

Parashat Korach

Numbers 16:1-13

(1) Now Korah, son of Izhar son of Kohath son of Levi, betook himself, along with Dathan and Abiram sons of Eliab, and On son of Peleth—descendants of Reuben—
(2) to rise up against Moses, together with two hundred and fifty Israelites, chieftains of the community, chosen in the assembly, men of repute. (3) They combined against Moses and Aaron and said to them, “You have gone too far! For all the community are holy, all of them, and the Eternal One is in their midst. Why then do you raise yourselves above the Eternal One’s congregation?” (4) When Moses heard this, he fell on his face. (5) Then he spoke to Korah and all his company, saying, “Come morning, the Eternal One will make known who is His and who is holy, and will grant him access to Himself; He will grant access to the one He has chosen. (6) Do this: You, Korah and all your band, take fire pans, (7) and tomorrow put fire in them and lay incense on them before the Eternal One. Then the man whom the Eternal One chooses, he shall be the holy one. You have gone too far, sons of Levi!” (8) Moses said further to Korah, “Hear me, sons of Levi. (9) Is it not enough for you that the God of Israel has set you apart from the community of Israel and given you access to Him, to perform the duties of the Eternal One’s Tabernacle and to minister to the community and serve them? (10) Now that He has advanced you and all your fellow Levites with you, do you seek the priesthood too? (11) Truly, it is against the Eternal One that you and all your company have banded together. For who is Aaron that you should rail against him?” (12) Moses sent for Dathan and Abiram, sons of Eliab; but they said, “We will not come! (13) Is it not enough that you

במדבר ט"ז:א'-י"ג

(א) וַיִּקַּח קֹרַח בֶּן-יִצְחָר בֶּן-קֹהַת בֶּן-לֵוִי וְדָתָן וְאַבִּירָם בְּנֵי אֶלְיָאֵב וְאֹן בֶּן-פִּלֶת בְּנֵי רְאוּבֵן: (ב) וַיִּקְלְמוּ לִפְנֵי מֹשֶׁה וְאַנְשֵׁים מִבְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל חֲמִשִּׁים וּמֵאָתָּה נָשִׂיָאֵי עֵדָה קְרָאִי מוֹעֵד אֲנָשֵׁי-נָשָׁם: (ג) וַיִּקְהָלוּ עַל-מֹשֶׁה וְעַל-אַהֲרֹן וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֲלֵהֶם רַב-לָכֶם כִּי כָל-הָעֵדָה כָּלָם קֳדָשִׁים וּבְתוֹכְכֶם יְהוָה וּמִדּוּעַ תִּתְנַשְּׂאוּ עַל-קְהָל יְהוָה: (ד) וַיִּשְׁמַע מֹשֶׁה וַיִּפֹּל עַל-פָּנָיו: (ה) וַיִּזְכֹּר אֶל-קֹרַח וְאֶל-כָּל-עֲדָתוֹ לֵאמֹר בֹּכֶר וַיֵּדַע יְהוָה אֶת-אֲשֶׁר-לֹו וְאֶת-הַקָּדוֹשׁ וְהַקְרִיב אֵלָיו וְאֶת אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר-בּוֹ יִקְרִיב אֵלָיו: (ו) זֹאת עֲשׂוּ קַחוּ-לָכֶם מִחֲתֹות קֹרַח וְכָל-עֲדָתוֹ: (ז) וַתֵּנוּ בָהֶן אֵשׁ וַיִּשִׂימוּ עֲלֵיהֶן קִטְרֶת לִפְנֵי יְהוָה מִחֹר וְהָיָה הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר-יִבְחַר יְהוָה הוּא הַקָּדוֹשׁ רַב-לָכֶם בְּנֵי לֵוִי: (ח) וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל-קֹרַח שְׁמַעוּ-נָא בְנֵי לֵוִי: (ט) הִמְעַט מִכֶּם כִּי-יִהְיֶה אֵלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶתְכֶם מֵעַדְתָּ יִשְׂרָאֵל לְהַקְרִיב אֶתְכֶם אֵלָיו לַעֲבֹד אֶת-עֲבֹדַת מִשְׁכַּן יְהוָה וְלַעֲמֹד לִפְנֵי הָעֵדָה לְשִׁרְתָּם: (י) וַיִּקְרַב אֹתָם וְאֶת-כָּל-אֲחֵיהֶם בְּנֵי-לֵוִי אֹתָם וּבִקְשָׁתָם גַּם-כֹּהֲנָה: (יא) לָכֵן אֹתָם וְכָל-עֲדָתָם הַנִּעֲצִים עַל-יְהוָה וְאַהֲרֹן מִה-הוּא כִּי תִלוּנוּ [תִּלְיִנוּ] עֲלֵיו: (יב) וַיִּשְׁלַח מֹשֶׁה לְקַרְא לְדָתָן וְלְאַבִּירָם בְּנֵי אֶלְיָאֵב וַיֹּאמְרוּ לֹא נֵעֲלֶה: (יג) הִמְעַט כִּי הָעֲלִיתָנוּ מֵאֶרֶץ זִבְחַת חֶלֶב וְדָבַשׁ לְהִמִּיתָנוּ בַּמִּדְבָּר כִּי-תִשְׁתַּחֲרַר עָלֵינוּ גַם-הַשְׁתַּחֲרַר:

brought us from a land flowing with milk
and honey to have us die in the wilderness,
that you would also lord it over us?

Haftarah

The two part Book of Samuel includes the story of Samuel's long service as military leader, judge, and prophet (second part of the 11th century BCE). Shortly before the present episode, he had - at the people's insistence and with God's consent - anointed Saul to be Israel's first king.

