the next verse. And Moses spoke to the children of Israel, and he said, They shall take to him, meaning, bring to Moses. Who should do that, all their leaders, all of these presidents of each tribe, they shall bring to Moses, a a staff or a rod of the leader. And it says, Each leader a rod of leadership, one rod of leadership for the house of their fathers. And then notice it says *sheim Assar*, that is 12 rods or 12 staffs, and the staff of Aaron in the midst of their staffs. So notice two times we've seen this, this rod or staff of Aaron be signaled out. We saw that, for example, and in verse, verse three of the texts, where it points to the the staff of Aaron, his name being written upon the rod of Levite. So we see Aaron, who represents, in a unique way, the tribe of Levi. And we see here. Look again. Moses spoke to the children of Israel that they shall take unto him, bring unto Moses, who shall do that all their leaders of the tribe for a leader. Each leader a staff of leadership, one staff of leadership for the house of their fathers, then we have 12 rods or 12 staffs, but the staff of Aaron in the midst of their staffs. So again, we see that there is an emphasis upon this tribe of levy that Aaron is representing. Let's move on. And Moses set the staffs or the rods before the Lord, and he did it exactly where God told him to. It says here in the tent of testimony. Now it's interesting here that it's called the tent of testimony. Why God is going to testify? God is going to reveal. He is going to give evidence, who that unique tribe is, and that indeed, Moses and Aharon, that is his brother, Aaron, had this unique call upon their life. Let's move on to the next verse, where it says,

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And it shall come about on the next day that Moses brought to the tent of testimony. And this tent of testimony, the place that we're calling this, is really the Holy of Holies, because this is where the Ark of testimony was, that Ark of the Covenant, it was in the Holy of Holies. This is what's being used here. Why? Well, there's an emphasis in that location, the Holy of Holies, on the presence of God. And what God is saying here is that he is getting involved personally in this issue, because. Says those whom he has chosen are being attacked, they're being questioned, and they are being insulted, and the people are complaining against them. But God is hearing this, and God hates complaining. We talked about that earlier on next verse where it says and it came about on the next day that Moses brought to the tent of of testimony. And behold, it says, *para*, what is that to to flourish or to blossom the rod of Aaron of the house of Levy, and it says here and went forth a blossom. Then we have an interesting word. There's a word *seats*. Now, *seats* is the same word that is used for the high priesthood where it talked

about being holy unto the Lord that's used there because God is showing who he is choosing to participate in his purposes so holy to the Lord. Remember that word holy always relates to the purposes of God, and God is saying, it's my purpose, my plan, my decision that I have chosen this tribe of Levi in order to serve Me and the family of Aharon, the house of Aaron, in order to be my priest. So look again, it says, Here, behold, there was para a blossoming of the rod of Aaron, of the house of Levi. And here house is referring to the tribe. And it says again, a blossom went out. And also we could say a flower also came forth. And then we have something. It talks about how this, this blossoming, caused something, and that is a bestowing of shedim or almonds. So this is the portion of Scripture where we see that it's Aaron's branch, his rod, that that puts forth a flower, a blossom, and the end result is there are almonds. We use the term shedim in Hebrew, but it refers to almonds that are there. Now this is a significant nut because it talks about fruitfulness. It talks about something that endures and lasts and does not quickly spoil let's look at our next verse. And it says, And Moses brought out all the rods before the Lord. Here again. Why is that there that expression before the Lord? Because all of this is being done according to God's instruction, and when we follow God's instruction, we can be assured of God's presence in our lives and our circumstances and situations that we find ourselves within. God will be there. This is what's being spoken of. Look again at our verse, where it says And Moses brought out all the rods or all the saps before the Lord to all the children of Israel. Now we see something. No one is being excluded. Why everyone needs to know this truth. And what is this truth that God has chosen the tribe of Levi that the Levites have a special call upon them, and likewise, so do the kohanim, the priests from the household of Aharon or Aaron, they are called in a unique way to lead the worship and to also, if you do a good study of this term for priests, biblically, we find that priests were the teachers of the children of Israel, so they just didn't lead in worship, but they also taught the people the Word of God. And notice what it says in this scripture. It says they they saw, and a man took, and the implication is, all the men took their rod, or his rod, each man took his rod, and we're going to see that there's an outcome. They are going to inspect them, and they are going to see what God has done. And God uniquely based upon His sovereignty, God causing this rod of Aaron to flourish, and that's the word that we should think of. I use the term blossoming. That's what we find in the Scripture, but it's really. Speaking about an abundance and God has when we submit to Him, He will work in our life in an abundant way. Remember what Messiah taught, where he says, I come that you should have life. And when we look at that expression, some will say abundant life, but it's literally the word forever increasing, and it just shows God's continued presence, God's continued power, God's continued provision so that we can live beyond our natural means. Why? Because God is with us. God is active in our circumstances. So notice what it says they looked and a man took his staff or rod next verse, And the Lord spoke to Moses return the rod of Aaron. Now this is at least the third, if not fourth, time that we see uniquely from all these 12 Tribes, all these 12 staffs, or rods, whatever you want to call the term Matei. It can be translated rod in some places, or staff in another. We're talking about the same thing. It's a representation of the 12 tribes of Israel. And we see how uniquely and God is reiterating this. He's teaching the people one more time why to bring an end to this complaining. And we're going to see something very interesting as we continue on in this same scripture. But look again, the Lord spoke to Moses return the rod of Aaron before the testimony. Now, where is that? Well, again, this is in that location where the Ark of the Covenant was also called the Ark of testimony. Why? Because God's presence was there. God's presence dwelt upon that Kapor, that is the mercy seat where they used to make atonement on the Day of Atonement at that location, so it says, Before the testimony. And then we have a word late ishmare. What is that? Well, it's a keeping or a charge. It speaks about something

