

קרח



וַיִּקַּח קַרְחַת. זֶה שֶׁאָמַר הַכָּתוּב: אָח נִפְשָׁע ^א
 מִקַּרְיַת עֵז, וּמִדִּינִים כְּבָרִיחַ אֶרְמוֹן ^{משלי יח, יט.} אָח
 נִפְשָׁע מִקַּרְיַת עֵז, זֶה קַרְחַת שֶׁחָלַק כְּנֶגֶד מִנְשָׁה
 וּמָרַד וַיֵּרֶד מִן כָּבוֹד שְׁהִיָּה בִּירוֹ. וְאִין נִפְשָׁע
 אֶלָּא לְשׁוֹן מְרִידָה, כִּמּוֹ דְּאָמַרְתָּ, מֶלֶךְ מוֹאָב
 פָּשַׁע בִּי (מל"ב ג, ז). וְכֵן הוּא אוֹמֵר, אֲזִי תִפְשָׁע
 לְבָנָה בָּעֵת הַהִיא (מל"ב ח, כב). וּמִדִּינִים
 כְּבָרִיחַ אֶרְמוֹן. מִדִּינִים שֶׁעָשָׂה כְּנֶגְדּוֹ, פְּלִטִים.
 כְּבָרִיחַ אֶרְמוֹן, שֶׁחָלַק עַל מִנְשָׁה וְעַל הַמָּקוֹם.
 וַיִּקַּח, אִין וַיִּקַּח אֶלָּא מְשִׁיכַת דְּבָרִים רַכִּים,
 שְׁמִנְשָׁךְ כָּל גְּדוּלֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְהַסְנֵה דְּרֵאוֹת
 אַחֲרָיו. בְּמִנְשָׁה הוּא אוֹמֵר, וַיִּקַּח מִנְשָׁה וְאַהֲרֹן
 אֶת הָאֲנָשִׁים הָאֵלֶּה ^{במדבר א, יז.} וְכֵן הוּא אוֹמֵר, קַח
 אֶת אַהֲרֹן וְאֶת בָּנָיו אֹתוֹ ^{ויקרא ח, ב.} וְכֵן הוּא אוֹמֵר,
 קָחוּ עִמָּכֶם דְּבָרִים וְשׁוּבוּ וְגו' ^{הושע יד, ג.} וְכֵן הוּא
 אוֹמֵר, וַתִּקַּח הָאִשָּׁה בֵּית פַּרְעֹה ^{בראשית יב, טו.} הָיִי,
 וַיִּקַּח קַרְחַת, שֶׁבְּדְּבָרִים רַכִּים מְשָׁךְ לָבָם. וַיִּקַּח
 קַרְחַת. עַל יְדֵי מַה נִּחַלְק. עַל יְדֵי אֱלִיצָפָן בֶּן

עֲזִיָּאל אָחִי אָבִיו, שְׁנַעֲשָׂה נָשִׂיא עַל מִשְׁפַּחְתּוֹ.
 שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: וְנָשִׂיא בֵּית אָב לְמִשְׁפָּחוֹת הַקָּהָתִי
 אֲלִיצָפָן בֶּן עֲזִיָּאל בַּמִּדְבָּר ג', ל. אָמַר קָרַח, אֲרִבְעָה
 אֲחִים הָיוּ אָחִי אָבִא, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: וּבְנֵי קָהָת עִמָּרָם
 וַיִּצְהָר חֶבְרוֹן וְעֲזִיָּאל שְׁמוֹת ו', יח. עִמָּרָם הַבְּכוֹר,
 זָכָה אֶהְרֹן וּבְנָיו לְכַהֲנָה, וּמִנְשָׂה אָחִיו לְמַלְכוּת.
 מִי רָאוּי לְפָטֹל אֶת הַשְּׂנִיָּה לֹא הִשְׁנִי. וְאֲנִי בְנוֹ
 שֶׁל יִצְהָר, הָיִיתִי רָאוּי לְהִיּוֹת עַל מִשְׁפַּחְתִּי
 נָשִׂיא. וְהוּא עָשָׂה בְנוֹ שֶׁל עֲזִיָּאל קָטָן שֶׁל אָחִי
 אָבִא יֵהֵא גָדוֹל עָלַי. הִרְיֵנִי חוֹלֵק וּמִבְטֵל כָּל
 מֶה שְׁנַעֲשָׂה עַל יָדוֹ. לְפִיכָךְ הִיָּתָה מַחְלָקָתוֹ.

