

~ABIRAM (341)

(A-bi'ram) [Father Is High or Exalted]

- A Reubenite, the son of Eliab and brother of Dathan and Nemuel. He was a family head and one of the principal men in Israel at the time of the Exodus from Egypt.
- Reuben, Israel's firstborn, Reuben's sons. Of Hanoch the family of the Hanochites, of Pallu the family of the Palluites. (**Numbers 26:5**)
- Of Hezron the family of the Hezronites. Of Carmi the family of the Carmites. (**Numbers 26:6**)
- These were the families of the Reubenites, and their registered one's amounted to forty-three thousand seven hundred and thirty. (**Numbers 26:7**)
- And the son of Pallu was Eliab. (**Numbers 26:8**)
- And the sons of Eliab, Nemuel and Dathan and **Abiram**. This Dathan and **Abiram** were summoned one's of the assembly, who engaged in a struggle against Moses and Aaron in the assembly of Korah, when they engaged in a struggle against Yehowah. (**Numbers 26:9**)
- **Abiram** and his brother Dathan supported Korah the Levite in his rebellion against the authority of Moses and Aaron. A third Reubenite, named On, is also included in the initial stage of the rebellion but thereafter receives no mention.
- And Korah the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, proceeded to get up, together with Dathan and **Abiram** the sons of Eliab, and On the son of Peleth, the sons of Reuben. (**Numbers 16:1**)
- Having gathered a group of 250 chieftains, who were **men of fame**, these men accused Moses and Aaron of arbitrarily elevating themselves over the rest of the congregation.
- And Korah the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, proceeded to get up, together with Dathan and **Abiram** the sons

of Eliab, and On the son of Peleth, the sons of Reuben. (**Numbers 16:1**)

- And they proceeded to rise up before Moses, they and two hundred and fifty men of the sons of Israel, chieftains of the assembly, summoned one's of the meeting, men of fame. (**Numbers 16:2**)
- So they congregated themselves against Moses and Aaron and said to them; That is enough of you, because the whole assembly are all of them holy and Yehowah is in their midst. Why, then, should you lift yourselves up above the congregation of Yehowah? (**Numbers 16:3**)
- From Moses words to Korah it is clear that Korah and his followers among the Levites sought the priesthood that had been conferred on Aaron.
- When Moses got to hear it he at once fell upon his face. (**Numbers 16:4**)
- Then he spoke to Korah and to his entire assembly, saying; In the morning Yehowah will make known who belongs to him and who is holy and who must come near to him, and whoever he may choose will come near to him. (**Numbers 16:5**)
- Do this. Take fire holders for yourselves, Korah and his entire assembly. (**Numbers 16:6**)
- And put fire in them and place incense upon them before Yehowah tomorrow, and it must occur that the man whom Yehowah will choose, he is the holy one. That is enough of you, you sons of Levi! (**Numbers 16:7**)
- And Moses went on to say to Korah; Listen, please, you sons of Levi. (**Numbers 16:8**)
- Is it such a little thing for you men that the God of Israel has separated you men from the assembly of Israel to present you to himself to carry on the service of Yehowah's tabernacle and to stand before the assembly to minister to them. (**Numbers 16:9**)
- And that he should bring you and all your brothers the sons of Levi with you near? So must you men also try to secure the

priesthood? (**Numbers 16:10**)

- For that reason you and all your assembly who are gathering together are against Yehowah. As for Aaron, what is he that you men should murmur against him? (**Numbers 16:11**)
- But this was evidently not the case with **Abiram** and Dathan, who were Reubenites. Moses dealt separately with them, and their rejection of his call for them to appear before him contains accusations directed solely against Moses, with no mention made of Aaron.
- They decried Moses leadership of the nation and said that he was **trying to play the prince over them to the limit**, and that he had failed in making good the promise of leading them into any land flowing with milk and honey. Moses prayer to Yehowah in answer to these accusations likewise contains a defense of his own actions, not those of Aaron.
- Later Moses sent to call Dathan and **Abiram** the sons of Eliab, but they said; We are not going to come up! (**Numbers 16:12**)
- Is it so little a thing that you have brought us up out of a land flowing with milk and honey to put us to death in the wilderness, that you should also try to play the prince over us to the limit? (**Numbers 16:13**)
- As it is, you have not brought us into any land flowing with milk and honey, that you may give us an inheritance of field and vineyard. Is it the eyes of those men that you want to bore out? We are not going to come up! (**Numbers 16:14**)
- At this Moses became very angry and said to Yehowah; Do not turn to look at their grain offering. Not one male ass have I taken away from them, nor have I harmed one of them. (**Numbers 16:15**)
- From this it would appear that the rebellion was two-pronged and aimed not only at the Aaronic priesthood but also at Moses position as administrator of God's instructions.
- And they began to envy Moses in the camp, even Aaron the holy one of Yehowah. (**Psalms 106:16**)

