

**Parsha Plug: Parshat Korach**

<p><b>Bamidbar 16:1-14</b></p>	<p><b>במדבר טז:א-יד</b></p>
<p><b>1</b> Korah the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi took [himself to one side] along with Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On the son of Peleth, descendants of Reuben. <b>2</b> They confronted Moses together with two hundred and fifty men from the children of Israel, chieftains of the congregation, representatives of the assembly, men of repute. <b>3</b> They assembled against Moses and Aaron, and said to them, "You take too much upon yourselves, for the entire congregation are all holy, and the Lord is in their midst. So why do you raise yourselves above the Lord's assembly?" <b>4</b> Moses heard and fell on his face. <b>5</b> He spoke to Korah and to all his company, saying, "In the morning, the Lord will make known who is His, and who is holy, and He will draw [them] near to Him, and the one He chooses, He will draw near to Him. <b>6</b> Do this, Korah and his company: Take for yourselves censers. <b>7</b> Place fire into them and put incense upon them before the Lord tomorrow, and the man whom the Lord chooses he is the holy one; you have taken too much upon yourselves, sons of Levi." <b>8</b> Moses said to Korah, "Please listen, sons of Levi. <b>9</b> Is it not enough that the God of Israel has distinguished you from the congregation of Israel to draw you near to Him, to perform the service in the Mishkan of the Lord and to stand before the congregation to minister to them? <b>10</b> He drew you near, and all your brothers, the sons of Levi with you, and now you seek the kehunah as well? <b>11</b> Therefore, you and your entire company who are assembled are against the Lord, for what is Aaron that you should complain against him?" <b>12</b> Moses sent to call Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, but they said, "We will not go up. <b>13</b> Is it not enough that you have brought us out of a land flowing with milk and honey to kill us in the desert, that you should also exercise authority over us? <b>14</b> You have not even brought us to a land flowing with milk and honey, nor have you given us an inheritance of fields and vineyards. Even if you gouge out the eyes of those men, we will not go up."</p>	<p>וַיִּקַּח קֹרַח בְּיִצְחָק בְּרִיקָהָת בְּרִי לֵוִי וְדָתָן וְאַבִּירָם בְּנֵי אֱלִיאָב וְאוֹן בְּרִי פֶלֶת בְּנֵי רְאוּבֵן: (ב) וַיִּקְמוּ לִפְנֵי מֹשֶׁה וְאֲנָשִׁים מִבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל חֲמִשִּׁים וּמֵאֵתִים גְּשִׁיאי עֵדָה קְרָאִי מוֹעֵד אֲנָשֵׁי־שָׂם: (ג) וַיִּקְהָלוּ עַל־מֹשֶׁה וְעַל־אַהֲרֹן וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֲלֵהֶם רַב־לָכֶם כִּי כָל־הָעֵדָה כֻּלָּם קִדְשִׁים וּבְחֻכְכֶם יִקְנֹק וּיִמְדוּעַ תִּתְנַשְּׂאוּ עַל־קֹהֵל יִקְוֹק: (ד) וַיִּשְׁמַע מֹשֶׁה וַיִּפֹּל עַל־פָּנָיו: (ה) וַיְדַבֵּר אֶל־קֹרַח וְאֶל־כָּל־עֲדֹתָיו לֵאמֹר בִּקְרוּ וַיָּדַע יִקְוֹק אֶת־אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ וְאֶת־הַקְּדוֹשׁ וְהַקְּרִיב אֵלָיו וְאֶת אֲשֶׁר יִבְחָר־בוֹ יִקְרִיב אֵלָיו: (ו) זֹאת עֲשׂוּ קְחוּ־לָכֶם מִחֻתּוֹת קֹרַח וְכָל־עֲדֹתָיו: (ז) וּתְנוּ בָהֶן אֵשׁ וְשִׂימוּ עֲלֵיהֶן קִטְרֶת לִפְנֵי יִקְוֹק מִחֹר וְהָיָה הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר־יִבְחָר יִקְוֹק הוּא הַקְּדוֹשׁ רַב־לָכֶם בְּנֵי לֵוִי: (ח) וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל־קֹרַח שְׁמַע־נָא בְּנֵי לֵוִי: (ט) הֲמַעַט מִכֶּם פִּי־הַבְּדִיל אֱלֹקֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶתְכֶם מֵעֲדַת יִשְׂרָאֵל לְהַקְרִיב אֶתְכֶם אֵלָיו לַעֲבֹד אֶת־עַבְדָּת מִשְׁפָּן יִקְוֹק וְלַעֲמֹד לִפְנֵי הָעֵדָה לְשִׁרְתָם: (י) וַיִּקְרַב אֹתָךְ וְאֶת־כָּל־אֶחָיִךְ בְּנֵי־לֵוִי אֹתָךְ וּבִקְשַׁתֶּם גַּם־כֹּהֵנָה: (יא) לִכֹּן אַתָּה וְכָל־עֲדֹתֶךָ הַנֹּעְדִים עַל־יִקְוֹק וְאַהֲרֹן מֵהַיּוֹם כִּי תִלּוּנוּ תִלְוִינוּ עֲלֵיו: (יב) וַיִּשְׁלַח מֹשֶׁה לְקַרְא לְדָתָן וְלַאֲבִירָם בְּנֵי אֱלִיאָב וַיֹּאמְרוּ לֹא נֵעֲלֶה: (יג) הַמַּעַט כִּי הָעֵלִיתָנוּ מֵאֶרֶץ זָבַת חֶלֶב וּדְבַשׁ וְדָבַשׁ לְהַמִּיתָנוּ בַּמִּדְבָּר כִּי־תִשְׁתַּרְרַר עָלֵינוּ גַם־הַשְׁתַּרְרַר: (יד) אַף לֹא אֶל־אֶרֶץ זָבַת חֶלֶב וּדְבַשׁ הֵבִיאָתָנוּ וְתִתֵּן־לָנוּ נַחֲלַת שָׂדֵה וְכַרְם הַעֵינֵי הָאֲנָשִׁים הֵם תִּנְקָרוּ לֹא נֵעֲלֶה:</p>