Numb. 16:1: "Now Korah betook himself." This text is related to Prov. 18:19, "A brother offended (rt.: psh') is more formidable than a fortified city; such contentions are like a castle bar." The brother offended is Korah, in that he sided against Moses.¹Numb. R. 18:1, 14. So he rebelled and sank from whatever glory that he possessed. Now offended (rt.: psh') can only imply rebellion, since it is stated in II Kings 3:7, "The king of Moab has rebelled (psh') against me." It also says in II Kings 8:22, "then did Libnah rebel (rt.: psh')." Prov. 18:19: "Such contentions are like a castle bar." The earth raised its bars against him like a castle. Prov. 18:19: "Like a castle bar." These words also refer to Korah, who sided against Moses and against the Omnipresent.²See the commentary of Enoch Zundel on Tanh., Numb.5:1. This explanation is also given by Issachar Berman Ashkenazi in his commentary, Mattenot Kehunnah, on Numb. R. 18:1. Numb. 16:1: "[Now Korah ...] took."³In this and some of the following sections, the midrash is

explaining the fact that the transitive verb, *TOOK*, has no object. Biblical translations offer solutions such as translating the verb intransitively, e.g., *BETOOK HIMSELF*, or by supplying an object, e.g., *TOOK MEN*. "Took" can only be a word for "attracting with persuasive words," in that he attracted all the leaders of Israel and the *sanhedraot* to follow after him.⁴ *Numb. R. 18:2*. Concerning Moses it is written in *Numb. 1:17*, "So Moses and Aaron took these men." And similarly it is written in *Numb. 8:2*, "Take Aaron and his sons with him." And so does it say in *Hos. 14:3*, "Take words with you and repent...." And so does it *also* say in *Genesis 12:15*, "and the woman was taken to the house of Pharaoh." Ergo in *Numb. 16:1* "Now Korah [...] took," in that he drew *i.e.*, *took* their hearts with persuasive words. *Numb. 16:1*: "Now Korah [...] betook himself." Because of what did he dissent? Because of Elizaphan, the son of his father's brother, who had been appointed prince (*nasi*) over his clan. So it says in *Numb. 3:30*, "And the prince of the ancestral house for the Kohathite clan was Elizaphan ben Uzziel." Korah said, "Father had four brothers." It is so stated *according to Exod. 6:18*, "And the sons of Kohath were Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel." "As for Amram, the first-born; his son Aaron and his sons attained the high priesthood, and his brother Moses *attained* the kingship. So who deserves to get second *place*? Should it not be the second *son*? Now I am Izhar's son. I deserved to be prince of my clan, but he has appointed the son of Uzziel. Should the youngest of father's brothers become superior to me? See, I am dissenting and declaring everything invalid, whatever he had done." Therefore, there was dissent.

