

**THE WHOLE NATION IS HOLY – BASED ON A SHIUR BY R. YAIR KAHN**

**Source 1: Bamidbar Ch. 16**

<p><b>טז</b> וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה, אֶל-קֹרַח, אֶתְּהָ וְכָל-עֲדֻתָּךְ, הֲיִיו לִפְנֵי יְהוָה: אֶתְּהָ וְהֵם וְאַהֲרֹן, מִחֶר.</p>	<p>16 And Moses said unto Korah: 'Be thou and all thy congregation before the LORD, thou, and they, and Aaron, to-morrow;</p>
<p><b>יז</b> וְקַחוּ אִישׁ מִחֻתָּתוֹ, וּנְתַתֶּם עֲלֵיהֶם קִטְרֹת, וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אִישׁ מִחֻתָּתוֹ, חֲמִשִּׁים וּמֵאָתַיִם מִחֻתֹּת; וְאַתְּהָ וְאַהֲרֹן, אִישׁ מִחֻתָּתוֹ.</p>	<p>17 and take ye every man his fire-pan, and put incense upon them, and bring ye before the LORD every man his fire-pan, two hundred and fifty fire-pans; thou also, and Aaron, each his fire-pan.'</p>
<p><b>יח</b> וַיִּקְחוּ אִישׁ מִחֻתָּתוֹ, וַיִּתְּנוּ עֲלֵיהֶם אֵשׁ, וַיִּשְׂמִימוּ עֲלֵיהֶם, קִטְרֹת; וַיַּעֲמְדוּ, פֶּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד--וּמֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן.</p>	<p>18 And they took every man his fire-pan, and put fire in them, and laid incense thereon, and stood at the door of the tent of meeting with Moses and Aaron.</p>
<p><b>יט</b> וַיִּקְהַל עֲלֵיהֶם קֹרַח אֶת-כָּל-הָעֵדָה, אֶל-פֶּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד; וַיֵּרָא כְבוֹד-יְהוָה, אֶל-כָּל-הָעֵדָה. {ס}</p>	<p>19 And Korah assembled all the congregation against them unto the door of the tent of meeting; and the glory of the LORD appeared unto all the congregation. {S}</p>
<p><b>כ</b> וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה, אֶל-מֹשֶׁה וְאֶל-אַהֲרֹן לֵאמֹר.</p>	<p>20 And the LORD spoke unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying:</p>
<p><b>כא</b> הִבְדְּלוּ, מִתּוֹךְ הָעֵדָה הַזֹּאת; וְאַכְלָה אֹתָם, כִּרְגֵעַ.</p>	<p>21 'Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment.'</p>
<p><b>כב</b> וַיִּפְּלוּ עַל-פְּנֵיהֶם, וַיֹּאמְרוּ, אֵל, אֱלֹהֵי הָרוּחֹת לְכָל-בָּשָׂר: הֲאִישׁ אֶחָד יַחֲטֵא, וְעַל כָּל-הָעֵדָה תִּקְצַף. {ס}</p>	<p>22 And they fell upon their faces, and said: 'O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, shall one man sin, and wilt Thou be wroth with all the congregation?' {S}</p>
<p><b>כג</b> וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה, אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר.</p>	<p>23 And the LORD spoke unto Moses, saying:</p>
<p><b>כד</b> דַּבֵּר אֶל-הָעֵדָה, לֵאמֹר: הֶעָלוּ, מִסְבִּיב, לְמִשְׁכַּן-קֹרַח, דָּתָן וְאַבִּירָם.</p>	<p>24 'Speak unto the congregation, saying: Get you up from about the dwelling of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.'</p>
<p><b>כה</b> וַיִּקָּם מֹשֶׁה, וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל-דָּתָן וְאַבִּירָם; וַיִּלְכוּ אַחֲרָיו, זִקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל.</p>	<p>25 And Moses rose up and went unto Dathan and Abiram; and the elders of Israel followed him.</p>
<p><b>כו</b> וַיְדַבֵּר אֶל-הָעֵדָה לֵאמֹר, סוּרוּ נָא מֵעַל אֲהַלֵי הָאֲנָשִׁים הָרָשָׁעִים הָאֵלֶּה, וְאַל-תִּגְעוּ, בְּכָל-אֲשֶׁר לָהֶם: פֶּן-תִּסָּפוּ, בְּכָל-חַטָּאתָם.</p>	<p>26 And he spoke unto the congregation, saying: 'Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be swept away in all their sins.'</p>