<b>Rashi on Bamidbar 16:3, 7</b>	<b>רש"י על במדבר טז:ג, ז</b>
16:3 You take too much upon yourselves: You took too much greatness for yourselves. 16:7 You have taken too much upon yourselves: I have told you a very great thing...[Or alternatively] You have taken too great a task upon yourselves to rebel against the Holy One, blessed is He.	רב לכם: הרבה יותר מדאי לקחתם לעצמכם גדולה רב לכם: דבר גדול אמרתי לכם...דבר גדול נטלתם בעצמכם לחלוק על הקב"ה.

<b>Devarim 3:26</b>	<b>דברים ג:כו</b>
<b>26</b> But the Lord was angry with me because of you, and He did not listen to me, and the Lord said to me, "It is enough for you; speak to Me no more regarding this matter".	כו וַיִּתְעַבֵּר ה' בִּי לְמַעַנְכֶם וְלֹא שָׁמַע אֵלַי וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֵלַי רַב לָךְ אֵל תּוֹסֵף דַּבֵּר אֵלַי עוֹד בְּדַבְרֵי הַזֶּה.

<b>Rashi on Devarim 3:26</b>	<b>רש"י על דברים ג:כו</b>
Another explanation of רב-לך: More than this is reserved for you. Much is the goodness that is kept for you.	רב לך: דבר אחר רב לך הרבה מזה שמור לך, רב טוב הצפון לך.

<b>Masechet Sotah 13b</b>	<b>מסכת סוטה יג:</b>
When Moshe relates how God responded to him when denying his request to enter Eretz Yisrael, he states: "And the Lord said to me: Let it suffice for you [ <i>rav lakh</i> ]; speak no more to Me of this matter". Rabbi Levi says: Moses proclaimed to the Jewish people when rebuking them with the term " <i>rav</i> ," and therefore it was proclaimed to him with the term " <i>rav</i> " that he would not enter Eretz Yisrael. He proclaimed with the term " <i>rav</i> " when speaking with the congregation of Korach: "You take too much upon you [ <i>rav lakhem</i> ], you sons of Levi", and it was proclaimed to him with the term " <i>rav</i> ," as God denied his request and said: "Let it suffice for you [ <i>rav lakh</i> ]." Alternatively, God's telling Moses " <i>rav lakh</i> " was intended to mean: You now have a <i>rav</i> , a master, and who is it? It is Yehoshua, who has been chosen to lead the Jewish people. Alternatively, God's telling Moses " <i>rav lakh</i> " was intended to mean: You have a <i>Rav</i> , i.e., God, Who says that you may not enter Eretz Yisrael. You must not importune Me anymore, so that people should not say: How difficult is the Master and how obstinate is the student.	ויאמר ה' אלי רב לך - א"ר לוי: רב בישר, רב בישרוהו; רב בישר - רב לכם, רב בישרוהו - רב לך. דבר אחר: רב לך - רב יש לך, ומנו? יהושע. דבר אחר: רב לך - שלא יאמרו הרב כמה קשה ותלמיד כמה סרבן.

**Rabbi Naftali Reich, *The Other Side of Ambition: Parshas Korach***

Although Korach was driven by raw ambition-the desire to assume the mantle of leadership and achieve prominence among the people-there was also a strain of a genuine desire to serve Hashem on a more sublime and intimate level. By being able to offer the incense in the Sanctuary, he would be able to connect to Hashem in a uniquely special way. Moshe should have acknowledged that desire as something positive and genuine. True, Korach's rebellion was primarily fueled by his own self-interest and his recalcitrance warranted the severest punishment imaginable. However, the words 'rav lach' that implied that his spiritual aspirations should be restricted were inappropriate. Therefore, when Moshe aspired to achieve even greater heights by entering the promised land and fulfilling the mitzvos associated with it, Hashem rejected his impassioned entreaty with the same words Moshe had used to Korach...Korach had committed a dastardly act and the earth was about to swallow him up for his heinous sin-a punishment that was unprecedented and never again duplicated. Nevertheless his spiritual stirrings should not have been so sharply brushed aside. In our own lives, we too encounter many groups and individuals who challenge our traditional ways with the professed objective of enhancing a Jew's spiritual connection to the Divine. While we may vehemently oppose their religious choices, we should not condemn them personally. As Chazal teaches us, a Jew's religious stirrings, however misguided, deserve recognition. Instead of summarily discounting them, let us acknowledge the genuine elements within those streams while opposing the misguided actions, remaining hopeful that the positive elements will ultimately prompt a true spiritual awakening.