

And Korach...and Dasan and Aviram took (16:1) – Rav Baruch Gigi Shlita points out that the Korach rebellion consisted of 2 groups, Korach and the Bnei Levi who were arguing for their right toward MORE spirituality in leadership and Dasan and Aviram who wanted no leadership at all. Dasan and Aviram were ready to return to Egypt, to a situation in which there was no need for any leaders trying to guide the people to any objectives at all. In our times, general society is largely apathetic when it comes to spiritual progress and the setting of goals. People are tired of wars, uninterested in battles, and want to be left alone in peace. This outlook has seeped into our circles, too. We find ourselves confronted with mediocrity, a sense of resting on laurels, and a lack of goals. We must stand firm against this atmosphere, and aspire to greatness. We must set ourselves new challenges and goals and aspire to attain them. Every day is an opportunity to try to progress, to grow, to raise ourselves higher.

When Moshe heard, he fell on his face (16:4) – Rashi writes that this was Bnei Yisrael's 4th offense – after the Eigel and the Misoninim and the spies an additional offense got Moshe to sink his hands. **Rav Moshe Feinstein ztl.** explains that arguing with Torah leaders is worse than the other Avairos. Only non-believers commit the other offenses but rebelling against Torah leaders can be done even by those who believe – yet this leads to a breakdown of even a few that can cause a much bigger breakdown of Torah values. In other cases sins are recognized as being committed by sinners. Here, it is more global and therefore more damaging.

In the morning Hashem will make known (16:5) – Rashi notes that in the same sense that day is clearly distinct from night, He distinguished between *kohanim*, *leviim*, and *yisraelim*. However, **Rav Schachter Shlita** quickly would regularly that we speak of Daled Amos Shel Halacha – referring to a broad two dimensional area of *muttar*, and not just a straight line. In the Torah way, we don't have to be careful not to get "out of line", rather we have to be careful not to cross over the border (*gevulos*). While raising kids, Rav Schachter Shlita would encourage us to raise them uniquely as long as they are all raised within the 4 amos of Halacha.

Is it not enough that you took us up from a land flowing with milk and honey (16:13) – Was Korach so blind that he really thought that Mitzrayim was a land of milk and honey and all sorts of good? How could someone so intelligent fall for such nonsense? **Rav Dessler ztl.** cites Rav Hai Gaon who compared the situation to a fox who was cornered by a lion. The fox convinced the lion that he would rather devour a certain fat human who was but a distance away. The lion expressed concern since he was worried that he might be getting into a trap. The fox assured him that not he nor his child but only the grandchild would need to worry. The lion pounced—and fell into a trap. As the fox walked around the trap, the lion asked him how he could have been entrapped if the fox had promised that only the grandchild would be ensnared? He was told that his grandfather too, had been provided the same promise. Rav Dessler added that sometimes, when one considers the reward and not the path to it, often it leads one to overlook obvious challenges that lead one to make ridiculous statements. Korach knew better but he was so quick to be correct in order to claim the Kehuna, he failed to see the trap in his words.

I did not even take one donkey from them (16:15) – Rashi explains that when Moshe went from Midyan to Mitzrayim he did not use a "company donkey". What would have been so bad HAD he used one of their donkeys? **Rav Wolbe ztl.** explains that he was able to openly declare that he had no Negios from his position. He wanted to be sure that his earned money was clean and not tainted.

Remove yourselves from on top of the tents of these evil people and do not touch anything that is theirs (16:26) – Why can't the people touch their objects? Rav Shach ztl. once noted that when one is so consumed with this world, you would expect him to live life to the complete fullest. However, we find that these people tend to spend their time in earth chasing valueless trinkets. Why hold onto something that has no value? Thus, Moshe told the people to have nothing to do with the philosophy of these people as it won't even achieve THEIR goals – only their desires.

The one I choose, his staff will flower (17:20) – If the tests themselves and the ground opening did not impress the people, why should this test prove anything? **Rav Simcha Zissel Broide ztl.** explained that the people thought Moshe was calling the shots and Hashem was going along with his plan. By seeing that Moshe's request was fulfilled AND that Hashem went even further – it guaranteed that the people knew that this was indeed Hashem's masterplan.

Haftorah: The earth is my footstool (Yeshayahu 66:1 – Shabbos Rosh Chodesh) – The Gemara (Kiddushin 31a) determines that the meaning of this Possuk is that when one violates an Issur in private it is as if he is pushing away the feet of the Shechina. In other words, if a person really believed that Hashem was watching him, he would not do the Avaira. **Rav Shimon Schwab ztl.** explained that the Malachim in Shomayim turn to praise Hashem when they realize that Hashem's Kedusha is brought down to the miniscule earth when Baalei Bechirah – human beings who are free agents choose to bring Hashem there. Every minute that the Baal Bechira chooses to bring Hashem there, the person brings Kavod Hashem into the world. Still, the space is physically limiting – at best it is a small impression of what Kavod Hashem is really about --- hence the land is but the footstool to Kavod Shomayim.