

# Numbers 16:40

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

To be a memorial unto the children of Israel, that no stranger, which is not of the seed of Aaron, come near to offer incense before the LORD; that he be not as Korah, and as his company: as the LORD said to him by the hand of Moses.

## Analysis

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**"To be a memorial unto the children of Israel"**—zikaron (זִכָּרוֹן) means a reminder, memorial, or monument designed to prevent forgetting. The specific warning: **"that no stranger, which is not of the seed of Aaron, come near to offer incense before the LORD"**—defines "stranger" (zar, זָר) as anyone outside Aaron's lineage. This exclusivity offends democratic sensibilities but establishes that access to God comes through His appointed means, not human presumption.

**"That he be not as Korah, and as his company"**—the memorial warns future generations that Korah's fate awaits those who reject God's mediatorial order. Hebrews 10:19-22 reveals Christ as the fulfillment—we now approach through His priesthood alone, making unauthorized worship still deadly (Hebrews 10:26-31).

## Historical Context

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This memorial functioned throughout Israel's history until the first temple's destruction (586 BC). The altar plating reminded Israel for over 800 years that God determines access terms. The New Testament transforms the principle—Christ's exclusive mediation (1 Timothy 2:5) fulfills Aaronic exclusivity, not abolishing but perfecting the requirement for appointed access to God.

## Related Passages

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**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

## Study Questions

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1. How does Christ's exclusive priesthood fulfill rather than contradict the Aaronic memorial's warning?
2. Why does God insist on appointed mediators rather than allowing direct individual access on human terms?
3. In what ways do modern worship innovations risk the presumption Korah's memorial warns against?

## Interlinear Text

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זָכָר וּן	לִבְנֵי י	יִשְׂרָאֵל ל	לְ מַעַן	כִּאֲשֶׁר ר	לֹא
To be a memorial	unto the children	of Israel	H4616	that	H3808
H2146	H1121	H3478		H834	
יָקֹרֵב ב	אֵין יֵשׁ	כִּאֲשֶׁר ר	לֹא	מִזֶּרַע	אֶהְרֹן
come near	no stranger	H2114	that	H3808	which is not of the seed
H7126	H376		H834		H2233
וְהָיָה ה	וְהָיָה ה	לִפְנֵי י	קֵטֹרֶת	לְהִקְטִיר ה	וְהָיָה
H1931	to offer	incense	before	as the LORD	H3808
	H6999	H7004	H6440	H3068	H1961
כִּלְכֹּל בַּח	וְכַם עֲדַת ו	כִּאֲשֶׁר ר	דִּבֶּר ר	וְהָיָה ה	
that he be not as Korah	and as his company	that	said	as the LORD	
H7141	H5712	H834	H1696	H3068	
בְּיַד	מֹשֶׁה ה	לּוֹ:			
to him by the hand	of Moses	H0			
H3027	H4872				

## Additional Cross-References

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**Numbers 3:10** (Parallel theme): And thou shalt appoint Aaron and his sons, and they shall wait on their priest's office: and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death.

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