<p><b>כז</b> וַיַּעֲלוּ, מֵעַל מִשְׁכַּן-קֹרַח דָּתָן וַאֲבִירָם--מִסָּבִיב ; וְדָתָן וַאֲבִירָם יָצְאוּ נֹצְבִים, פָּתַח אֹהֲלֵיהֶם, וּנְשֵׁיהֶם וּבְנֵיהֶם, וְטַפָּם.</p>	<p>27 So they got them up from the dwelling of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, on every side; and Dathan and Abiram came out, and stood at the door of their tents, with their wives, and their sons, and their little ones.</p>
<p><b>כח</b> וַיֹּאמֶר, מֹשֶׁה, בְּזֹאת תִּדְעוּן, כִּי-יְהוָה שְׁלַחְנִי לַעֲשׂוֹת אֵת כָּל-הַמַּעֲשִׂים הָאֵלֶּה : כִּי-לֹא, מִלְּבִי.</p>	<p>28 And Moses said: 'Hereby ye shall know that the LORD hath sent me to do all these works, and that I have not done them of mine own mind.</p>
<p><b>כט</b> אִם-כָּמוֹת כָּל-הָאָדָם, יָמָתוּן אֱלֹהִים, וּפְקֻדַת כָּל- הָאָדָם, יִפְקֹד עֲלֵיהֶם--לֹא יְהוָה, שְׁלַחְנִי.</p>	<p>29 If these men die the common death of all men, and be visited after the visitation of all men, then the LORD hath not sent Me.</p>
<p><b>ל</b> וְאִם-בְּרִיאָה יִבְרָא יְהוָה, וּפְצָתָהּ הָאֲדָמָה אֶת- פִּיהָ וּבָלְעָה אֹתָם וְאֶת-כָּל-אֲשֶׁר לָהֶם, וַיֵּרְדוּ חַיִּים, שָׁאֲלָה--וַיִּדְעַתֶּם, כִּי נֹאצִּוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים הָאֵלֶּה אֶת- יְהוָה.</p>	<p>30 But if the LORD make a new thing, and the ground open her mouth, and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they go down alive into the pit, then ye shall understand that these men have despised the LORD.'</p>
<p><b>לא</b> וַיְהִי, כַּכְּלֹתוֹ, לְדַבֵּר, אֵת כָּל-הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה ; וַתִּבָּקַע הָאֲדָמָה, אֲשֶׁר תַּחְתֵּיהֶם.</p>	<p>31 And it came to pass, as he made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground did cleave asunder that was under them.</p>
<p><b>לב</b> וַתִּפְתַּח הָאָרֶץ אֶת-פִּיהָ, וַתִּבְלַע אֹתָם וְאֶת- בְּתֵיהֶם, וְאֵת כָּל-הָאָדָם אֲשֶׁר לְקֹרַח, וְאֵת כָּל- הָרְכוּשׁ.</p>	<p>32 And the earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up, and their households, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods.</p>
<p><b>לג</b> וַיֵּרְדוּ הֵם וְכָל-אֲשֶׁר לָהֶם, חַיִּים--שָׁאֲלָה ; וַתִּכַּס עֲלֵיהֶם הָאָרֶץ, וַיִּאֲבְדוּ מִתּוֹךְ הַקֶּהֶל.</p>	<p>33 So they, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit; and the earth closed upon them, and they perished from among the assembly.</p>
<p><b>לד</b> וְכָל-יִשְׂרָאֵל, אֲשֶׁר סָבִיבֵתֵיהֶם--נָסוּ לְקֹלָם : כִּי אָמְרוּ, פֹּן-תִּבְלַעֵנוּ הָאָרֶץ.</p>	<p>34 And all Israel that were round about them fled at the cry of them; for they said: 'Lest the earth swallow us up.'</p>
<p><b>לה</b> וְאֵשׁ יָצְאָה, מֵאֵת יְהוָה ; וַתֹּאכַל, אֵת הַחֲמִשִּׁים וּמְאָתַיִם אִישׁ, מִקְרִיבֵי הַקֶּטֶר. {ס}</p>	<p>35 And fire came forth from the LORD, and devoured the two hundred and fifty men that offered the incense. {S}</p>

