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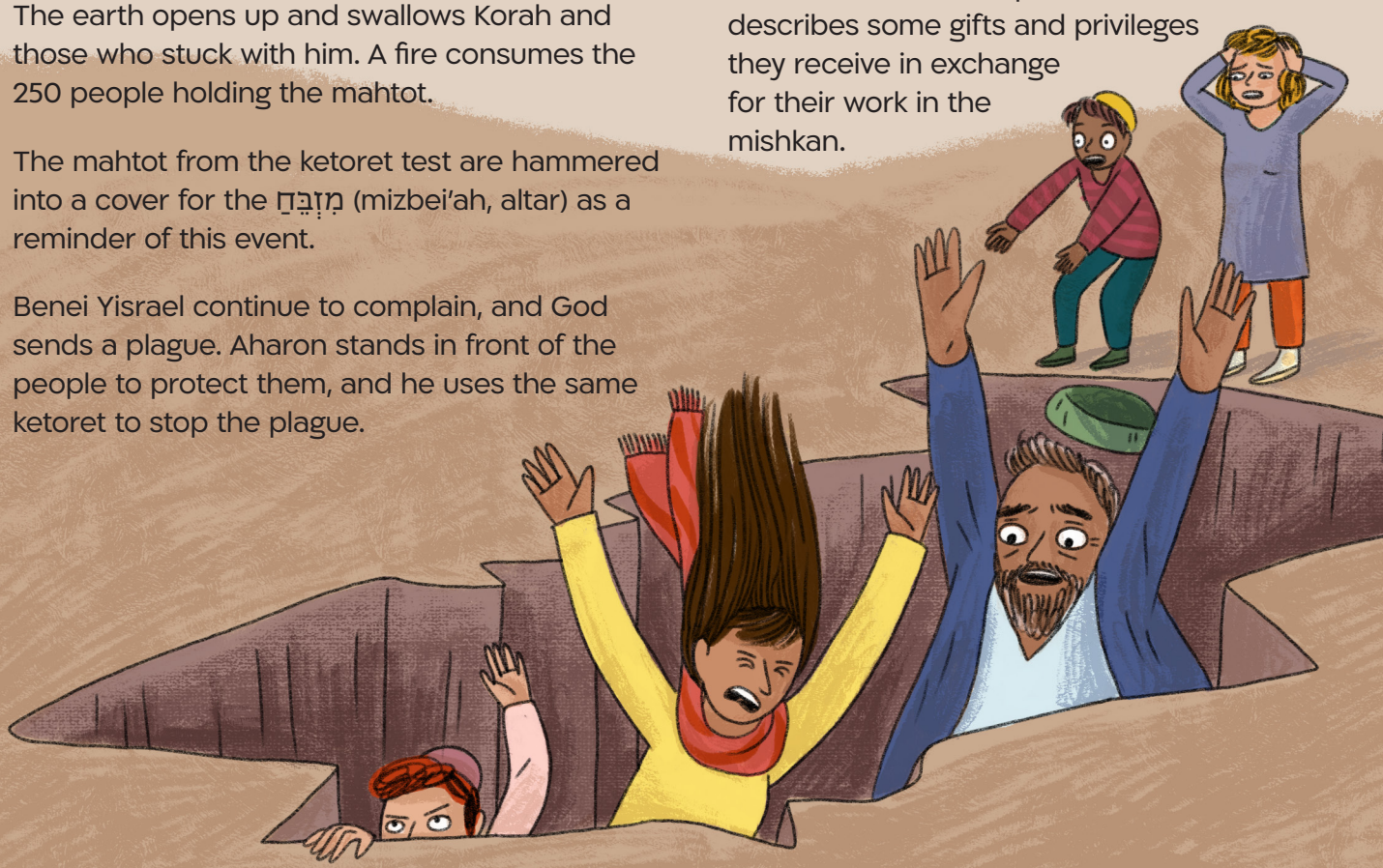