that has some some long reaching time, meaning this is something that's going to to speak for a long period of time to the people of God. Look again, this is going to be a charge or a keeping and then we have an interesting word. It says le OT, which means for a sign. Now, what I would say to you is this, this word for sign is unique. It is a miraculous word. It's similar to the word NES, but there's a significant difference between the word NES and the word OT. Why is that? Well, we see, for example, people like the early apostles, they did signs and wonders. In other words, they could do miracles. Now, who gave them the power to do that? Of course, it came from God, through their faith in the Son of God, Messiah, Yeshua, so they were able to do miracles. But when we have this word Oat, it refers to a unique miracle. What do I mean by that? It is a miracle that only God can do. If you do a good study of this Hebrew word Oat, it speaks about, for example, when, when Cain killed his brother hevel, what did God do? He put a mark upon his forehead where no one could kill him. Now we can't do that. We see that every time this word oat appears in the Hebrew Bible, it's significant because it speaks about something which is uniquely a sign from God, a sign that only he can do. And why is this word there? Well, telling us something that it was God who was at work, in order to remind the people, to reiterate to them that indeed it was unique, this call on the tribe of Levi, where, offer, where, where Moses came from, and where Aharon came from. So this tribe is being singled out in a miraculous way by God. And notice what it says here. Let's read all the verse again where it says, And the Lord spoke to Moses return the rod of Aaron before the testimony for a keeping, for a sign for the sons or the children of and we have a very important word. It's word Mary. Mary. Is a word of rebellion in Hebrew. It's the Hebrew word Mary, which speaks about rebelliousness. And this is to remind us of the sons of Korok. They were rebelling against what God had clearly made known. Now this is important for a couple of reasons. It was not that they were doing this rebellion, and they didn't know God had clearly taught the children of Israel that the tribe of the Levites were singled out likewise, not just the tribe of Levites, but uniquely as well, the house of Aharon or Aaron, and Aaron and his sons were going to take upon themselves at the bequest of God, at the commandment of God, that they were going to be his priests. So they didn't choose this for themselves. They didn't take anything upon themselves. They were responding to what God had told them, what God had commanded them. It's very important we see this. And those who were challenging it were rebels. They were belonging to the children of rebels. That's what it says here. And notice it is to bring it into their complaining from upon me that they will not die. Now these are some strong words, and it teaches us that principle, God does not like complaining. Remember that, remove complaining from your vocabulary. Don't ever complain. It's never pleasing. It never produces a good outcome. So don't be complainers. Why? Well, what is God doing here? He's going to settle this dispute. The sons of korak said to the house of Levi, that is the tribe of Levi, you've taken too much responsibility on yourselves. You are doing this because you want to do it, not because God has instructed you. God now has acted. He has revealed that's not the case. The Sons of Korah were speaking lies. They do not represent the truth. Yes, indeed, had God uniquely called this tribe of the Levites and the household of Aaron to be priests. This is what's being affirmed here. So it says, to bring in their complaining from upon me that they will not die. So what is God doing? He's reiterating what he's already said, that uniquely, because of who he is, God can choose whatever, whatever God does, it's righteous, it's holy, it's perfect. And he has chosen the tribe of Levi in a unique way to represent in service and in worship the children of Israel, and notice what it says. Look at the next verse, And Moses did just as the Lord commanded him, thus it says he did. Now, wouldn't that be a nice thing that was said about us, that when God commands us to do something that thus we do it just as He commanded. That's where wisdom is, and in order to do what God has commanded, we have to

