

## The Choice (Num. 17:1-13)

Today's message is entitled the choice. You must be able to choose what God has chosen. May this be the time for you to uncover God's important message for you. We hold to the covenant as we give worship. By God's grace we are giving worship. All mankind must possess the covenant. That is how they will gain life and maintain it. Mankind has never made this covenant yet God has given the covenant to mankind and you must receive the covenant. God desires to save many. At times people may dislike God. Regardless of it all God desires to save them. That is why the covenant has been given to you. When you hold to the covenant you will receive life. When you hold to the covenant you will be able to enjoy all the promises that are contained in the covenant. That is why you must hold to the covenant as you give worship to God. Then Satan will be diminished and the doors to your life will be opened. Of course, God gives us the evidence that is written in the Bible. All those who lived by the covenant had victory and conquest. The condition was always the covenant. May you once again confirm that Jesus is the Christ. For those who are amidst suffering and problems may this be the time of worship that you hold to the covenant. May the small word of life change your life. Of course, at that moment it may not seem like much. There was a small word of God that hit my heart in the past. Of course, I was not able to overcome the word yet it led me to close down my pharmacy and go to seminary school. Of course, I have now become a pastor and speak of world evangelization and this is something that can never be compared to my past. It's not a tremendous work that has hit my heart, it is the small voice of the Lord that penetrated my life to which my life has completely changed. We all know the story of Commander Naaman that is recorded in 2 Kings chapter 5. He was a commander and the King of the army of Syria but he had leprosy so what would happen to him. They invaded Israel and took a little girl as a captive. She shared the work of Elijah that is why he went to go meet him and he was healed from leprosy. Of course, there is no greater answer that he has received compared to this. But yet, his life was overturned by the small words that the little girl spoke to him. So may you once again hold to the covenant of Jesus Christ as you give worship. May you give worship as you pray to God please give me the word that I will be able to enjoy throughout this week and for the rest of my life. Of course, within God's word lies the great and hidden miracles.

### 1. The Choice

Today's message is entitled the choice. Today's chapter is 17 but the story begins from chapter 16. As the Israelites were within the wilderness they rebelled against the Lord. Of course, it records many of the Israelites rebelled against the Lord but also today is one of the passages. May you listen to today's word within the mindset of objectivity if not you will be confused with the pastor's authority. In the past many of the pastors would use this Bible passage to give the sermon regarding the pastor's authority in the church. But of course for us who are heading towards world evangelization our focus should not be on the pastor's authority. This is what is recorded in Numbers 16 verse 1, Now Korah the son of Izhar, son of Kohath, son of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, and On the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men. Verse 2, And they rose up before Moses, with a number of

the people of Israel, 250 chiefs of the congregation, chosen from the assembly, well-known men. So the four men above that were recorded had chosen 250 chiefs of the congregation and they went before Moses. This is what they say in verse 3, They assembled themselves together against Moses and against Aaron and said to them, "You have gone too far! For all in the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the Lord?" The present time they could say that all of us have received the Holy Spirit. It's not only you who have received it but all the assembly members of the Israelites have received it as well. Of course, you have gone too far then why do you exalt yourself above the assembly of the Lord. In verse 4, When Moses heard it, he fell on his face. So he begins to pray to God. God gives the word in verse 5, and he said to Korah and all his company, "In the morning the Lord will show who is his, and who is holy, and will bring him near to him. The one whom he chooses he will bring near to him. The Lord tells them that you must be able to take the censers, Korah, and all his company and you must be able to stand before the Lord. He says that you will be able to see who is holy who he will bring him near to him. God says that it is because they come before and argue that they are holy as well. The situation had taken place so Moses heard and fell on his face, praying to God. The Lord has commanded that 250 men shall bring 250 incense before the Lord. It records that in today's passage. We do not have much time so please read chapter 16 when you return back home. Let me tell you the results. This is what it states in verse 27, "So they got away from the dwelling of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. And Dathan and Abiram came out and stood at the door of their tents, together with their wives, their sons, and their little ones." Who are they? They are the Israelites and when they went before Moses and Aaron, they went to the tent of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. Along with Moses, the elders, and the Israelites, they all stood before the tent along with their wives, sons, and little ones. Verse 31, "As soon as he had finished speaking all these words, the ground under them split apart." Who is he? He is Moses. Moses told the elders, the Israelites, along with Korah, Dathan, and Abiram that if God opens the Earth and they are swallowed up, that is the work of God. God has already told Moses what is to take place, that is why he testifies it before the people. Verse 32, "And the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, with their households and all the people who belonged to Korah and all their goods." This is truly outstanding. The earth opened up and swallowed all of their belongings including their tents. Verse 34, "All Israel who were around them fled at their cry..." They could have never imagined that to take place. They were in fear after they had witnessed that. All of the Israelites fled at their cry. Verse 35, "And fire came out from the Lord and consumed the 250 men offering the incense." This is the core point of today's message. It does not end here. If you take a look at verse 41, "But on the next day all the congregation of the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and against Aaron, saying 'You have killed the people of the Lord.'" It is truly outstanding what they said to them. When they went before Moses and Aaron, trying to stone them, the Lord appeared before them. That is when Moses realized that an illness was spreading amongst the people. That is when Moses called Aaron. Aaron took it as Moses said and ran to the midst of the assembly and placed the incense and