ב"ד - ל' סִיוָן תשפ"ד June 30 - July 6, 2024

## מָה בַּפָּרָשָׁה • In This Week's Parashah

- Korah leads a rebellion against Moshe and Aharon. He is joined by Datan, Aviram, and 250 others.
- Moshe sets up a test. Aharon and the 250 others will bring קְטֹרֶת (ketoret, incense) offerings in מַחְתּוֹת (mahtot, firepans). Everyone will see which ketoret God chooses.
- The earth opens up and swallows Korah and those who stuck with him. A fire consumes the 250 people holding the mahtot.
- The mahtot from the ketoret test are hammered into a cover for the מִזְבֵּחַ (mizbei'ah, altar) as a reminder of this event.
- Benei Yisrael continue to complain, and God sends a plague. Aharon stands in front of the people to protect them, and he uses the same ketoret to stop the plague.
- Moshe collects a staff from each שֵׁבֶט (shevet, tribe). Aharon's staff represents Shevet Levi. The next morning, Aharon's staff miraculously blossoms with almonds.
- It's clear that God chooses the כֹּהֲנִים (kohanim, priests) and לְוִיִּם (Levi'im, Levites). The parashah describes some gifts and privileges they receive in exchange for their work in the mishkan.



## פַּרְשָׁנוּת • Commentary

**Bemidbar 16:3**

They (Korah and his followers) gathered against Moshe and Aharon, saying to them, "You have too much! The entire community is all holy, and God is among them. Why do you lift yourselves up over the congregation of God?"

**במדבר טז:ג**

וַיִּקָּהֲלוּ עַל מֹשֶׁה וְעַל אַהֲרֹן
וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֲלֵהֶם רַב לָכֶם
כִּי כָל הָעֵדָה כֻּלָּם קְדֹשִׁים
וּבְתוֹכָם ה׳
וּמַדּוּעַ תִּתְנַשְּׂאוּ עַל קְהַל ה׳:



You might wonder: **What was the problem with Korah's claim? Isn't it true that the people are holy and that God is with them?** Yet the Torah makes it clear that Korah is the bad guy in the story. Our פַּרְשָׁנִים (parshanim, commentators) explain why:

**R. Shimshon Raphael Hirsch (Germany, 150 years ago)**

They are a people sanctified to God, and with every fiber of their being, as individuals and as a people, they belong only to God, but they are not holy yet. Rather, their task is to rise up and to uplift themselves to their holy calling. They must not... pretend to be holy already just because they were called to become holy. Instead, their holy calling should be their goal they try to reach.

R. Hirsch explains that the people are holy only in the sense that they have been given a mission to become holy through the Torah. But that's not the same thing as being holy automatically. Korah's mistake was to think that the people are already holy without having to work at it!

- What kind of holiness does Benei Yisrael have? If it's not something they already are, what is it?
- How are Benei Yisrael supposed to become holy? How can you make yourself more holy?







### מלבי"ם

וְאִם תֹּאמַר שֶׁאַתֶּם גְּדוֹלִים מִן הָעֵדָה מִצַּד שֶׁבָּכֶם בָּחַר ה' לִנְבוּאוֹת אֶתְכֶם וּלְהַשְׁכִּין שְׁכִינָתוֹ עֲלֵיכֶם וְקָרוֹב ה' אֲלֵיכֶם יוֹתֵר מִכָּל הָעֵדָה עַל זֶה אָמַר "וּבְתוֹכָם ה'" וְאַחַר שֶׁאֵין לָכֶם יִתְרוֹן עַל הָעֵדָה מַדּוּעַ תִּתְנַשְּׂאוּ, וּבָזֶה נָפְלוּ בְּטָעוּת שֶׁטָּעוּ בְּעֵת מַתַּן תּוֹרָה שֶׁרָצוּ שֶׁלֹּא יִהְיֶה בֵּינֵיהֶם חִלּוּף מַדְרֵגוֹת.

### Malbim (Eastern Europe, 200 years ago)

Korah said to Moshe and Aharon, "if you think you are greater than the people because God chose you to be prophets and to have God's presence closer to you than to anyone else, that's wrong because God is close to everyone! So you're no better than anyone else and you should not lead." But this was his mistake—he wanted there to be no difference between people.

Malbim thinks that Korah is right about everyone being holy, but he's wrong to think there isn't a difference between Moshe and Aharon and the rest of the people. God is close to everyone, and everyone is holy, but there are still differences between people, and it's still good to have special leaders like Moshe and Aharon.

- If everyone is holy, and God is close to everyone, why is it still important to have special leaders?
- How can some people become even holier than they already are? How can this connect to R. Hirsch on page 2?
- How does it feel to think you are holy and that God is close to you? How can that feeling help you appreciate people like Moshe and Aharon even more? Can you think of people in your life who can be models to you to become even holier and closer to God than you already are?