ב

1 וַיִּקַּח קָרַח. מֶה כְּתִיב לְמַעַלָּה מִן הָעֲנִיָּן, דְּבַר
 אֶל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵיהֶם וַעֲשׂוּ לָהֶם
 צִיצִית בַּמִּדְבָּר טו, לח. קִפֵּץ קָרַח וְאָמַר לְמִנְשָׁה, אַתָּה
 אֹמֵר, וְנָתַנּוּ עַל צִיצִית וְגו' שם. טְלִית שְׂכָלָה
 תִּכְלֶת, מֶה הִיא שִׁיָּהָא פְּטוּרָה מִן הַצִּיצִית.
 אָמַר לוֹ מִנְשָׁה, חִיָּבֶת בְּצִיצִית. אָמַר לוֹ קָרַח,
 טְלִית שְׂכָלָה תִּכְלֶת אֵינָה פּוֹטֶרֶת עֲצָמָה,
 וְאַרְבָּעָה חוֹטִין פּוֹטֵר אוֹתָהּ. בֵּית מֶלֶךְ סִפָּרִים,
 מֵהוּ שֶׁתִּהְיֶה פְּטוּרָה מִן הַמְּזוּזָה. אָמַר לוֹ: חִיָּבֶת
 בַּמְּזוּזָה. אָמַר לוֹ: כָּל הַתּוֹרָה כְּלָהּ מֵאֲתִים
 שִׁבְעִים וְחֲמִשׁ פָּרָשִׁיּוֹת שֵׁשׁ בָּהּ, כֹּלָן אֵין
 פּוֹטֵרוֹת אֶת הַבַּיִת, וְשֵׁשִׁי פָּרָשִׁיּוֹת שִׁבְּמְזוּזָה
 פּוֹטֵרוֹת אֶת הַבַּיִת. אָמַר לוֹ: דְּבָרִים אֵלּוּ לֹא
 נִצְטַוִּיתָ עֲלֵיהֶם, וּמִלְבָּד אַתָּה בּוֹדָאם. הֲרָא
 הוּא דְּכְתִיב: וַיִּקַּח קָרַח. וַיִּקַּח קָרַח, אֵין וַיִּקַּח
 אֶלָּא לְשׁוֹן פְּלִיגָה, שְׁלָבוֹ לְקַחוּ, כְּעֲנִין שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר:
 מֶה יִקְחֶךָ לְבָדָּךְ וּמֶה יִרְזָמוּן עֵינֶיךָ אִיּוֹב טו, יב. הוּא
 שִׁמְנֶשָּׁה אֹמֵר לָהֶם, הִמָּעֵט מִכֶּם כִּי הִבְדִּיל

אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶתְכֶם מֵעֵדֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל, כָּל אוֹתוֹ
הָעֲנִין, עַד אִם כְּמוֹת כָּל הָאָדָם יִמָּתוּן אֵלֶּה.
אָמְרוּ חֲכָמֵינוּ זְכוֹרֹנָם לְבִרְכָּה, חָכָם גָּדוֹל הָיָה
קָרַח, וּמִטּוֹעֵי הָאֲרוֹן הָיָה, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: וְלִבִּי קָהָת
לֹא נָתַן כִּי עֲבוֹדַת הַקֹּדֶשׁ עָלֵיהֶם בְּכַתֵּף יִשָּׂאוּ
בַּמִּדְבָּר ז', ט, קָרַח בֶּן יִצְהָר בֶּן קָהָת. כְּשֶׁאָמַר מֹשֶׁה,
וְנָתַנּוּ עַל צִיצִית הַכֹּהֵן פְּתִיל תְּכֵלֶת שֵׁם טו', לַח, מָה
עָשָׂה קָרַח. מִיָּד צָוָה וַעֲשָׂה מֵאֲתִים וְחַמְּשִׁים
טְלִיתוֹת תְּכֵלֶת, וְנָתַעֲטֹפוּ בָהֶן אוֹתָן חַמְּשִׁים
וּמֵאֲתִים אִישׁ רָאשֵׁי סִנֵּה־דָרָאוֹת שֶׁקָּמוּ עַל מֹשֶׁה,
כְּעֲנַן שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: וַיִּקְוֹמוּ לִפְנֵי מֹשֶׁה וְאֲנָשִׁים מִבְּנֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל חַמְּשִׁים וּמֵאֲתִים. וּמִי הֵם. נְשִׂאֵי עֵדָה
קָרִיאֵי מוֹעֵד אֲנָשֵׁי שֵׁם. עָמַד קָרַח וַעֲשָׂה לָהֶם
מִשְׁתָּה, וְנָתַעֲטֹפוּ כָּלָן בְּטִלִּיתוֹת תְּכֵלֶת וּבָאוּ
בְּנֵי אֶהֱרֹן לְטַל מִתְּנוּתֵיהֶן חֲזֵה וְשׁוֹק הַיָּמִין.
עָמְדוּ כְּנִגְדָּן וְאָמְרוּ לָהֶם, מִי צָוָה אֶתְכֶם לְטַל
כֹּךְ, לֹא מֹשֶׁה. לֹא נָתַן לָכֶם כָּלוּם, שֶׁלֹּא דִבֶּר
עִמּוֹ הַמָּקוֹם מִזֶּה. בָּאוּ וְהוֹדִיעוּ לְמֹשֶׁה. הֲלֹךְ