What was the second punishment – of the 250 men – a response to? Pesukim 2-3

**ב** וַיִּקְמוּ לִפְנֵי מֹשֶׁה, וְאַנְשֵׁים מִבְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל חֲמֵשִׁים וּמְאַתָּים, נְשִׂאֵי עֲדָה קְרָאִי מוֹעֵד, אַנְשֵׁי-שָׁם. 2 and they rose up in face of Moses, with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty men; they were princes of the congregation, the elect men of the assembly, men of renown;

**ג** וַיִּקְהָלוּ עַל-מֹשֶׁה וְעַל-אַהֲרֹן, וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֲלֵהֶם רַב-לָכֶם--כִּי כָל-הָעֵדָה כֻּלָּם קֳדָשִׁים, וּבְתוֹכָם יְהוָה; וַיַּדְוִיעַ וַתִּתְנַשְּׂאוּ, עַל-קַהֲלֵי יְהוָה. 3 and they assembled themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said unto them: 'Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them; wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the assembly of the LORD?'

Source 2: Rav Mosheh Lichtenstein, Rav Yitzchak Blau,

quoting Netziv, Rav Naftali Tzvi Yehuda Berlin:

“Therefore it must be understood that the 250 men were truly great people in every respect, including in their fear of God. Their exclusion from the priesthood – which brings one to closeness and love of God – was like a fire burning within them, not because they desired power and apparent honor, but rather because they desired to sanctify themselves and to achieve a [high] level by conducting the sacrificial service... This was not so of Datan and Aviram, who were far removed from this lofty desire and were by nature disputatious and hated Moshe even in Egypt...”

R. Yitzchak Blau: ...In the same way, the Torah anticipates the wild desire for clinging to God of the two hundred fifty men in the Korach uprising. The commandment of *tzitzit* precedes that story because this commandment attempts to forestall such behavior. R. Berlin argues that this commandment reminds both regular Jews and those who seclude themselves in pursuit of love of God to remain within halakhic boundaries. The blue threads of *tekhelet* symbolize those yearning for the heavens, and they need this reminder.

Source 3: Maharal, Tiferet Yisrael, Ch. 18: The punishment for Korach, Datan and Aviram  
 "וכאשר היו חולקים על דבר שמציאותו הכרחי, אי אפשר שיהיה אדם כזה נמצא. כי המוכרח במציאות, הדבר שהוא כנגדו הוא מוכרח שלא יהיה נמצא, אחר שהפכו מוכרח. ולכך כאשר היו חולקים על התורה, שכל דבריה מוכרחים במציאות, המתנגד לזה מוכרח שאין לו מציאות כלל. ולכך כתיב 'ויאבדו מתוך הקהל וירדו הם וכל אשר להם חיים שאולה', שהיו מוכרחים להיות בלתי נמצאים כלל, וירדו חיים שאולה, שהוא האבדון..."

The Torah is essential and a necessary component of reality; those who challenge the Torah are challenging reality, and that's why it says, 'they were lost from the midst of the kahal, and sunk to their graves while still alive' It was necessary for them to not exist...

Source 4a: Bamidbar 17:6

ו וַיִּלְנוּ כָּל-עֵדַת בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל, 6 But on the morrow all the congregation of the  
 מִמֶּחֱרָת, עַל-מֹשֶׁה וְעַל-אַהֲרֹן, children of Israel murmured against Moses and  
 לֵאמֹר: אַתֶּם הַמֹּתִים, אֶת-עַם against Aaron, saying: 'Ye have killed the people of  
 יְהוָה. the LORD.'

Rav Yair Kahn: The use of the term "you" in this context indicates that Moshe and Aharon were being held personally responsible for the deaths of the insurgents. Did the people still believe that Moshe was acting out of personal vengeance?

