

## **"It is too much for you. For the entire assembly, all of them are holy and Hashem is among them; why do you exalt yourselves over the congregation of Hashem?" (16:3)**

Korach and his followers justified their actions in a self-serving manner. It is not unusual for the individuals who instigate conflict, who attempt to undermine every holy endeavor, to paint themselves as paragons of virtue and righteousness. In a departure from the standard interpretation, the *Ksav Sofer* takes a satirical approach to this *pasuk*. Lay people commonly assess that the *rav* or spiritual professional who serves his community is fortunate to live in a city such as theirs, with community members who are as righteous and decent as they are. Indeed, if the *rav* had not been serving in a community populated with such "fine, moral and upstanding" lay people, he might have been asked to leave. It is a tribute to their "decency and patience" that they have tolerated him thus far, despite his "many" shortcomings.

This self-righteous attitude towards our spiritual leaders is as common as it is revolting. This same attitude, comments the *Ksav Sofer*, dominated the discussion between Korach and Moshe and Aharon. Korach said ofk cr, the reality that you still have a position of leadership, that you continue to function in a prominent role, is only due to the fact that "*the entire assembly are holy*" and "*Hashem reposes among them.*" Consequently, "*Why do you exalt yourselves?*" Why do you act as if you are so great? If you maintain a low profile and refrain from hassling anyone, your tenure as "leader" will be extended. Is it really a wonder that the message of *Parashas Korach* is so timeless and its narrative so relative to contemporary Jewish life?