מִנְשָׁה לְפִי־סָן. מִיָּד עָמְדוּ כְּנָגְדּוֹ, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: וַיִּקְוֹמוּ
לִפְנֵי מִנְשָׁה וְאֲנָשִׁים מִבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל חֲמֻשִּׁים
וּמֵאֲתִים. וּמִי הֵם. אֶלִּיצָוֹר בֶּן שְׂדִיאוֹר וַחֲבָרִיו
אֲשֶׁר נִקְּבוּ בְּשֵׁמוֹת. אֵף עַל פִּי שְׁלֹא פָּרְסָמוֹ
הַכָּתוּב, נָתַן סִימְנִיהֶן, וּמֵתוּךְ הַמִּקְרָאוֹת אֵתָּה
מִכִּיר אוֹתָם. מָשָׁל לָמָּה הִדְבָּר דּוּמָה. לְבֶן
טוֹבִים שֶׁהָיָה גּוֹנֵב כָּלִים בְּבֵית הַמֶּדְרֶשׁ, וְלֹא
הָיָה רוֹצֵה בַּעַל הַגְּנֵבָה לְפָרְסָמוֹ, הִתְחִיל נוֹתֵן
בּוֹ סִימְנָיו. אָמְרוּ לוֹ: מִי גֹנֵב כְּלִיךָ. אָמַר לָהֶם:
אוֹתוֹ בֶּן טוֹבִים, בַּעַל קוּמָה הוּא, עֵינָיו נֹאֲרוֹת,
שֶׁעֲרוֹתָיו שְׁחָרוֹת, חָטְמוֹ נֹאֲה. מִשְׁנָתָן סִימְנָיו,
יָדְעוּ מִי הוּא. וְאֵף כָּאֵן אֵף עַל פִּי שֶׁסִּתְּמָן
הַכָּתוּב וְלֹא פָּרַשׁ אֵת שְׁמוֹתָן, וּבָא וְנָתַן אֵת
סִימְנֵיהֶם, אֵתָּה יוֹדֵעַ מִי הֵם. נֶאֱמַר לְהִלָּן אֵלֶּה
קְרוּאֵי הָעֵדָה נְשִׂאֵי מִטּוֹת אֲבוֹתָם רָאשֵׁי אֲלִפֵּי
יִשְׂרָאֵל הֵם בַּמִּדְבָּר א, טז, וַיִּקַּח מִנְשָׁה וְאַהֲרֹן אֵת
הָאֲנָשִׁים הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר נִקְּבוּ בְּשֵׁמוֹת שֵׁם פֶּסוּק יז.

וַיֹּאמֶר כָּאֵן, נְשִׂאֵי עֵדָה קְרִיאֵי מוֹעֵד אֲנֹשֵׁי שָׁם.
וַיִּקְהֲלוּ עַל מֹשֶׁה וְעַל אֶהֱרֹן.