Source 4b) Ch. 17:9-13

ט וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה, אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר. 9 And the LORD spoke unto Moses, saying:  
 י הֲרִמוּ, מִתּוֹךְ הָעֵדָה הַזֹּאת, וְאָכְלָה אֹתָם, כָּרְגֵעַ; וַיִּפְּלוּ, עַל-פְּנֵיהֶם. 10 'Get you up from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment.' And they fell upon their faces.  
 יא וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל-אַהֲרֹן, קח אֶת-הַמִּחְתָּה וְתֵן-עָלֶיהָ אֵשׁ מֵעַל הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וְשִׂים קִטְרֶת, וְהוֹלֵךְ מְהֵרָה אֶל-הָעֵדָה, וְכַפֵּר עֲלֵיהֶם: כִּי-נִצָּא הַקֶּזֶף מִלִּפְנֵי יְהוָה, הַחַל הַנִּגָּף. 11 And Moses said unto Aaron: 'Take thy fire-pan, and put fire therein from off the altar, and lay incense thereon, and carry it quickly unto the congregation, and make atonement for them; for there is wrath gone out from the LORD: the plague is begun.'

יב וַיִּקַּח אַהֲרֹן כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר מֹשֶׁה, וַיֵּרָץ אֶל-תּוֹךְ הַקְּהָל, וַהֲגִה הַחַל הַנִּגָּף, בָּעָם; וַיִּתֵּן, אֶת-הַקִּטְרֶת, וַיְכַפֵּר, עַל-הָעָם. 12 And Aaron took as Moses spoke, and ran into the midst of the assembly; and, behold, the plague was begun among the people; and he put on the incense, and made atonement for the people.

יג וַיַּעֲמֵד בֵּין-הַמֵּתִים, וּבֵין הַחַיִּים; וַתֵּעָצֵר, הַמִּגַּפָּה. 13 And he stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stayed.

Towards the end of the perek:

כֹּז וַיֹּאמְרוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, אֶל-מֹשֶׁה  
לֵאמֹר: הֵן גָּוַעְנוּ אֶבְדָּנוּ, כָּלֵנוּ  
אֶבְדָּנוּ.

27 And the children of Israel spoke unto Moses, saying:  
'Behold, we perish, we are undone, we are all undone.

כח כָּל הַקָּרֵב הַקָּרֵב אֶל-מִשְׁכַּן  
יְהוָה, יָמוּת; הָאֵם תִּמָּנוּ,  
לְגֹועַ. {ס}

28 Every one that cometh near, that cometh near unto  
the tabernacle of the LORD, is to die; shall we wholly  
perish?' {S}

#### Source 5: Commentary of Ramban

ואם בריאה יברא ה' כתב ר"א יש אומרים כי בריאה תורה על המצא יש מאין וכבר נבקעו מדינות רבות וירדו הדרים בהן שאולה אבל פירושה כטעם גזרה מן וברא אותה (יחזקאל כג מז) והנכון שתאמר על המצא דבר מאין כי אין אצלנו בלשון הקדש מורה על זה זולתי המלה הזאת אבל הענין כי בקיעת האדמה אינה בריאה מחודשת אבל פתיחת הארץ את פיה לבלוע הוא חדוש לא נהיה מעולם כי כאשר תבקע האדמה כמו שנעשה פעמים רבים ברעש הנקרא זלזלה תשאר פתוחה גם ימלא הבקע מים ויעשה כאגמים אבל שתפתח ותסגר מיד כאדם הפותח פיו לבלוע ויסגור אותו אחרי בלעו זה הדבר נתחדש ביום ההוא כאלו הוא נברא מאין וזה טעם ותכס עליהם הארץ (פסוק לג) ולכך אמר הכתוב אחרי ותבקע האדמה (פסוק לא) ותפתח הארץ את פיה ותבלע אותם (פסוק לב) ועל דעת רבותינו (סנהדרין קי) בקרוב פתח גיהנם גם הוא ענין נתחדש לשעתו:

If Hashem will create a [new] creation. Splitting open the ground was not in fact a new creation, but that the ground would open its mouth and swallow them alive was something new that had never happened. When the earth splits, as has happened many times in an earthquake, it remains open, and the cracks later fill with water and become like lakes. However, that the earth should open and close immediately, as a man opens his mouth to swallow and closes it after he swallows – this was created afresh on that day as if it were created from nothing. This is the explanation of (v. 33), “and the earth covered them,” and therefore it says: “The ground beneath them split. The earth opened its mouth and swallowed them.” According to the teaching of our Rabbis (Sanhedrin 110a) the opening of Gehinnom drew close to them; this was newly created on that day as well.

