

**And they congregated on Moshe and Aharon (16:3)** – The Mishna in Avos (5:17) notes that the Machlokes of Korach and his cohorts is an example of one that will not endure. **Rav Ovadiah Yosef ztl.** highlights the fact that Korach and his cohorts was only one side of the Machlokes. Why does the Mishna not note the fact that it was a disagreement between them and Moshe? He answers that when there is a Machlokes that is for the sake of heaven so each side unites in support of its opinion. Unique to Korach and his cohorts was the fact that at the same time that they were disagreeing with Moshe, they were not even united themselves – for each one believed that he and he alone, was the rightful heir to the Kehuna.

**And they said we shall not go up (16:12)** – **Targum Yonasan** explains that they demurred the opportunity to enter the land of Israel. **Rav Moshe Wolfson Shlita.** asks how this is possible if the people had already been told that as a result of the sin of the Miraglim they would not enter the land? Why is their response so insulting to Moshe? Rav Wolfson answers that the Shevet of Reuben represented by the month of Tammuz – had a chance to engage Teshuva since they are the tribe of Teshuva. Their leaders refused Moshe's call to Teshuva which could have reversed the general decree. Dasan and Aviram decided to remain stubborn in their dismissing of the land of Israel. Rav Wolfson explains that the same is true today – many have become turned off to living or supporting Israel because of the challenges of living there. However, one has the obligation to live in the opposite manner – to support Israel and to desire to merit to live there at some point --- to see the land as a gift.

**Moshe was angry and he said to Hashem Do not accept their Mincha offering (16:15)** – Why does it bother Moshe so much if Hashem “looks to their Mincha”? What kind of Tefillah was Moshe offering? **Rav Eliyahu Bakshi Doron Shlita** explains that Moshe was afraid that Hashem would examine the Mesirus Nefesh that the 253 used in offering Ketores and perhaps offer some degree of Zechus as a result (ala Sotah) which would allow the seed of Machlokes to continue within the Jewish camp.

**Remove yourselves from the Mishkan of Korach, Dasan V'aviram (16:24)** – Why is the word Mishkan used to refer to their tents? **Rav Mordechai Gifter ztl.** explains that this is not by accident. Rather the debates between Dasan and Aviram and Moshe dated all the way back to Moshe's time in Mitzrayim. Those issues so splintered them from the mainstream, it was as if they had established another Mishkan in their midst – a separate camp based on an alternative ideology. It was the entire ideology that Moshe wanted the rest of the people to move away from.

**The Matos (17:1)** – **Daas Sofrim** explains that the story of the Matos was necessary in order to teach us a valuable lesson – just because the source of a challenge has been eliminated does not mean that the problem has been eliminated. The challenge of the Korach did not end when Korach died – at that point Moshe needed to engage Bnei Yisrael in a healing process to bring them closer to Hashem. The absence of distance is not closeness.

**And it blossomed and brought forth almonds (17:23)** – Generally when a fruit tree begins to bear fruit, the flower falls off. Here, the flower remained as part of the sign. Why? Moreover, the

test was to see whose stick would flower (17:23) – why the fruit AND the flower? **Rav Gedaliah Schorr ztl.** reminds us of the reason for the test – to see who would be worthy of leading the people. Often leaders suffer from a lack of “freshness” when they get into the later years of their lives. The message in Aharon’s case was not only that his efforts “bore fruit” but that at the same time, he approached the job with a certain freshness – a Hitchadshus – each and every day

**And behold I have given you the guardianship of my Teruma (18:8)** – The braisa at the end of Pirkei Avos compares Torah to Kehuna and Malchus by noting that Torah is greater than Kehuna since Kehuna has 24 gifts while torah is acquired in 48 ways. Why is the fact that there are 24 gifts of Kehuna compared to the 48 steps needed to acquire Torah – the two seem unrelated? **Rav Baruch Dov Povarsky Shlita** explains that the 48 ways are also 48 gifts – when one studies Torah correctly, then each one of the gifts is given to him in the same manner that Terumah is given to the one who is a kohein.

**Haftorah – Rav Hershel Schachter Shlita** noted that many assume the connection between the Parsha and the Haftorah is in the rebellion – in the parsha of Korach to the authority of Moshe and Aharon and in the Haftorah of Bnei Yisrael to the authority of Shmuel. However, he added that a more complete connection would be in the actions of Moshe and Shmuel to challenge the rules and structure of nature as proofs to the authority of the leadership and Haskama of Hashem to that authority from the beginning of time.