



Korach's sons...

Rabbi Alon Meltzer

*A New Page of Talmud –
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Now Korah, son of Izhar son of Kohath son of Levi, betook himself, along with Dathan and Abiram sons of Eliab, and On son of Peleth—descendants of Reuben -to rise up against Moses, together with two hundred and fifty Israelites, chieftains of the community, chosen in the assembly, men of repute. **Bamidbar 16:1-2**¹ But if God brings about something unheard-of, so that the ground opens its mouth and swallows them up with all that belongs to them, and they go down alive into Sheol, you shall know that those involved have spurned God. Scarcely had he finished speaking all these words when the ground under them burst asunder, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up with their households, all Korah's people and all their possessions.— **Bamidbar 16:30-32**² But the sons of Korach did not die. — **Bamidbar 26:11**³ They were in the plot originally, but at the moment when the rebellion broke out they had thoughts of repentance in their hearts; therefore a high spot was fenced round for them in Gehinnom and they stayed there— **Rashi on Bamidbar 26:11**⁴ It is somewhat surprising that the Torah informs us about this fact here instead of in the story about Korach or in connection with the count of the Levites where we should have been told about which Levites had died. If you accept what we have written it is evident that the Torah chose this occasion to reveal who was the root-cause of Korach's uprising, i.e. Datan and Aviram. If so this was the place to inform us about some other redeeming quality of Korach, namely that his sons were righteous and did not join their father in his rebellion or that they retracted in time. At any rate, whereas Datan and Aviram and all their "houses," i.e. their offspring perished, Korach's sons did not. This is another factor which supports the theory that Datan and Aviram had been the instigators all along. — **Or HaChaim on Bamidbar 26:11**⁵ [Jonah said to the fish]...Show me what is in the sea and in the depths.... Hence we may learn that Jerusalem

Came to rise up against
Moshe...

וַיָּקָמוּ לִפְנֵי מֹשֶׁה
Bamidbar 16:2

stands upon seven (hills), and he saw there the Eben Shethiyah (Foundation Stone) fixed in the depths. He saw there the sons of Korah standing and praying over it. They said to Jonah, Behold thou dost stand beneath the Temple of God, pray and thou wilt be answered. Forthwith Jonah said to the fish, Stand in the place where thou art standing, because I wish to pray. The fish stood (still), and Jonah began to pray before the Holy One, blessed be He, and he said: Sovereign of all the Universe! Thou art called "the One who kills" and "the One who makes alive," behold, my soul has reached unto death, now restore me to life. — **Pirkei D'Rabbi Eliezer 10:9**⁶ We find that sons (or descendants) of Korach sang hymns in the Holy Temple as we know from Psalms 47,1 and 48,1 and others. — **Rabeinu Bachya, Bamidbar 26:11**⁷ After their father followed Datan and Aviram, the enemies of Moshe, they became the students of Moshe, and therefore they didn't follow the instigators and did not die! — **Haemek Davar on Bamidbar 26:11**⁸ Loyalty to an unjust cause is a perversion of honour. — **Brian Herbert and Kevin J Anderson**⁹

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