- Did the people really believe that God killed randomly ?
- Were they unaware that Korach and his followers had committed a grave sin?
- Why do they continue to complain after seeing the tragic consequences of their initial complaint?

## Source 6: Rav Yair Kahn

I believe that the people WERE convinced by the divine sign. Korach's claim that Moshe was not representing God's will was laid to rest when the earth miraculously swallowed the insurgents. The people's argument was not rooted in philosophical skepticism; rather, it was a human reaction generated by sorrow and pain. Devastated by the death of public leaders, friends and relatives, they turned to Moshe and Aharon full of grief: "Was there no other way to prove your point? Did all these people have to be destroyed? Are we short of orphans and widows?" It was an emotional outburst, not a rational argument.

We find a similar divine reaction after the initial challenge with Korach and the 250:

**יט** וַיִּקְהַל עֲלֵיהֶם קֹרַח אֶת-כָּל-  
הָעֵדָה, אֶל-פֶּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד;  
וַיֵּרָא כְבוֹד-יְהוָה, אֶל-כָּל-  
הָעֵדָה. {ס}

19 And Korah assembled all the congregation against them unto the door of the tent of meeting; and the glory of the LORD appeared unto all the congregation. {S}

**כ** וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה, אֶל-מֹשֶׁה וְאֶל-  
אַהֲרֹן לֵאמֹר.

20 And the LORD spoke unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying:

**כא** הַבְּדִלוּ, מִתּוֹךְ הָעֵדָה הַזֹּאת;  
וְאֲכַלְתִּים אֹתָם, בְּרִגְעָא.

21 'Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment.'

**כב** וַיִּפְּלוּ עַל-פְּנֵיהֶם, וַיֹּאמְרוּ,  
אֵל, אֱלֹהֵי הָרוּחַת לְכָל-  
בָּשָׂר: הַאִישׁ אֶחָד יִחַטָּא, וְעַל  
כָּל-הָעֵדָה תִּקְצָף. {ס}

22 And they fell upon their faces, and said: 'O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, shall one man sin, and wilt Thou be wroth with all the congregation?' {S}

- Was Hashem not “overreacting?”
- What was the source of the nation’s error?

## Source 7: Shemot 19:6

ג וּמֹשֶׁה עָלָה, אֶל-הָאֱלֹהִים; וַיִּקְרָא  
אֵלָיו יְהוָה, מִן-הַהָר לֵאמֹר, כֹּה  
תֹאמַר לְבֵית יַעֲקֹב, וְתִגִּיד לְבָנֵי  
יִשְׂרָאֵל.

3 And Moses went up unto God, and the LORD called unto him out of the mountain, saying: 'Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel:

ד אַתֶּם רְאִיתֶם, אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתִי  
לְמִצְרַיִם; וְאֲשָׂא אֶתְכֶם עַל-כַּנְּפֵי  
נְשָׁרִים, וְאָבֵא אֶתְכֶם אֵלַי.

4 Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto Myself.

ה וְעַתָּה, אִם-שָׁמוּעַ תִּשְׁמְעוּ בְּקוֹלִי,  
וּשְׁמַרְתֶּם, אֶת-בְּרִיתִי--וְהִיִּיתֶם לִי  
סִגְלָה מִכָּל-הָעַמִּים, כִּי-לִי כָל-  
הָאָרֶץ.

5 Now therefore, if ye will hearken unto My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be Mine own treasure from among all peoples; for all the earth is Mine;

ו וְאַתֶּם תִּהְיוּ-לִי מַמְלַכַת כֹּהֲנִים,  
וְגוֹי קְדוֹשׁ: אֵלֶּה, הַדְּבָרִים, אֲשֶׁר  
תִּדְבֹר, אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל.

6 and ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.'





### Source 9: Kohelet 4:17

שְׁמֹר רַגְלֶיךָ [רַגְלֶיךָ] בְּאֶשֶׁר תִּלְךְ אֶל־בַּיִת הָאֱלֹהִים וְקָרֹב לְשִׁמְעַת מִתַּת  
הַכְּסִילִים זָבַח כִּי־אֵינָם יוֹדְעִים לַעֲשׂוֹת רָע:

Be not overeager to go to the House of God: more acceptable is obedience than the offering of fools, for they know nothing [but] to do wrong.

