

GRACE GAZETTE

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Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

Hebrews 12:12-13

THE SONS OF KORAH

And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up together with Korah, when that company died, what time the fire devoured two hundred and fifty men: and they became a sign. Notwithstanding the children of Korah died not. Numbers 26:10-11

Rebellion against the way and order of GOD is a recurring error of mankind throughout his very brief history. It began in the Garden of Eden and has continued until the present hour. No where is this sin and its certain judgment illustrated any more clearly than in the rebellion of Korah and his cohorts, Dathan and Abiram. (see Num.16:1-35) GOD has a prescribed way in which a man may approach unto HIM and HE will only be worshipped in that way. The inherent idolatry that is in the heart of men by nature leads them to devise methods, means, and ways to worship as they desire. We see this trait demonstrated quite early as Cain grew angry when the LORD did not accept the offering he brought. (see Gen.4:2-5) It is just as much an act of idolatry for a man to think he can approach the LORD GOD of heaven and earth according to his own timetable and in his own fashion, as it is to carve a piece of wood or chisel a piece of stone and fall down before it and render homage to a lifeless god. (see II Sam.6:3-7)

Moses was a man appointed by GOD to lead the children of Israel and his brother Aaron was the appointed high priest. They, alone, were authorized to make offerings unto the LORD. But Korah led a rebellion against this "narrow-minded way" and was certain that he had an improved system. He assumed that men had the right to come into the presence of GOD in any fashion they chose. GOD destroyed them and all who were their confederates.

There is but one means of approach unto the true and living GOD. It is through the GREAT HIGH PRIEST who has been appointed by the FATHER even before Aaron (who was a type and foreshadow of this true PRIEST) drew breath. There is but one way in which the FATHER and the SON can be truly worshipped: In spirit and truth. In fact the scripture says HE "*seeketh such to worship him.*" (John 4:23) It is according to HIS purpose and by HIS permission that any of sinful humanity are caused to approach HIS mercyseat. The Samaritan woman assumed that her tradition was fine. The LORD told her that no man's tradition could bring him into the LORD's presence, but only those whom the FATHER "seeketh" would go into that holy place. Modern day churches are full of those who think that they can worship HIM any time they get ready. Most think it is well within the "ability" of men to design their own worship so they often devise pompous methods and practices which satisfy their love of religion. The establishment and perpetuity of a "professional" clergy is indicative of this idea. Most churches have abandoned the scriptural concept of a ministry among the body in favor of setting up a ruling class of "trained professionals" who are able to come in and perform the necessary teaching, administrating, and counseling which they assume the body needs to function. Schools are established which must be staffed by these same "experts" who turn out more and more fresh young faces "equipped" for "the professional ministry". It is a true thing that in the church; GOD calls and endows some with teaching gifts. And there is indeed nothing in the world wrong with a man getting all of the education that he possibly can, regardless of the endeavor he may be called to undertake. But it

is the height of pride for men to think that they can "train", "educate", and "equip" such men in man made institutions to carry on the holy work of laboring in word and doctrine in the local church which is, itself, "*the pillar and ground of the truth.*" (1 Tim 3:15) The LORD designed the church as this training ground and it is impossible that the institutions of men can "equip" those whom the LORD calls and fits for this task. (see Gal.1:16) The church is a living body with one HEAD, and is a brotherhood of priests and kings seated in heavenly places; not a sterile classroom which needs a schoolmarm and a guidance counselor.

Man's natural rebellion against the LORD is never more fervent than when the subject of HIS sovereign unconditional election is mentioned. The sons of Korah provide one of the best illustrations of election found anywhere in all of the word of GOD. The sons of Korah were spared from the destruction that engulfed the children of Dathan and Abiram. Dathan and Abiram's children were not evidently involved in their fathers' rebellion but they were connected to them by birth and as such were judged guilty by GOD. There is no logical explanation as to why Korah's sons should be spared while these others perished except that GOD was pleased to show mercy to them while they were just as guilty as the children of Dathan and Abiram. In fact the case could be made that since Korah was the ringleader, they were even more worthy of death. The whole human race has shown itself to be worthy of eternal destruction. That any should be spared is a testament to the mercy of GOD. Yet even beyond that fact man's mouth must be silent before GOD because as the CREATOR, HE has the absolute right to elect some unto eternal life and reprobate others to eternal destruction before they were ever born or had done good or evil. What can the thing formed say to HIM who created it? (see Rom.9:6-24)

Until a man has bowed before a sovereign GOD and confessed that HE has the power and the right to create a whole world just for the purpose of sending it to hell, (if HE wanted to), there remains within him a seed of rebellion. Man can place no limitations or boundaries on GOD nor prescribe for HIM what is right or wrong. The sovereign work of the LORD in revealing to HIS elect children the mercy that HE has extended to them in giving them the privilege to become the sons of GOD moves them to fall upon their faces in thankful and profuse worship and adoration. And so we see the sons of Korah become a family of singers, musicians, and worshippers for whom many of the Psalms are written. (see Ps.42-49; 84;85;87;88)

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