made atonement for the people. It states that as he stood between the people and the dead, the plague stopped. Verse 49, "Now those who died in the plague were 14,700, besides those who died in the affair of Korah." This is not the end. Let's take a look at Numbers 17:12. Because the people were going against the Lord, he tells each of the chiefs to bring a staff. He said to write their name on the staff and see who the Lord chooses. He said to write Aaron's name on the staff of Levi. The Lord said that they should deposit them at the tent of testimony. The next day, Moses went to the tent of testimony, and Aaron's staff was blooming. So God already states the conclusion. God already states the conclusion of who he chose and who Aaron and Moses were to him. Of course, the people of Israel stood before Moses and Aaron. In verse 12, "And the people of Israel said to Moses, 'Behold, we perish, we are undone, we are all undone.'" They state three times that they are undone and truly believe that they would perish before Moses. It is truly outstanding the reason why they said what they said. Verse 13, "Everyone who comes near, who comes near to the tabernacle of the Lord, shall die. Are we all to perish?" Who are those who stood before the Lord's tent? It is Korah, Dathan, Abiram, and the 250 men. Are they truly the ones who stood before the tent of meeting? No, they did not go to give sacrifices to the Lord, they stood before the Lord to be punished by him. People of Israel who were so wicked at the time, said that they were all to perish. It does not state how many days they stood before the tent of meeting, but yet, it states how many days it took for the plague to spread. After 250 men were put to death after two days, they stood before the Lord regarding the plague. They told Moses that he killed the people and tried to stone him to death. Of course we have all witnessed within movies where people were stoned to death. It did not end there, even those people who died from the plague were 14,700, yet, they continued to go against Moses and Aaron. What they have done is truly outstanding. So what choice should God make? It is such a sad and pitiful state. After 250 men have died, the Lord tells them to bring the staff. On the next day, Moses went to the Tent of the Testimony and Aaron's staff budded. And it was only a staff. They thought it would end there, but the people went on. It is such a long story. May you return back home and read each chapter. What is God's conclusion? God's conclusion is that Moses and Aaron are different. They may be the same, but God's choice was different. The Lord says that Korah, Dathan, and Abiram are all the same. They say all the congregation are holy before the Lord. It is because the Lord is within and amidst the assembly of the Israelites. But who do you say exalt yourself before the Lord? This was the logic of Korah and his company. What he said was right, but was completely different from God's result. It was completely different in the fact that God's choice and his calling was different. That is why their position was different as well, as their work and tasks are different as well. What God had entrusted to them is different as well. God's message to the people of the Israelites is that they must abide and obey their word because they are different. God's message is that He will not directly give the Word, but will give it to Moses to relay to them. This is what is fundamentally different between Moses and the people. This was a very important aspect in which they must have realized how important Moses was. It is because the Word of God is the fundamental of all mankind, especially for the people of the Lord. The fundamental to your life

is the Word. Do you not agree to this? In this aspect, he was different. Without the Word, they could never surpass the wilderness. They had no clue of where the water was or how they could win the battles that they had to face. God spoke all of the Word to Moses to which it was all fulfilled. At the time, Moses was their fate and destiny because Moses was the answer for them. It is God's logic that Moses and Aaron are different. There is something far more important than this, something to say that there is a difference between Aaron and Moses and the Israelites. This is the reason God punished them. It is because they had to enter Canaan. God says that I will never give this up or change this. God's choice is absolute. It was the absolute choice at the time that God chose for them to enter the land of Canaan. God never makes a mistake. It was God's absolute choice that without Moses, they would never receive the absolute answer. At the time, there were many lands but God chose Canaan and the land of Canaan was the only answer for them. This is the absolute choice. It is only Jesus Christ. God has chosen Jesus Christ. That is the only answer. It is the end to all. All those who desire to live must believe in Jesus Christ. If you do not desire to do this, it is your fault. God will never change for He is absolute. This is the greater message. Moses and Aaron were different from them. Of course, they were all the same in which they were holy and received the Holy Spirit, however they were different. There is an important message than this. Why did God raise Moses and Aaron? For them to enter the land of Canaan and save many people. You must understand this. For those who have this inside of their heart, they will connect with God. Works will arise within your life and you will receive answers even if you stay put. Because you connect with God, that itself is prayer. Through this incident, God is giving you the message, "You must come to know of this. You must enter within that." There are those who deny God's choice, so what must they do? Even if the 250 men were consumed by fire, let alone having them earth swallowed them up whole. All the people of Israel stood before Moses and Aaron. This is truly an uproar. They speak such nonsense, saying that those who stand near the tabernacle shall die. Are we all to perish? It made no sense. All those that rejected the Lord died as well as their families. Even the little ones who existed. From experience in my past, Americans see little children to be very important. They were so upset that the Lord had killed the little ones, but even the little ones were born as sinners. Should the children be exalted to God? No, of course it is precious to raise your children well. If you do not raise them correctly, they will commit wicked acts in this world. In the end, all those who rejected His Word were put to death. They lit up the incense and went before Moses and Aaron, telling them that they have gone too far, asking how they are different. Since God favored them, God put them to death but let their families live. Those families who went against the Lord were Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. And On had one son who did not follow after his brothers. Of course, On and his family members were supposed to be swallowed up by the ground, yet they were excluded from that. I believe On and his family surrendered before the Lord. In Korah and Abraham's eyes, however, they might have seen them as traitors. However, in God's perspective, when He viewed them, He would have seen them as wise. We must never reject or deny world evangelization. If you do, you are also influencing your family. Korah, Dathan, and Abiram were all very