שמר רגלך וגו'. תני, לא יכנס אדם להר הבית במנעלו ובאבק שעל רגליו ומעותיו צרוורין בסדינו ואפונדתו עליו מבחוץ, מה טעם, שמור רגלך כאשר תלך אל בית האלהים ירושלמי ברכות פ"ד ה"ד

שמר רגלך וגו'. א"ר אחא, שמור רגלך כאשר תלך אל בית האלהים – שמור עצמך כשתהא נקרא אל בית האלהים שתהא טהור ונקי ע"ל התקן עצמך בעת שאתה צריך ללכת לבית אלהים לעמוד בדין כשיבא עתך תהיה טהור ונקי במעשיך ירושלמי מגילה פ"א ה"ט

Normal human reactions of anger and grief must be suppressed; emotional outbursts are unacceptable. When Nadav and Avihu were destroyed, Aharon and his remaining sons were commanded not to mourn:

### Source 10: Vayikra 10: 6-7

וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל־אַהֲרֹן וְלֶאֱלֵעָזָר וְלִיִּתְמָר | בְּנֵי רֵאשִׁיכֶם אֲלִתְפָרְעוּ | וּבִגְדֵיכֶם לֹא־  
תִפְרְמוּ וְלֹא תִמְתּוּ וְעַל כָּל־הָעֵדָה יִקְצֹף וְאַחִיכֶם כָּל־בַּיִת יִשְׂרָאֵל יִבְכוּ אֶת־הַשְּׂרִפָּה אֲשֶׁר  
שָׂרַף יְהוָה:

And Moses said to Aaron and to his sons Eleazar and Ithamar, "Do not bare your heads and do not rend your clothes, lest you die and anger strike the whole community. But your kinsmen, all the house of Israel, shall bewail the burning that the LORD has wrought.

וּמִפֶּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד לֹא תֵצְאוּ פֶן־תִּמְתּוּ כִּי־שִׁמֹן מִשְׁחַת יְהוָה עָלֵיכֶם וַיַּעֲשׂוּ כַדְבָר  
מֹשֶׁה: (פ)

And so do not go outside the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, lest you die, for the LORD's anointing oil is upon you." And they did as Moses had bidden.

### Source 11: Vayikra 21

וְהַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל מֵאַחָיו אֲשֶׁר־יוֹצֵק עַל־רֹאשׁוֹ | שֶׁמֶן הַמִּשְׁחָה וּמִלֵּא אֶת־יָדוֹ לְלִבֹּשׁ אֶת־  
הַבְּגָדִים אֶת־רֹאשׁוֹ לֹא יִפְרֹעַ וּבְגָדָיו לֹא יִפְרֹם :

The priest who is exalted above his fellows, on whose head the anointing oil has been poured and who has been ordained to wear the vestments, shall not bare his head or rend his vestments.

וְעַל כָּל־נִפְשׁוֹת מֵת לֹא יֵבֵא לְאַבְיוֹ וּלְאִמּוֹ לֹא יִטְמָא :

He shall not go in where there is any dead body; he shall not defile himself even for his father or mother.

וּמִן־הַמִּקְדָּשׁ לֹא יֵצֵא וְלֹא יַחֲלִיל אֶת מִקְדָּשׁ אֱלֹהָיו כִּי נִזְר שֶׁמֶן מִשְׁחַת אֱלֹהָיו עָלָיו אֲנִי  
יְהוָה :

He shall not go outside the sanctuary and profane the sanctuary of his God, for upon him is the distinction of the anointing oil of his God, Mine the LORD's.

Looking back at the second “complaint” it’s clear that it’s a pathetic whimper. The people understand the lesson! Look back @ their words...

Source 12: Rav Kahn: After initially identifying with Korach's campaign and rejecting the barriers separating the Sanctuary from the nation, the people are now ready to appreciate why division is necessary. They understand that, to a certain extent, "a holy nation" is a contradiction in terms. Sanctity demands separation, a departure from the mundane. Frailties typical of the human condition are incommensurate with holiness. Normal societal conditions are replete with passion and competition, arguments and jealousy. Although these are unavoidable within a normal human framework, they are intolerable in the presence of God. Nationhood and holiness appear to be mutually exclusive.

