

Numbers 17

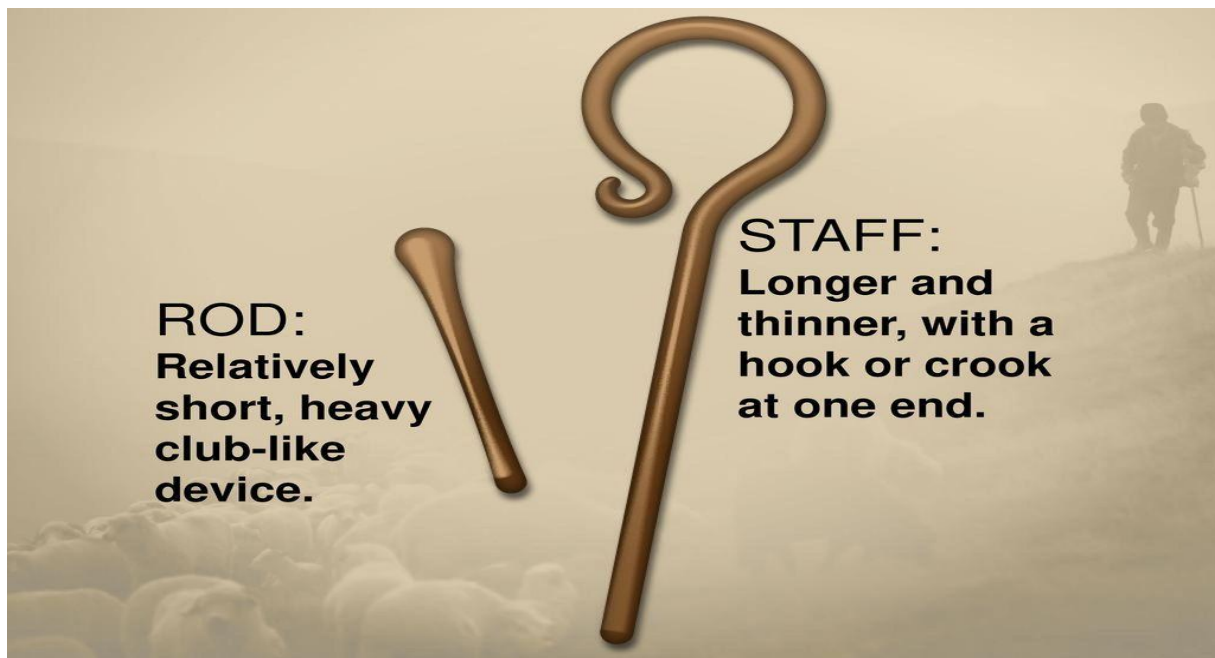
Verses 1 – 7

Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ² “Speak to the sons of Israel, and obtain from them a staff for each father’s household: twelve staffs, from all their leaders for their fathers’ households. You shall write each man’s name on his staff, ³ and write Aaron’s name on the staff of Levi; for *there is to be* one staff for the head of *each* of their fathers’ households. ⁴ You shall then leave them in the tent of meeting in front of the testimony, where I meet with you. ⁵ And it will come about that the staff of the man whom I choose will sprout. So I will relieve myself of the grumblings of the sons of Israel, who are grumbling against you.” ⁶ So Moses spoke to the sons of Israel, and all their leaders gave him a staff, one for each leader, for their fathers’ households, twelve staffs *in all*, with the staff of Aaron among their staffs. ⁷ Then Moses left the staffs before the Lord in the tent of the testimony.

Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ² “Speak to the sons of Israel, and obtain from them a staff for each father’s household: twelve staffs

The staff and rod were the tools of a shepherd

See Pic 1705



1. The rod was a sturdy wooden stick used as a weapon to fight off wild animals. The rod is a symbol of the Lord's strength and protection.
2. The staff is a symbol of the Lord's guidance and lovingkindness. The shepherd used his staff to keep his sheep out of danger and close to himself. The shepherd would loop the curved end of the staff around the neck of the sheep and retrieve it back to safety.

See Psalms 23:4

**Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I fear no evil, for You are with me;
Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.**

⁵ And it will come about that the staff of the man whom I choose will sprout. So I will relieve myself of the grumblings of the sons of Israel, who are grumbling against you."

God was tired of the grumbling so He decided to give the people one last sign so they might accept the fact that He had chosen Aaron and his sons to be the priests. The people had already been given 3 signs in the last 24 hours that the rebellion would not be tolerated.

1. The earth opening up and swallowing the main leaders.
2. Fire from heaven consuming the 250 men of renown.
3. A plague that killed 14,700 of the common people.

If these supernatural events had not convinced the people that the priesthood belonged to Aaron & his sons how would the budding of his staff change their mind?

Verses 8 - 11

⁸ Now on the next day Moses went into the tent of the testimony; and behold, Aaron's staff for the house of Levi had sprouted and produced buds and bloomed with blossoms, and it yielded ripe almonds. ⁹ Moses then brought out all the staffs from the presence of the Lord to all the sons of Israel; and they looked, and each man took his staff. ¹⁰ But the Lord said to Moses, "Put the staff of Aaron back in front of the testimony to be kept as a sign against the rebels, so that you may put an end to their grumblings against me and they do not die." ¹¹ Moses did so; just as the Lord had commanded him, so he did.

⁸ Now on the next day Moses went into the tent of the testimony; and behold, Aaron's staff for the house of Levi had sprouted and produced buds and bloomed with blossoms, and it yielded ripe almonds.

Moses captured this moment with his phone. 😊

See Pic 1710



¹⁰ But the Lord said to Moses, “Put the staff of Aaron back in front of the testimony to be kept as a sign against the rebels, so that you may put an end to their grumblings against me and they do not die.”

See Pic 1711



The artist who drew this must have misread the text because he/she failed to include the blossoms and ripe almonds.

Also, the poles to carry the ark should be on the short side of the ark and should be attached to the feet (where are the feet). Details matter.

See Exodus 25:12

¹² **You shall also cast four gold rings for it and fasten them on its four feet; two rings shall be on one side of it, and two rings on the other side of it.**

Verse 12

¹² Then the sons of Israel spoke to Moses, saying, “Behold, we are passing away, we are perishing, we are all perishing! ¹³ Everyone who comes near, who comes near to the tabernacle of the Lord, must die. Are we to perish completely?”

It appears that the people had come to the wrong conclusion. The people that died were killed for the following reasons.

1. Worshipping the golden calf.
2. Their grumblings about the lack of meat.
3. When they rejected the Promised Land.
4. When some tried to take over the priesthood.
5. Because they rejected the leadership of God, Moses and Aaron.

There was a restriction concerning the common people entering the Tabernacle but they were encouraged (commanded) to bring their sacrifices there. How in the world did they come to the conclusion that coming near to the tabernacle was the reason for them perishing?