remain humble. We have to be individuals that recognize God's absolute authority over us. I want to pause for a moment, because just recently, I heard an individual speak. He's from what's called the Heritage Society. It's a conservative organization, and he said something very, very problematic. What he said was this, he was talking about the fact that many conservatives are believers, followers and disciples of Yeshua HaMashiach, or Jesus Christ. He used the term Christians. That's fine. And what did he say? He says, what Christians we are required to put country first? No, that is false. As followers of Messiah and servants of the living God, we are required to put God first. There's going to be many times that we see something that perhaps the nation that we live in that they do things incorrectly. They do not serve God, but they violate the truth of God. They are leading the people, those who they are supposed to lead. They are leading them into rebelliousness. That is not good. That is what the Sons of Korah did. Now, all of this had to do with Israel and basically what. He's saying is this. He's saying, you know, it's not a test of our faith, that we as conservatives, that we support Israel. Well, I have said many times that As believers, we are committed to the truth of God, and whoever violates the truth of God, they are going to suffer a punishment from God. Now we can be forgiven, but that punishment, there's consequences of rebelliousness, and that's true for Israel. It's true for every nation. Why the Bible says God is not a respecter of persons, meaning God has the same standard for all individuals, for Israel and for the nations. This is what we learn in the Scripture. Now I say this because when we look at Israel, people say, Do you ever criticize Israel? Yes, let me give an example. I thought it was totally ungodly for the leadership of Israel. I'm talking about the prime minister for him to continue through these two years and now, when Hamas is not upholding their part of the deal, still, what's going on? Humanitarian aid is coming in. Now, perhaps there's a small reduction, but still, humanitarian aid is coming in. I was against any aid whatsoever. We don't see in the scripture that God says Now, yes, I know the verse that we're supposed to love our enemies and pray for them. That's fine, but what do we we love them for, that they would submit, and what do we pray for that they would repent and that they would become servants of living God? We should pray for that. That is a righteous thing to pray. But if not, there's no biblical mandate that, that when you go to war. And I think we would all agree that what was done on October 7 of 2023 was indeed an act of war. And Israel saw it that way and declared war

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upon Hamas, not all the people of Gaza, but because Hamas is ruling Gaza, there's going to be some suffering for the citizens of Gaza. Why? Because they chose wickedly when they voted for Hamas, and there's consequences to decisions. So let me just simply say the reason why I was against humanitarian aid coming in. It's not that I have a hard heart and I don't want the the people of Gaza to be fed and I want them to suffer. That's not my heart at all. What was my heart? I wanted this conflict to come to an end and sooner than better. Well, what would bring it when the people are suffering, that would cause them, and hopefully even the leadership, to surrender when they start seeing that there's children dying of hunger, there's no aid, there's no assistance. This is going to encouraging the surrender. Well, Israel didn't hold fast to no humanitarian aid. And what could have been over much, much sooner, lasted over two years, and this brought suffering for all the people of Gaza and also for the family of the soldiers and the hostages family, this could have been dealt with much quicker. So biblically, we have no obligation if there's a war declared in order to feed the enemy, that's just not biblical. In fact, if you look at what the Scripture says, it says that we are to, when we're at war, to plug up the wells, destroy the trees, so that there's a long term consequence of this ungodly behavior. That's what the children of Israel were supposed to do. Why? In order to just bring suffering, no to bring an