intelligent. In order for you to gather 250 men, you must have great logic. What is the foundation of that logic? They emphasize that they are like Moses and Aaron. "How are we different from them?" This is such a simple content for them to share to 250 men in which they had such logic to influence them. It is right, but that is not God's choice. They lost hold of the fact that God's choice was completely different from their own perspective. The work that God desires to do is unchanging. That is why world evangelization is the absolute covenant. And Christ is the absolute covenant. You must not speak of anything else. May you not speak of anything else. May you enter into this and become the most blessed person.

## **2. Commission**

The second point we'll look at is "Commission." Commission is another life for the believers. This is the strength of the believers. This is very important. Today's message speaks about the fact that God will get rid of any hindrance to His work. It is not about God's judgment but God's desire for them to enter into the land of Canaan and world evangelization. We read Numbers 14 a couple of weeks ago. It said that the people wept through the night. God is love, and He even shed His blood for His people. And God waited for His people to choose His desire. That is why God's commission is absolute. Yet, many unbelievers have a misunderstanding regarding this. There are people that ask, "Are there no blood or tears from God?" They say, "They've waited 40 years and cried throughout the night. Why can't God just give them a second chance? How is this a god of love?" But God's perspective is different. For them to enter into Canaan is the better way for His people to live. And that is the only way for them to be used to save many people. So, of course, God made this choice. Pharaoh took Abraham's wife. Abraham remained still like a fool. But God favored Abraham and let him live, punishing Pharaoh instead. And people say it was unfair of God to punish Pharaoh and that it wasn't his fault. Yet, God is rational. He knew He needed to save Abraham to save many more people. It's the same for today's passage. If the leadership of Abraham and Aaron were broken apart, there would be no chance of them to enter Canaan. If this happened, they would've been seized by all the work that took place in which 250 men would fight against Moses and Aaron. Of course, Moses and Aaron would have defeated all of them with prayer, but they would be seized by that work. God cannot allow this. God could never accept the hindrance of His work of His people entering the land of Canaan. That is why the Lord said, "If you're so bold about it, bring the incense before Me." It was so tremendous that the 250 men that held on to the incense were all consumed by fire and died. Of course, Korah and his company may say that they go against Moses and Aaron and not the work of God. But God viewed it differently. They had went against the God's work of going to the land of Canaan. And God cannot accept that. Going to Canaan was absolute to that extent. Today's passage is not focused on either the pastors or the elders. It is about Canaan and world evangelization. "If you hinder My work, you have no choice but to perish. But if you enter into My desire, I will bless you like Moses, Aaron, Joshua, and Caleb. So, do not stand on the opposite side. Never forget Aaron's budding staff and remember it forever." That is the message. We all must possess the commission. If there is nothing for you to do,

what do you do? Many say you age quicker when you don't have work to do. If you have nothing to do before the Lord, what can you do? It is the commission God gives to you that you must do before the Lord. That is why commission is another life of the believer. Those that have this commission desire and yearn to live. They are spiritually strengthened. They desire to work for this commission. It is because they have uncovered the reason for them to live. May you all possess the commission. In this aspect, the church is very important. And the worship that we give at church is important. May you not be deceived because of this pandemic and make an excuse to not come to church to give worship and stay at home. May you continuously pray for the church. May you not only pray for the Sunday service but also the Friday and Wednesday service as well. That is how important the church is. We must go hand in hand with the church, and it is our spiritual background for blessings. May you be victorious with the covenant. When you enjoy, the day of conquest will come upon you. May you hold onto the covenant God has given to you. You must live your life with that alone. Everything else lies in God's time schedule. That time is coming to you. With that, may you head towards world evangelization. May we also receive important answers from the church camp.