- The situation may have seemed opportune for organizing popular sentiment toward a change, since shortly before this the people had severely complained against Moses, had talked of appointing a new head to lead the nation back to Egypt, and had even talked of stoning Joshua and Caleb for upholding Moses and Aaron.
- Then all the assembly raised their voice, and the people continued giving vent to their voice and weeping all through that night. (**Numbers 14:1**)
- And all the sons of Israel began to murmur against Moses and Aaron, and all the assembly began to say against them; If only we had died in the land of Egypt, or if only we had died in this wilderness! (**Numbers 14:2**)
- And why is Yehowah bringing us to this land to fall by the sword? Our wives and our little one's will become plunder. Is it not better for us to return to Egypt? (**Numbers 14:3**)
- They even went to saying to one another; Let us appoint a head, and let us return to Egypt! (**Numbers 14:4**)
- At this Moses and Aaron fell upon their faces before all the congregation of the assembly of the sons of Israel. (**Numbers 14:5**)
- And Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who were of those who spied out the land, ripped their garments apart. (**Numbers 14:6**)
- And they proceeded to say this to all the assembly of the sons of Israel; The land that we passed through to spy it out is a very, very good land. (**Numbers 14:7**)
- If Yehowah has found delight in us, then he will certainly bring us into this land and give it to us, a land that is flowing with milk and honey. (**Numbers 14:8**)
- Only against Yehowah do not rebel. And you, do not you fear the people of the land, for they are bread to us. Their shelter has turned away from over them, and Yehowah is with us. Do not fear them. (**Numbers 14:9**)
- However, all the assembly talked of pelting them with stones.

And Yehowah's glory appeared on the tent of meeting to all the sons of Israel. (Numbers 14:10)

- **Reuben was Jacob's firstborn son but lost his right to the inheritance as such because of wrong action.**
- **And the sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel, for he was the firstborn, but for his profaning the lounge of his father his right as firstborn was given to the sons of Joseph the son of Israel, so that he was not to be enrolled genealogically for the right of the firstborn. (1 Chronicles 5:1)**
- **Thus, Dathan and Abiram may have been expressing resentment at Moses the Levites exercise of authority over them, because of desiring to regain the lost primacy of their forefather.**
- **And the sons of Eliab, Nemuel and Dathan and Abiram. This Dathan and Abiram were summoned one's of the assembly, who engaged in a struggle against Moses and Aaron in the assembly of Korah, when they engaged in a struggle against Yehowah. (Numbers 26:9)**
- **However, shows that their struggle was not only against Moses and Aaron but also against Yehowah, who had divinely commissioned Moses and Aaron to occupy positions of authority.**
- **Since the family of the Kohathites, in which Korah's family was included, encamped on the South side of the tabernacle, the same side as did the Reubenites, it is possible that Korah's tent was nearby those of Dathan and Abiram.**
- **The three-tribe division of the camp of Reuben will be toward the south in their armies, and the chieftain for the sons of Reuben is Elizur the son of Shedeur. (Numbers 2:10)**
- **The families of the sons of Kohath were encamped on the side of the tabernacle to the south. (Numbers 3:29)**
- **At the time of God's expression of judgment, Dathan and Abiram stood at the entrances of their tents, while Korah and 250 rebel supporters were gathered at the entrance of the tent of meeting with their incense holders in their hands. Then, following Moses call to the rest of the people to withdraw from around the tents of the three ringleaders of the rebellion, God manifested his condemnation of their**

disrespectful course by causing the ground to open up beneath the tents of these men, swallowing up Dathan and **Abiram, and their households.**

