

Korach, the son of Yitzhar, the son of Kehas, the son of Levi, separated himself. (16:1)

The *Torah* deliberately traces Korach's lineage back to Levi, stopping there. Why is Yaakov *Avinu* not included in Korach's pedigree? *Rashi* explains that when Yaakov was reproving his two sons, Shimon and Levi, for their deplorable actions regarding the people of Shechem, he said, "*Bi'kehalam al teichad kevodi*," "In their conspiracy may my soul not enter." Yaakov *Avinu* did not want his name connected to the evil that their descendants would eventually generate. *Rashi* adds, however, that when the *Torah* mentions in *Divrei Hayamim* that a descendant of Korach was among the *Leviim* who sang in the *Bais Hamikdash*, it does trace his lineage to Yaakov. If, indeed, it had been imperative that Yaakov's name not be associated with Korach, why is his name recorded in reference to the singing in the *Bais Hamikdash*?

Horav Mordechai Gifter, Shlita, explains that Yaakov implored Hashem that he not be the source of Korach's negative character traits. If it had to be so - his name should at least not be included in Korach's lineage. It should be understood that whatever *middah*, character trait, within Korach had motivated this rebellion was not an attribute that he had inherited from Yaakov. Indeed, Yaakov had criticized Levi for his involvement in the destruction of Shechem, because he saw in him various negative character traits that constituted the foundation of this deed. Korach's conspiracy was a result of these negative traits. Thus, the *Torah* traces Korach's lineage to Levi. Korach's descendants inherited the spiritual level to sing *shirah* in the *Bais Hamikdash* from Yaakov. Regrettably, Korach's negative characteristics overshadowed his positive ones.

Horav Gedalyah Shorr, zl, takes an alternative approach towards explaining this *pasuk*: Yaakov *Avinu* is synonymous with another very unique quality. The *Torah* in *Devarim 34:4* tells us, "*The Torah that Moshe commanded us is the heritage of the congregation of Yaakov*." The ability to create a *kehilla*, congregation/community, was an inherent skill that Yaakov developed. He prayed that his name not be included in "their *kahal*." Korach's congregation was not one of unity. He did not inherit this type of organization from Yaakov. The "Yaakov" type of *achdus*, unity, centers around the *middah* of *emes*. It is founded on truth and is maintained only through truth. Korach's type of *achdus* represents the antithesis of unity, since it is based upon *pirud*, disunity. His goal was not the truth; he sought to destroy, not to create. This is not the type of *kehillah* that is worthy of Yaakov's imprimatur.