

This rebellion probably occurred quite a long time after the crisis at Kadesh, for there seems to be no link between the two events. It is not indicated as a movement against the wilderness journey, nor against God's plan for progress to Canaan, nor yet against God's law in general. It seems to have been solely an insurrection against the authority of Moses and Aaron. There is no indication of its exact date, which was probably not near either end of the thirty-eight years of wandering.

The gravity of the revolt is seen in the character of its leaders. Korah was a member of the Kohathite branch of the tribe of Levi, the branch to which Moses and Aaron belonged. With him were three outstanding members of the tribe of Reuben, the firstborn of Israel, and 250 leaders of the congregation. They asserted that all members of the congregation were holy, and therefore that Moses and Aaron had no right to take supremacy over them.

It is true that all sincere believers are equal in God's sight. Yet man, born in sin, is very subject to error. It is necessary that there be a standard of authority. In our day this standard is found in the Word of God. At that time very little of the Bible was yet available. The people were in a crucial situation. The future of Israel's testimony depended on the safe passage of the nation through the wilderness and its establishment in Canaan. Although the insurgents claimed to be following the Lord, they were actually rebelling against Him, since they were opposing the leadership which He had raised up for this vital stage of the progress of His kingdom.

On (1). This man is not mentioned again. Whether he simply followed along with the others and was not considered important enough for further special mention, or whether he withdrew from participation in the opposition to Moses, is unknown.

A special point of contention seems to have been the restriction of the priesthood to Aaron's family. For the sake of good order it was necessary that this important work be restricted to those whom God had set apart for the purpose. At a later time when a good king of Judah attempted to take upon himself the priestly function, God smote him with leprosy (2 Ch. xxviii. 1-5; 16-21).