The sidrah features Korah's attempt to replace Moses as the people's leader; in the haftarah, the people try to displace God as their sovereign and want instead to have an earthly king. Moreover, both Moses and Samuel state that they have not taken even a single donkey that did not belong to them. And in both tales, miracles occur to justify the leader's status.

I Samuel 12:12-22

(12) But when you saw that Nahash king of the Ammonites was advancing against you, you said to me, 'No, we must have a king reigning over us'—though the Eternal One your God is your King. (13) "Well, the Eternal One has set a king over you! Here is the king that you have chosen, that you have asked for. (14) "If you will revere the Eternal One, worship Him, and obey Him, and will not flout the Eternal One's command, if both you and the king who reigns over you will follow the Eternal One your God, [well and good]. (15) But if you do not obey the Eternal One and you flout the Eternal One's command, the hand of the Eternal One will strike you as it did your fathers. (16) "Now stand by and see the marvelous thing that the Eternal One will do before your eyes. (17) It is the season of the wheat harvest. I will pray to the Eternal One and He will send thunder and rain; then you will take thought and realize what a wicked thing you did in the sight of the Eternal One when you asked for a king." (18) Samuel prayed to the Eternal One, and the Eternal One sent thunder and rain that day, and the people stood in awe of the Eternal One and of Samuel. (19) The people all said to Samuel, "Intercede for your servants with the Eternal One your God that we may not die,

שמואל א י"ב:י"ב-כ"ב

(יב) ותרֹאוּ כִּי־נִחַשׁ מֶלֶךְ בְּגִי־עֲמוֹן בָּא עֲלֵיכֶם וַתֹּאמְרוּ לִי לֹא כִי־מֶלֶךְ יִמְלֹךְ עָלֵינוּ וַיְהִינָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם מִלְּכֶכֶם: (יג) וַעֲתָה הִנֵּה הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲשֶׁר בַּחֲרַתֶּם אֲשֶׁר שְׁאַלְתֶּם וְהִנֵּה נָתַן יְהוָה עֲלֵיכֶם מֶלֶךְ: (יד) אִם־תִּירָאוּ אֶת־יְהוָה וַעֲבַדְתֶּם אוֹתוֹ וַשְׁמַעְתֶּם בְּקוֹלוֹ וְלֹא תִמְרוּ אֶת־פִּי יְהוָה וְהִיגָה וְהִיתֶם גַּם־אֲתָם וְגַם־הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲשֶׁר מֶלֶךְ עֲלֵיכֶם אַחֵר יְהִינָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: (טו) וְאִם־לֹא תִשְׁמָעוּ בְּקוֹל יְהוָה וּמִרִיתֶם אֶת־פִּי יְהוָה וְהִיתָה יַד־יְהוָה בָּכֶם וּבִאֲבֹתֵיכֶם: (טז) גַּם־עֲתָה הִתְיַצְּבוּ וּרְאוּ אֶת־הַדָּבָר הַגָּדוֹל הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה עֹשֶׂה לְעֵינֵיכֶם: (יז) הֲלוֹא קָצִיר־חֹטִים הַיּוֹם אֲקָרָא אֶל־יְהוָה וַיִּתֵּן קִלּוֹת וּמָטָר וַדְּעוּ וּרְאוּ כִּי־רַעַתְכֶם רַבָּה אֲשֶׁר עֲשִׂיתֶם בְּעֵינַי יְהוָה לְשֹׁאֵל לָכֶם מֶלֶךְ: (יח) וַיִּקְרָא שְ�מוּאֵל אֶל־יְהוָה וַיִּתֵּן יְהוָה קִלְת וּמָטָר בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא וַיִּירָא כָּל־הָעָם מְאֹד אֶת־יְהוָה וְאֶת־שְ�מוּאֵל: (יט) וַיֹּאמְרוּ כָּל־הָעָם אֶל־שְ�מוּאֵל הֲתַפְּלֵל בְּעַד־עַבְדֶּיךָ אֶל־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְאֶל־נַפְשׁוֹת כִּי־יִסְפְּנוּ עַל־כָּל־חַטֹּאתֵינוּ רָעָה לְשֹׁאֵל לָנוּ מֶלֶךְ: (כ) וַיֹּאמֶר שְ�מוּאֵל אֶל־הָעָם אֶל־תִּירָאוּ אַתֶּם עֲשִׂיתֶם אֵת כָּל־הָרָעָה הַזֹּאת אֲךָ אֶל־תִּסּוּרוּ מֵאַחֲרַי יְהוָה וַעֲבַדְתֶּם אֶת־יְהוָה

for we have added to all our sins the wickedness of asking for a king.” (20) But Samuel said to the people, “Have no fear. You have, indeed, done all those wicked things. Do not, however, turn away from the Eternal One, but serve the Eternal One with all your heart. (21) Do not turn away to follow worthless things, which can neither profit nor save but are worthless. (22) For the sake of His great name, the Eternal One will never abandon His people, seeing that the Eternal One undertook to make you His people.

בְּכָל־לִבְבְּכֶם: (כא) וְלֹא תִסְּוּרוּ כִּי אֶתְּרִי
הָיָהוּ אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יִוָּעִילוּ וְלֹא יִצְּלוּ כִּי־תָהוּ
הֵמָּה: (כב) כִּי לֹא־יִטֹּשׁ יְהוָה אֶת־עַמּוֹ
בַּעֲבֹר נַפְשׁוֹ הַגָּדוֹל כִּי הוֹאִיל יְהוָה לַעֲשׂוֹת
אִתְּכֶם לֹו לְעַם:

Translation and introduction to Haftarah taken from the Plaut chumash



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