*Numb. 16:1: "Now Korah [...] took." What is written above the matter in Numb. 15:38?*⁵ *Numb. R. 18:3. "Speak unto the Children of Israel and tell them to make tassels (zizit) for themselves."* Korah quickly said to Moses, "In the case of a prayer shawl (*tallit*) which is all blue, what is the rule about it being exempt from *having* the tassel?" Moses said to him, "*Such a prayer shawl* is required to have the tassels." Korah said to him, "Would not a prayer shawl which is all blue exempt itself, when four *blue* threads exempt it? In the case of a house which is full of *scriptural* books, what is the rule about it being exempt it from *having* the mezuzah *which contains only two passages of scripture*?" Moses said to him, "*Such a house* is required to have the mezuzah." Korah said to him, "Since the whole Torah has two hundred and seventy-five *parashiot* in it⁶ Cf. *yShab. 16:1 15c; Soferim 16:10; M. Pss. 22:19, according to which there are 175 parashiot in the Torah where an expression of speaking, saying, or commanding occurs. See also Alfa Beta deRabbi 'Aqiva, longer recension, Tsade (Eisenstein, p. 421).* and they do not exempt the house *from having the mezuzah*, would the two *parashiot* which are in the mezuzah exempt the house?" He also said to him, "These are things about which you have not been commanded. Rather you are inventing them *by taking them out of your own heart*." Here is what is written in *Numb. 16:1*, "Now Korah [...] took." *Numb. 16:1: "Now Korah [...] took."* Now "took *rt.: lqh*" can only be a word of discord, in that his heart carried him away (*rt.: lqh*). Thus is *the word* used in *Job 15:12*, "How your heart has carried you away (*rt.: lqh*) [...]." This explains what Moses said to them in *Numb. 16:9*, "Is it too small a thing for you that the God of Israel has separated you [from the congregation to draw you near unto Himself, to perform the service of the Lord's tabernacle ...?" Plus] that whole passage up to vs. 29, "If these people die the common death of every person." The sages have said, "Korah was a great sage and was one of the bearers of the ark, as stated in *Numb. 7:9*, 'But to the children of Kohath He gave no *wagons*, because they had the service of the holy objects, which they carried on their shoulders.'" Now Korah was the son of Izhar, *who was* the son of Kohath. When Moses said in *Numb. 15:38*, "And put on the tassel of each corner a thread of blue," what did Korah do? He immediately ordered them to make two hundred and fifty blue shawls for those two hundred and

fifty heads of *sanhedraot* who rose up against Moses to wrap themselves in, just as it is stated in *Numb. 16:2*, “And they rose up against Moses, together with two hundred and fifty men from the children of Israel.” And who are they? *Numb. 16:2, cont.:* “Princes of the congregation, chosen in the assembly, men of repute.” Korah arose and made them a banquet at which they all wrapped themselves in blue prayer shawls. When Aaron's sons came to receive their dues, *namely the breast and right thigh,*⁷*I.e., the priestly share of the animals slaughtered for the feast. See Lev.7:31-32.* they arose against them and said to them, “Who commanded you to receive such? Was it not Moses? *If so, we shall not give you anything, as the Holy One, blessed be He, has not commanded it.*” They came and informed Moses. He went to placate⁸*Rt.: PYS. See the Gk.: peithein, peisai in the aroist.* them. They immediately confronted him, as stated *ibid.*, “And they rose up against Moses.” And who were they? Elizur ben Shedeur and his companions *the princes*, the men according to *Numb. 1:17* “who were mentioned by name.” Although the text has not publicized⁹*From PRSM. Cf. Gk: parresiazesthai.* their names, it has given clues¹⁰*Gk.: semeia.* to their identity, so that you can identify them from the various verses. A parable: To what is the matter comparable? To a scion of good parentage who stole articles from the bathhouse. The owner of what was stolen did not want to publish his name. Rather, he began to give clues about his identity. When they said to him, “Who stole your articles,” he said, “A scion of good parentage, a tall person with beautiful teeth and black hair.” After he had given his clues, they knew who he was. So also here where the text has concealed them and not specified their names, it comes and gives clues to their identity. You know who they are. It is stated elsewhere in *Numb. 1:16*, “These were elected by the congregation, princes of their ancestral tribes, heads of thousands within Israel.” Then it is written in *vs. 17*, “So Moses and Aaron took these men who were mentioned by name.” Now here it is written in *Numb. 16:2-3*, “princes of the congregation, elected by the assembly, men of renown. They gathered together against Moses and Aaron.”