

# “Aaron’s Credentials”

## Numbers Chapter 17

In the last chapter Korah and some leaders questioned Moses and Aaron’s authority. Ultimately, it was questioning God. Moses and Aaron didn’t seek these positions. God selected them for it. Korah’s rebellion infected the congregation and they too grumbled about Aaron and Moses.

At the end of chapter 16 Aaron stepped up, fulfilling his role as the interceding High Priest before the people.

In this chapter, God is going to demonstrate, once again, that He has selected Aaron for the role of High Priest.

Num 17:1 **1) 12 Ordinary Rods** vs 1-7

Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

Num 17:2 "Speak to the sons of Israel, and get from them a rod for each father's household: twelve rods, from all their leaders according to their fathers' households. You shall write each name on his rod,

Num 17:3 and write Aaron's name on the rod of Levi; for there is one rod for the head of each of their fathers' households.

- Rod was used by shepherds in their work with sheep. It guided them, it disciplined them, it protected them. Psalm 23 "thy rod and thy staff they comfort me"
- God has previously used a rod to establish their ministry. Moses had a rod. It became the "Rod of God"
  1. Exodus 7:9-10 - This rod became a serpent then back to a rod
  2. Exodus 7:17 - This rod was used to turn the Nile River into blood
  3. Exodus 8:5 - This rod used to bring forth frogs
  4. Exodus 8:16-17 - This rod used to bring forth lice
  5. Exodus 9:23 - This rod used to bring forth hail
  6. Exodus 10:3 - This rod used to bring forth locust
  7. Exodus 14:16 - This rod used to part the Red Sea
  8. Exodus 17:9 - This rod used to bring about a victory in battle
  9. Numbers 20:11 - This rod used to bring water out of a rock
- God had Moses collect one rod each from the household of each tribe and write their name on it to distinguish one from the other.
- God gave clear instruction for the household of Levi that Aaron’s name would be on that rod.
- It seems that these rods were ordinary rods. Nothing special.

Num 17:4 "You shall then deposit them in the tent of meeting in front of the testimony, where I meet with you.

Num 17:5 "It will come about that the rod of the man whom I choose will sprout. Thus I will lessen from upon Myself the grumblings of the sons of Israel, who are grumbling against you."

Num 17:6 Moses therefore spoke to the sons of Israel, and all their leaders gave him a rod apiece, for each leader according to their fathers' households, twelve rods, with the rod of Aaron among their rods.

Num 17:7 So Moses deposited the rods before the LORD in the tent of the testimony.

- The rods were placed before the presence of the Lord in the tent of meeting.
- God will demonstrate His choice by allowing only one of the rods to blossom. This would be a definite miracle and a powerful reminder of God’s choice.
  - The decision is a picture of resurrection or fruitfulness from that which was dead
- No longer could Israel assume Moses and Aaron designed these callings upon themselves. Numbers 16:28.
- Each leader handed Moses their rod. You could imagine the hopeful anticipation in their heart as they imagined their rod sprouting.
- God said, "will lessen (rid) from upon Myself the grumblings of the sons of Israel" - Doesn’t mean that Israel will no longer grumble. God will simply no longer regard it.
- Grumblers grumble because of a condition in the heart not because of circumstances.

Num 17:8 **2) 1 Blooming Rod** vs 8-13

Now on the next day Moses went into the tent of the testimony; and behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi had sprouted and put forth buds and produced blossoms, and it bore ripe almonds.

- The very next day, Moses checked on the rods.
- Only one rod sprouted.
  1. Put forth Buds -- Hope / Good Desires
  2. Produced Blossoms -- Holy resolutions / Promising Profession
  3. Bore RIPE almonds -- Fruitfulness of Faith and Love (Clarke)
- The miracle was exceptional in that all three stages of fruitfulness were apparent on one rod.
- Our ministries would be producing these stages of fruitfulness. Hope/Good Desires, Holy Resolutions/Promising Professions. Faith and Love.

Num 17:9 Moses then brought out all the rods from the presence of the LORD to all the sons of Israel; and they looked, and each man took his rod.

- That which was once given in hope, was now retrieved with clear understanding that man cannot choose God's call.
- Each man took his rod. This wasn't a rejection of 11 men. It was a choosing on one. The others still had their rod. Their job.
- Aaron was not more spiritual than the others. His rod was no less dead than the others. The only difference was God choose.

Num 17:10 But the LORD said to Moses, "Put back the rod of Aaron before the testimony to be kept as a sign against the rebels, that you may put an end to their grumbings against Me, so that they will not die."

Num 17:11 Thus Moses did; just as the LORD had commanded him, so he did.

- Aaron's rod was kept in the Ark of the Covenant.
- Hebrews 9:4 "the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, in which was a golden jar holding the **manna**, and **Aaron's rod** which budded, and the **tables of the covenant**"
- It was kept as a reminder for Israel that they would not grumble.
- David Guzik says in the Ark was
  1. the Law which they Broke,
  2. the Manna which they Complained about, and
  3. the Blooming Rod which was due to their rebellion.But God would have the High Priest cover the Ark with the blood that covered those acts of sin and rebellion.

Num 17:12 Then the sons of Israel spoke to Moses, saying, "Behold, we perish, we are dying, we are all dying!"

Num 17:13 "Everyone who comes near, who comes near to the tabernacle of the LORD, must die. Are we to perish completely?"

- The sons of Israel knew that had rebelled against the Lord. Their words show they were fearing judgment upon their sin.
- God will use our rods (Jobs) to establish us in ministry.
- How are we in our Jobs? Fruitful? Are we waiting for a ministry title before we bear fruit of righteousness in dark places?

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