

Then journeyed the Kehasim, bearers of the Sanctuary. (10:21)

Interestingly, the Torah refers to the *Leviim* who descended from *Kehas* as *Kehasim*, and those who descended from Gershon and Merari as *Bnei Gershon* and *Bnei Merari*. Why? *Korban Ani* explains that the sons of Kehas were *zoche*, merited, to carry the *Aron* and the other holy vessels. This was because they were a very close-knit, unified family. In *Bereishis* 49:10, Yaakov *Avinu* blesses Yehudah with the words, *V'lo yikhas amim*, "And his will be an assemblage of nations. *Yikhas/kehas* refers to an assemblage/congregation/aggregate, a gathering of people working together with a common goal. As a result of their *achdus*, family unity, the *Kehasim*, unified ones, merited to carry the *Aron*.

An inspirational explanation, but what about Korach? He was a member of the family of Kehas. He has gone down in infamy as the symbol of *machlokes*, dissent, controversy, divisiveness. Where does he belong in the equation? *Horav Sholom Schwadron, zl*, quotes *Horav Leib Chasman, zl*, who compares this to an unused cannon which has lain dormant for fifty years near one of the walls of Yerushalayim. This cannon had been forgotten after the war and did not bother anyone, until one day someone walked by the area and flicked a burning cigarette which landed on the cannon (which was still filled with unused gun powder). One can only begin to imagine the explosion that erupted as a result of that one burning cigarette. For fifty years, no one had walked there, and the cannon lay dormant, until one day... Likewise, Korach carried the *Aron*, maintained a harmonious relationship with everyone, until one day something ticked him off: Elitzafan ben Uriel became the *Nasi*, Prince. That was the burning cigarette that brought out the real Korach.