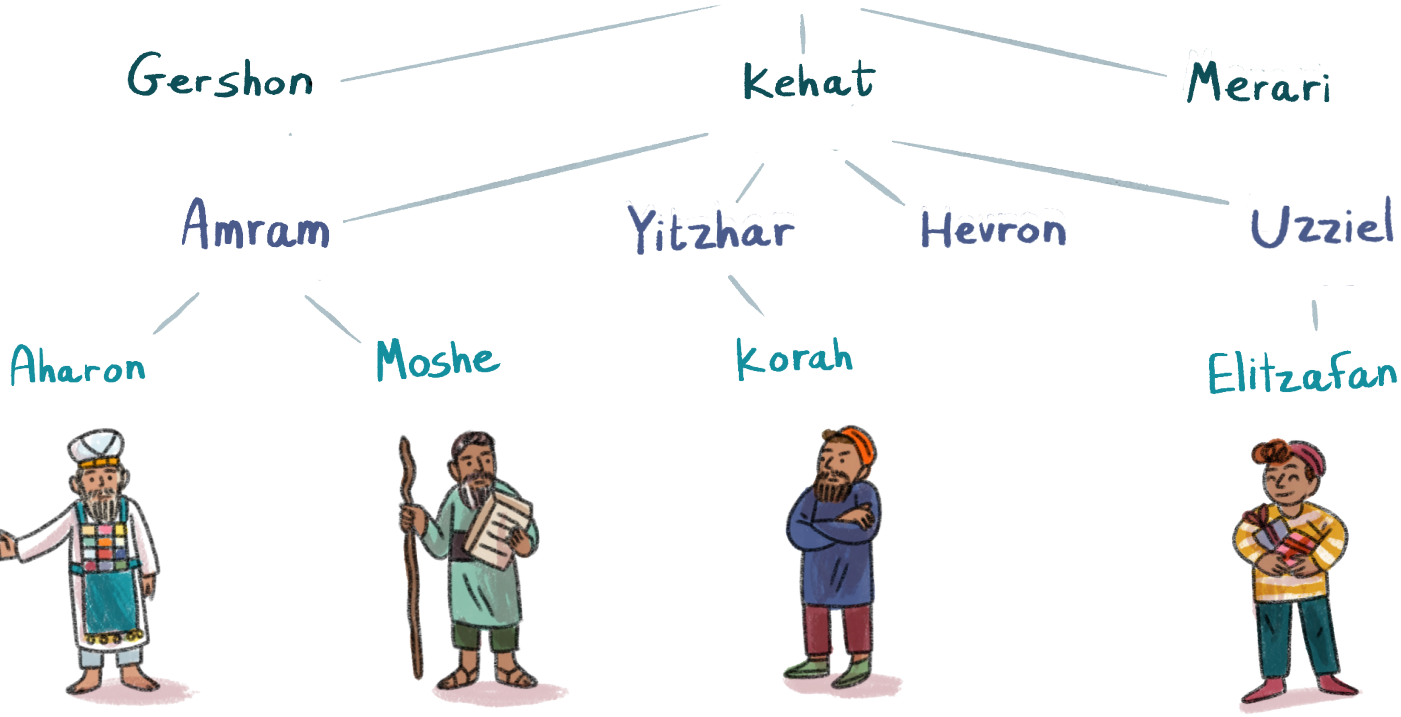


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## פֵּרוּשִׁים • Commentary

Did you know Korah and Moshe were first cousins?




Rashi explains that these family dynamics are the background for Korah's rebellion:

**Rashi (France, 1,000 years ago)**

Why did Korah decide to fight with Moshe? He was jealous about Elitzafan ben Uzziel, whom Moshe appointed as nasi (chief) over the children of Kehat based on God's word (see Bemidbar 3:30).

Korah said, "My father was one of four brothers... Amram the eldest had two of his sons get greatness—Moshe is ruler and Aharon is Kohen Gadol (High Priest). Who should be next in line (to become

**רש"י**

וּמָה רָאָה קֹרַח לַחֲלֹק עִם מֹשֶׁה? נִתְקַנֵּא עַל נְשִׂיאוּתוֹ שֶׁל אֱלִיצָפָן בֶּן עֻזִּיאֵל, שֶׁמִּנָּהוּ מֹשֶׁה נָשִׂיא עַל בְּנֵי קְהָת עַל פִּי הַדִּבּוּר.