end a swifter into the conflict, that the war might end, and hopefully there would be spiritual renewal after Well, what do we see here? Go back to our verse, where it says And Moses did praise him for that, just as the Lord commanded him. Thus he did. This is what we should do. And again, there is no commandment that we have to when we're in war. Now, if it's just someone that we don't like, of course we're supposed to provide for them, bless them, help them, feed them, clothe them. That's obvious. That's what we do to the least of our brethren. But when a war is declared, We don't feed and provide for the enemy. That's foolish. Let's look at the next two verses, and then we'll be done. It says, And the children of Israel said to Moses, saying, Behold. And then we have a word that refers to a dead body, and we might translate it, we have died and we have perished. We see these two words, gavanu, avadnu, so gavavnu is we have become a dead body, and we have perished. And it says all of us, we have perished. Now that's teaching us something. When we complain, when we're not committed to the things of God, we don't submit to Him, what are we going to experience? Well, just what it says here, disobedience will, given enough time, bring about death. Now we know something. There is an inherent relationship between sin and death. So when we sin, what is sin? Rebelliousness? It's doing what we want instead of what God has made known to us. It is a rejection of the truth of God. It brings death, and it brings this word for perishing. We have perished is a word of destruction. It brings destruction into our life, and it says, all of us, we have perished. Look at the last verse. Verse, the last verse of the chapter, where it says all, and then we have the word for drawing near. And that word appears twice. So it says all the ones who draw near that draw near. Now, how do we translate that? Well, most scholars would say all the ones who draw utterly near to the tabernacle. Now we have a change in Word, where we saw the phrase ohed Ha Ohel ha edut. Now we see the word Mishkan, which is normally translated tabernacle. So everyone who wants to utterly draw near to the tabernacle of the Lord. Now, why would one do that? Well, this is worship. See, if we're going to worship God, we have to end the complaining. You cannot worship God in the spirit of complaining when you are rebelling against the truth of God. That has to be dealt with. And that's what God's doing here. He's bringing death, but the death of the flesh, he's bringing destruction. To destroy that, that evil inclination that dwells in us through sin. And how do we ultimately destroy that, that evil inclination by faith, through the grace of God, we become that new creation. So it says, All the ones who are utterly drawing near to the tabernacle of the Lord. It says, Here he will. What die now? Why is that? If we come with a spirit of complaining, in a spirit of rebelliousness, and we go before the Lord. We're not ready to worship Him, and it's going to lead to death. And then it says, Haim, that word Haim, it introduces a question. And it says here, Haim, tamnu, what is Tam? Tam is, if we see this word, for example, it represents an end. So have we come to the end of complaining? If we have, it's going to be good if we haven't notice how this chapter concludes. Ligor, what is that to die? It's that same word that speaks of basically a dead body or a corpse. So if we don't learn to stop the complaining, if we don't cease the rebelliousness, we can't worship God. We can't draw near to Him. Everyone who draws near to God in the spirit of complaining and rebelliousness, they are going to experience destruction. They are going to experience death, so we need to bring that to an end. And that's what God's doing, how he's revealing His truth, that he has indeed chosen the tribe of Levi and he has also chosen the house of Aharon or Aaron as the priesthood. So what the Sons of Korah were saying did not come from God. In fact, they were rebelling against God's revelation because God had made it very clear who was called to serve Him who were going to replace the firstborn of the children of Israel. It's the tribe of. The Levites. And when these group of people, the sons of Korok, was rebelling against that God, brought them to an understanding, and what did they experience? Well, we read it a few weeks ago, death, where there

was those 14,000 plus people that lost their life in this rebellion of Korah. So the message is clear, stop rebelling against God. Well, how do you stop rebelling? Very simply, you submit. Let me just give you one last piece of advice or counsel, and that is this. One of the things that I do every morning is I pray God, give me that spirit of submissiveness. Give me a spirit of humility that I might recognize and live under your authority. That is good. That is what every disciple of Messiah is called to, to do, to submit, to be humble, so that we can serve God. Remember what it says about Moses. Moses was the most humble of all humanity, and what was he called a servant of the Lord. That's what we should desire to be servants of God, and the only way to serve God is humbling ourselves coming before him in a spirit of submissiveness and a desire to obey and to do the purposes of God. God reveals His truth. The question is this, are we going to receive that truth? Are we going to recognize it as God's revelation and implement it into our life? That's what a true believer desires. Well, I'll close with that until next week. Shalom from Israel. You