

Korach the son of Yitzhar the son of Kehas the son of Levi took (16:1)

The *Torah* purposely omits Yaakov's name from this *pasuk*. He was Korach's great-grandfather, but as a result of the dispute, he implored Hashem to exclude his name from Korach's pedigree. He did not want his name connected with *machlokes*, controversy. Did Yaakov think for one moment that people would forget the Patriarch from whom Korach had descended? What did he gain by having his name excluded?

Horav Eliyahu Lopian, zl, comments that in recounting an individual's lineage, we rarely go back further than the father; we surely never mention the great-grandfather. The *Torah* makes an exception, however, when it seeks to focus upon a specific act, when it traces the source of a particular behavior. For example, when the *Torah* reports Pinchas's act of zealousness - the time when he avenged Hashem's Name by smiting Zimri and Cosbi for perpetrating an immoral outrage - it includes Aharon *Hakohen*, Pinchas' grandfather, in his lineage. The reason is that the tribes were maligning Pinchas, asserting that he was a murderer whose intentions were diabolical. The *Torah*, consequently, asserts that Pinchas was Aharon's grandson. Like his grandfather, love of his fellow man motivated his actions. If this is the case, Yaakov's name should have been included as a merit for Korach in order to save him from destruction.

Yaakov truly sought to save Korach by excluding his name. When an individual with unimpressive lineage sins, society does not take note. It is entirely another matter when the sinner has *yichus*, noble lineage. Yaakov prayed that his name not be included in order to spare Korach. He hoped that during Korach's moment of debasement, Hashem would not add his noble pedigree to Korach's onus of guilt.

These are powerful words. A slight indiscretion performed by one who is held in high esteem -- either by virtue of his lineage or position -- becomes a major infraction. Everything that we do is measured relative to our own standing. Furthermore, it would serve us well to take into consideration that our actions affect others beyond ourselves. Our actions reflect upon our parents and grandparents, who surely do not deserve such "compensation" for all that they have done for us.