- **Then Moses said to Korah; You and all your assembly, be present before Yehowah, you and they and Aaron, tomorrow. (Numbers 16:16)**
- **And take each one his fire holder, and you men must put incense upon them and present each one his fire holder before Yehowah, two hundred and fifty fire holders, and you and Aaron each his fire holder. (Numbers 16:17)**
- **So they took each one his fire holder and put fire upon them and placed incense upon them and stood at the entrance of the tent of meeting together with Moses and Aaron. (Numbers 16:18)**
- **When Korah got all the assembly together against them at the entrance of the tent of meeting, then Yehowah's glory appeared to all the assembly. (Numbers 16:19)**
- **Yehowah now spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying; (Numbers 16:20)**
- **Separate yourselves from the midst of this assembly, that I may exterminate them in an instant. (Numbers 16:21)**
- **At this they fell upon their faces and said; O God, the God of the spirits of every sort of flesh, will just one man sin and you become indignant against the entire assembly? (Numbers 16:22)**
- **In turn Yehowah spoke to Moses, saying; (Numbers 16:23)**
- **Speak to the assembly, saying; Get away from around the tabernacles of Korah, Dathan and **Abiram**! (Numbers 16:24)**
- **After that Moses got up and went to Dathan and **Abiram**, and the older men of Israel went with him. (Numbers 16:25)**
- **Then he spoke to the assembly, saying; Turn aside, please, from before the tents of these wicked men and do not touch anything that belongs to them, that you may not be swept away in all their sin. (Numbers 16:26)**

- Immediately they got away from before the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan and **Abiram**, from every side, and Dathan and Abiram came out, taking their stand at the entrance of their tents, together with their wives, and their sons and their little ones. (**Numbers 16:27**)
- Then Moses said; By this you will know that Yehowah has sent me to do all these deeds, that it is not of my own heart. (**Numbers 16:28**)
- If it is according to the death of all mankind that these people will die and with the punishment of all mankind that punishment will be brought upon them, then it is not Yehowah that has sent me. (**Numbers 16:29**)
- But if it is something created that Yehowah will create, and the ground has to open its mouth and swallow up them and everything that belongs to them and they have to go down alive into Sheol, you will then know for certain that these men have treated Yehowah disrespectfully. (**Numbers 16:30**)
- And it came about that as soon as he had finished speaking all these words, the ground that was under them began to be split apart. (**Numbers 16:31**)
- And the earth proceeded to open its mouth and to swallow up them and their households and all humankind that belonged to Korah and all the goods. (**Numbers 16:32**)
- So down they went, and all who belonged to them, alive into Sheol, and the earth went covering them over, so that they perished from the midst of the congregation. (**Numbers 16:33**)
- And all the Israelites who were round about them fled at the screaming of them, for they began to say; We are afraid that the earth may swallow us up! (**Numbers 16:34**)
- And a fire came out from Yehowah and proceeded to consume the two hundred and fifty men offering the incense. (**Numbers 16:35**)
- Nor what he did to Dathan and **Abiram** the sons of Eliab the son of Reuben, when the earth opened its mouth and proceeded to swallow them up and their households and their tents and every

existing thing that stepped after them in the midst of all Israel.
([Deuteronomy 11:6](#))

- The earth then opened up and swallowed down Dathan, and covered over the assembly of **Abiram**. ([Psalms 106:17](#))
- Korah's household, with the exception of his sons, likewise perished. Korah himself died with the 250 rebels, destroyed by fire before the tabernacle.
- And a fire came out from Yehowah and proceeded to consume the two hundred and fifty men offering the incense. ([Numbers 16:35](#))
- Then the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up. As for Korah, he died at the death of the assembly when the fire consumed two hundred and fifty men. And they came to be a symbol. ([Numbers 26:10](#))
- However, the sons of Korah did not die. ([Numbers 26:11](#))
- Thus the rebellion against divinely assigned authority came to a swift termination, and for his share in it, **Abiram's** name was wiped out of Israel.