## Source 13: Reintroduction of Priesthood/Kehuna: Bamidbar 18:1

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־אַהֲרֹן אַתָּה וּבָנֶיךָ וּבֵית־אֲבִיךָ אֲתָם תִּשָּׂאוּ אֶת־עֹן כְּהֹנְתְּכֶם:  
וְאַתָּה וּבָנֶיךָ אֲתָם תִּשָּׂאוּ אֶת־עֹן הַמִּקְדָּשׁ וְאַתָּה וּבָנֶיךָ אֲתָם

The LORD said to Aaron: You and your sons and the ancestral house under your charge shall bear any guilt connected with the sanctuary; you and your sons alone shall bear any guilt connected with your priesthood.

וְגַם אֶת־אֲחִיךָ מִטֵּה לְוִי שֹׁבֵט אֲבִיךָ הַקָּרֵב אֲתָם וְיָלוּ עֲלֵיךָ וְיִשְׁרְתוּךָ וְאַתָּה וּבָנֶיךָ אֲתָם לִפְנֵי אֱהִל הָעֵדוּת:

You shall also associate with yourself your kinsmen the tribe of Levi, your ancestral tribe, to be attached to you and to minister to you, while you and your sons under your charge are before the Tent of the Pact.

וְשָׁמְרוּ מִשְׁמֶרֶתְךָ וּמִשְׁמֶרֶת כָּל־הָאֱהִל אֲךָ אֶל־כָּל־י הַקְּדָשׁ וְאֶל־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ לֹא יִקְרְבוּ וְלֹא־יָמָתוּ גַם־הֵם גַּם־אֲתָם:

They shall discharge their duties to you and to the Tent as a whole, but they must not have any contact with the furnishings of the Shrine or with the altar, lest both they and you die.

## Source 14: Bamidbar 1:53

וְהַלְוִיִּם יַחְנוּ סָבִיב לְמִשְׁכַּן הָעֵדוּת וְלֹא־יִהְיֶה קֶצֶף עַל־עֵדוּת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְשָׁמְרוּ הַלְוִיִּם אֶת־מִשְׁמֶרֶת מִשְׁכַּן הָעֵדוּת:

The Levites, however, shall camp around the Tabernacle of the Pact, that wrath may not strike the Israelite community; the Levites shall stand guard around the Tabernacle of the Pact.

## Source 15: Bamidbar 16:22 - Korach

וַיִּפְּלוּ עַל־פְּנֵיהֶם וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵל אֱלֹהֵי הָרוּחַת לְכָל־בָּשָׂר הָאִישׁ אֶחָד יַחֲטֵא וְעַל כָּל־הָעֵדָה תִּקְצָף: (פ)

But they fell on their faces and said, "O God, Source of the breath of all flesh! When one man sins, will You be wrathful with the whole community?"

## Source 16: Bamidbar 17:11 - Korach

וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל־אַהֲרֹן, קַח אֶת־הַמִּחֹתֶה 11 And Moses said unto Aaron: 'Take thy fire-pan, and put fire וְתֵן־עָלֶיהָ אֵשׁ מֵעַל הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וְשִׂים קִטְרֶת, וְהוֹלֵךְ therein from off the altar, and lay incense thereon, and carry it

מְהֵרָה אֶל-הָעֵדָה, וְכַפֵּר עֲלֵיהֶם : כִּי-נִצָּא הַקֶּזֶף מִלִּפְנֵי הַהוָה, הַחֵל הַנֶּגֶף. quickly unto the congregation, and make atonement for them; for there is wrath gone out from the LORD: the plague is begun.'

Source 17: Bamidbar 18:5 – Korach

וַשְׁמֵרְתֶם אֶת מִשְׁמֶרֶת הַקֹּדֶשׁ וְאֶת מִשְׁמֶרֶת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וְלֹא יִהְיֶה עוֹד קֶזֶף עַל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

as you discharge the duties connected with the Shrine and the altar, that wrath may not again strike the Israelites.

- The Ibn Ezra notes that Korach attacked the structure that was established at the beginning of *Sefer Bamidbar*. Applying the principle that the Torah does not necessarily correspond to chronological order, he argues that the Korach rebellion preceded the *meraglim*.
- The Ramban counters that Datan and Aviram's attack on Moshe ["You have brought us up out of a land flowing with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness...] Moreover you have not brought us into a land flowing with milk and honey, nor given us inheritance of fields and vineyards" [16:13-14]) is a clear reference to the decree following the *chet ha-meraglim*.