אָמַר קֹרַח, אַחֵי אַבָּא אַרְבָּעָה הָיוּ... עַמְרָם הַבְּכוֹר נָטְלוּ שְׁנֵי בָנָיו גְּדֻלָּה, אֶחָד מֶלֶךְ וְאֶחָד כֹּהֵן גָּדוֹל, מִי רָאוּי לִטֹּל אֶת הַשְּׁנִיָּה?

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לֹא אֲנִי שֶׁאֲנִי בֶּן יִצְהָר, שֶׁהוּא שֵׁנִי לְעַמְרָם? וְהוּא מִנָּה נָשִׂיא אֶת בֶּן אָחִיו הַקָּטָן מִכֻּלָּם, הֲרֵינִי חוֹלֵק עָלָיו וּמְבַטֵּל אֶת דְּבָרָיו.

leader of the tribe)? Am I not the son of Yitzhar, who was the eldest after Amram? And Moshe appointed Elitzafan, son of the youngest brother?! So I will rebel against Moshe and undo his words."

- Look at Korah's complaint in the beginning of the parashah (Bemidbar 16:1-3). Can you find evidence for Rashi's reading?
- According to Rashi, what did Korah really want? Was his rebellion about the holiness of the people, or was it something else? What does this tell us about Korah?
- Can you think of another story in the Torah in which people were bothered because a younger brother was given something great? (Hint: look in Bereishit 37!) How did that go? What do you think the Torah could be teaching us about age order, greatness, and jealousy?






## דַּקָּה שֶׁל דִּיּוּן • One-Minute Debate



**Debate: Never go to bed angry.**

### *How to play:*

- Here are some arguments to get you started, but try to come up with your own. Then debate someone!
- For a true one-minute debate, give each side 30 seconds to make its best case.





### *Agree!*

- You won't have a good sleep.
- End your day with a peaceful feeling.

### *Disagree!*

- Sometimes a night of sleep can change your perspective. You might go to bed angry and feel way better in the morning.
- At night you might be too tired to work things out. It's best to sleep on it and find a solution when you're well-rested.



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**aliyot:**
**1)** Bemidbar 16:1 to 16:13
**2)** 16:14 to 16:19
**3)** 16:20 to 17:8
**4)** 17:9 to 17:15
**5)** 17:16 to 17:24
**6)** 17:25 to 18:20
**7)** 18:21 to 18:32

**haftarah for Shabbat Rosh Hodesh:** Yeshayahu 66:1 to 66:24

# שְׁאֵלוֹת הַשָּׁבוּעַ • Parashah Scavenger Hunt

The answers to the first seven questions can be found in the matching numbered aliyah in the Torah reading. The answers to questions 8 and 9 are harder and can come from anywhere in the parashah. The answer to question 10 is in this week's haftarah.

Good luck!



1. What was Korah's relationship to Levi?
2. What has Moshe **not** taken from any of Korah's followers?
3. What happens to the copper mahtot used by the 250 rebels?
4. How many people died in the plague that followed Korah's rebellion?
5. What was written on the staff for the tribe of Levi?
6. Aharon and his descendants get a lot of privileges, but what do they not get?
7. Where are Bnei Yisrael instructed to stay away from?
8. How many times in our parashah does God talk directly to Aharon without speaking to Moshe?
9. Which person started out as a named rebel and then disappeared from the story? What tribe was he from?



10. **From the haftarah:** Who will rejoice with Yerushalayim?

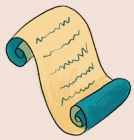
* Look for the answers on page 8!

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## מִדְרָשׁ • Midrash

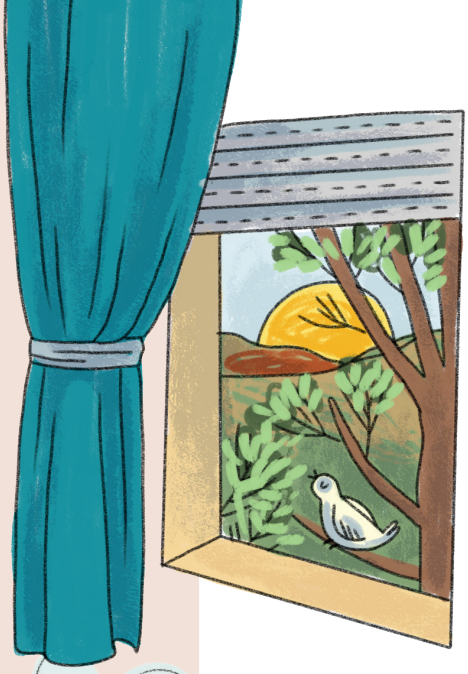
Korah and his 250 followers rebel against Moshe and Aharon's leadership. Here's Moshe's response:

**במדבר טז:ה**

וַיְדַבֵּר אֶל קֹרַח וְאֶל כָּל עֲדָתוֹ לֵאמֹר
בֹּקֶר וְיֹדַע ה' אֶת אֲשֶׁר לוֹ
וְאֶת הַקָּדוֹשׁ וְהִקְרִיב אֵלָיו...

**Bemidbar 16:5**

Then Moshe spoke to Korah and all his company, saying, "In the morning God will make known who is God's own, and who is holy to be drawn close..."





Bzzzz
A lot of midrashim are **bugged** by something unusual in the Torah text

Why does Moshe tell them to wait until the next morning? Couldn't God just have dealt with the situation right away?

**תנחומא קרח ה:א**

אָמַר מֹשֶׁה, שְׁמָא מִתּוֹךְ רֹב מַאֲכָל וּמִשְׁתֶּה אָמְרוּ דָּבָר זֶה.

לְכָךְ אָמַר, בֹּקֶר. אָמַר, שְׁמָא בֵּין כָּךְ וּבֵין כָּךְ יַעֲשׂוּ תְּשׁוּבָה.

**Tanhuma Korah 5:1**

Moshe said: Maybe they rebelled because they ate or drank too much.

That is why he said, "In the morning." He was saying: Maybe between then and now they will change their minds and do teshuvah (repent).

According to this midrash, Moshe doesn't want to rush to conclusions, and he wants to give Korah and his followers a chance to gain forgiveness without punishing them. He delays the response because he's hoping that their feelings were only temporary, and that they might wake up in the morning with a different perspective and change their minds.

- What does this midrash teach us about Moshe? Would you be able to have that much patience and understanding if you were the leader and people were rebelling against you?
- When we feel attacked, it can be hard to show understanding and patience for the people we're dealing with. Can Moshe's example help us do this? What else can help?



## דִּקְדּוּק • Grammar

A while back we learned about the הִתְפַּעֵל (hitpa'el) form of a word—it's usually used when you want to talk about someone doing something to themselves.

It's pretty simple to make a hitpa'el word. You find the three-letter שֹׁרֶשׁ (shoresh, root) you are working with, and those three letters fill the spaces where the letters פ.ע.ל are in הִתְפַּעֵל. For example:

The shoresh ל.ב.ש is about getting dressed, so הִתְלַבֵּשׁ (hitlabesh) means "got himself dressed."

The shoresh ק.ד.ש is about holiness, so הִתְקַדֵּשׁ (hitkadesh) means "made himself holy."

But not all shorashim are the same. Some start with letters that use your teeth, like the letters zayin, samekh, tzadi, and shin/sin. When that happens, it can become hard to pronounce them right after a tav sound. So the tav moves forward to help out! Here's a great example from our parashah:



כִּי תִשְׂתָּרֵר עָלֵינוּ גַּם הִשְׂתָּרֵר

That you should make yourself in charge, in charge of us? (Bemidbar 16:13)

The words תִּשְׂתָּרֵר (tistarer) and הִשְׂתָּרֵר (histarer) are both hitpa'el forms. But can you tell what the root is?

It's ש.ר.ר, which means to be in charge of people. But try, if you can, to say הִתְשָׂרֵר (hitsarer)—it's a lot harder, isn't it? So the letters switch to make it easier to pronounce: histarer. Phew.




### Parashah Scavenger Hunt Answers:

1. He was his great-grandson (16:1)
2. A donkey (16:15)
3. They are beaten into a covering for the copper מִזְבֵּחַ (mizbe'ah, altar) (17:2-4)
4. 14,700 (17:14)
5. Aharon's name (17:18)
6. Land (18:20)
7. The אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד (ohel moed, tent of meeting) (18:22)
8. Three (18:1, 8, 20)
9. On ben Pelet from the tribe of Reuven (16:1)
10. Those who love Yerushalayim and those who mourned for Yerushalayim (Yeshayahu 66:10)