Source 18a: Devarim Ch. 1 : A Review of the Sin of the Spies

וַתִּקְרְבוּן אֵלַי כָּלְכֶם וַתֹּאמְרוּ נִשְׁלַח אַנְשִׁים לְפָנֵינוּ וְיַחְפְּרוּ לָנוּ אֶת-הָאָרֶץ וַיָּשֻׁבוּ אֵתָנוּ דְבַר אֶת-הַדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר נֵעְלֶה-בָּהּ וְאֶת הָעָרִים אֲשֶׁר נָבֵא אֵלֵינוּ:

Then all of you came to me and said, "Let us send men ahead to reconnoiter the land for us and bring back word on the route we shall follow and the cities we shall come to."

Source 18b: Rashi

וַתִּקְרְבוּן אֵלַי כָּלְכֶם. בְּעֶרְבוּבָא; וְלַהֲלֹךְ הוּא אֹמֵר (דְּבָרִים ה') (וַתִּקְרְבוּן אֵלַי כָּל רְאֵשֵׁי שְׁבֻטֵיכֶם וְזִקְנֵיכֶם וַתֹּאמְרוּ הֵן הָרָאנוּ וְגו'), אֹתָהּ קָרִיבָה הֵיטָה הוֹגֵגֶת – יְלָדִים מְכַבְּדִים אֶת הַזִּקְנִים וְשִׁלְחוּם לְפָנֵיהֶם, וְזִקְנִים מְכַבְּדִים אֶת הָרְאֵשִׁים לְלַכֵּת לְפָנֵיהֶם, אֲבָל כָּאן "וַתִּקְרְבוּן אֵלַי כָּלְכֶם" בְּעֶרְבוּבָא – יְלָדִים דוֹחֲפִין אֶת הַזִּקְנִים, וְזִקְנִים דוֹחֲפִין אֶת הָרְאֵשִׁים (ספרי)

AND YE APPROACHED ME ALL OF YOU – all of you: in a crowd. But further on ותקרבוני אלי כלכם (Deuteronomy 5:20, 21) it states, “Ye approached me, even all the heads of your tribes, and your elders, and ye said, Behold [the Eternal our God] hath shown us [His glory and His greatness]”: That approach to me was a fitting one – young people showing respect to their elders, letting these precede them, and the elders showing respect to the heads of the tribes that these should precede them. Here, however, ye approached me, all of you, in a crowd, the young pushing aside their elders, the elders pushing aside the heads (Sifrei Devarim 20:1).

Source 19: From - Rav Yair Kahn: Parashat Shlach: Lack of Confidence, Lack of Faith

However, with the exception of Calev and Yehoshua, these leaders failed miserably in their mission. Instead of inspiring the people and instilling them with faith and confidence, the scouts acted as spies, not as tourists, and they aroused the fear that had lain dormant in the unbelieving hearts of the nation.

At this point, we find the *machane* in total disarray. Overcome by grief and fear, the people are willing to reject the entire redemption process and return to slavery in Egypt. Even Moshe, who saved the nation from suffering and bondage with a spectacular display of miracles, stands powerless. His stature has been tarnished. The nation's total confidence in him and absolute respect for him, displayed just one year ago at the shores of the Red Sea – "...they had faith in God and in His servant Moshe" (Shemot 14:31) – is replaced by a mutinous call – "Let us appoint a leader and head back to Egypt" (Bamidbar 14:4). The voices of Yehoshua and Calev are drowned out by threats of violence, and only divine intervention prevents bloodshed.

The "machane" which was constructed with such precision at the beginning of "Chumash Ha-pekudim" has collapsed. The multi-colored social fabric has unraveled. The general population and the leadership –including Moshe Rabbeinu – is malfunctioning.

Directionless and shattered, the entire generation that had experienced redemption and witnessed God's miracles is now doomed to perish in the wilderness. The "*machane*" which was intended to reflect the incarnation of the ideal religious community and realize the fulfillment of the messianic dream will never enter the Promised Land. The 600,000 who were enumerated and enlisted as part of *Knesset Yisrael* are now destined to be buried in the desert.