

PARSHA GAMES

Freeze and Justify

by Sammy Schaechter

GOAL: Korach and his men try to stop all of the leaders of Bnei Yisrael and try to replace them. In this activity, we will learn about what it feels like when we try to push our friends out of the way and take the stage for ourselves as the leader.

TYPE: Moderate, indoor, group game.

HOW TO PLAY: Using 2 or 3 kids, start them off acting out a scene, can be anything in the world from shopping at the supermarket to working out at a gym, or anything you can think of. Have one of the group leaders be the "freezer", where when they see fit, call out "FREEZE!" and everyone in the scene must freeze immediately. Then someone else will come into the scene and tag out one of the current actors and take their places. Whatever position the previous actor was in, the new actor must take that exact pose and change the scene. For example: If an actor was frozen with both hands in the air while reaching for something on a top shelf, the next actor can start doing jumping jacks at the gym. Try to get the actors to move as much as possible so that

when they get "frozen" they're not just standing still.

DISCUSSION: In this week's parsha Korach comes along with a bunch of people and they all are trying to replace Moshe, Aharon, and the other leaders of Bnei Yisrael. As we know, Moshe and Aharon are great leaders and don't need to be replaced. Korach thought he knew best and he thought he was better and smarter than everyone when really he was not. We played games where our friends were doing something and we stopped them and replaced them with ourselves or our own ideas. We were doing it all together in a fun way, but Korach did not. Korach fought and argued trying to get himself in when really he didn't belong in those positions. We should always try to be respectful to our friends and family when it comes to following leaders. We don't always have to run the show, it's ok. Sometimes the best leader is a follower.

LEADER TIP:

Have you ever felt like you could do a better job than someone? Was it difficult to just stand by and watch?



Korach Wrap-Up

by Sammy Schaechter

Korach, along with Dattan, Aviram, and 250 men from Shevet Reuven, challenged Moshe and Aharon's leadership. Moshe set the next day for a showdown, hoping that the rebels would reconsider their rebellion. After attempting to convince Korach to reconsider, Moshe attempted to sway Dattan and Aviram. Moshe's efforts were rebuffed. The next day Hashem instructed Moshe and the nation to separate themselves from the tents of Korach, Dattan, and Aviram. Moshe proclaimed that his and Aharon's leadership would be divinely confirmed through the way in which Korach and his followers would die. Korach, Dattan, and Aviram, along with their entire families were swallowed up by the earth, while the 250 men from Reuven

were consumed by a heavenly fire. A rebellion broke out among the people, and Aharon had to intervene in order to stop the plague sent as a punishment against the people. 14,700 people perished in the plague. Aharon's appointment as Kohain Gadol is reconfirmed through the test of the staffs. Aharon's staff was the only staff that miraculously sprouted almonds. Aharon's staff is placed in the Holy of

LEADER TIP:

Bring in almonds as a special Parshat Korach treat!

Holies. The duties of the Kohanim and Leviyim are stated along with a list of the Kohain's share in the nations produce and live stock. The Levite's share of the nation's produce and the gifts given by the Laviyim to the Kohanim are stated.

PARSHA STORIES

STORIES MY GRANDFATHER TOLD ME

Out-of-Pocket Expenses

"I have not taken a donkey from any one of them" (Bamidbar 16:15)

R'Shraga Feivel Mendlowitz, founder of Yeshivas Torah Voda'ath in the United States, was always careful never to use any of the school's money for his personal use — not one cent beyond his meager personal salary. He would even constrict his legitimate traveling expenses, though he had

every justification for doing otherwise. Outsiders were amazed to see R' Shraga Feivel going from door to door collecting donations for the yeshivah. Walking around with tens of thousands of dollars in cash and checks for the yeshivah, he refused to heed an acquaintance's suggestion that he return home by taxi after his wearying exertions.

There were occasions, in times of need, when R' Shraga Feivel did use a taxi — but he always paid the fare out of his own pocket. He did not ask the office to refund his traveling expenses incurred on the yeshivah's behalf.

Moshe Rabbeinu's words — "I have not taken a donkey from any one of them" — danced constantly before R' Shraga Feivel's inner eye.



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TORAH COMICS

Korach and 250 of his followers rebel against Moshe and Aharon.



Excerpt from ANDiDREW Torah Comics. Get the book or draw your own at TorahComics.com

The Stick That Blossomed

And that man whom I shall choose, his rod shall blossom (17:20)

R' Yehudah Hechasid was sunken deeply in profound thought when a stranger knocked and entered his study. It was as if an icy wind had penetrated the room. R' Yehudah knew who it was without even raising his eyes. He dared not look up, for it is forbidden to look an evil person in the face and the man before him was thoroughly wicked. He was a man who had abandoned his faith, converted to Christianity and become a renegade. He slandered and informed on his people, whenever he had the chance, and committed every conceivable sin. The Jewish community lived in terror of his false libels, and for valid reasons. His name was anathema. Shuddering with distaste, R' Yehudah barely got out a few curt words, "What do you want?"

A broken, sobbing voice replied. The man could not bear to look at R' Yehudah, either, for his head was bowed in shame. He had come to seek a way to repent his evil deeds. He regretted his wicked past and wished to return to Judaism. Would he be able to atone for his sins?

R' Yehudah looked up and his eye fell upon a short wooden rod which always lay on his table. Smooth and round, it fitted right into his hand. Whenever R' Yehudah was perplexed by some difficult problem, he would take this stick in his hand and roll it back and forth across his palm. "Do you see this rod?" he said in severe tones. "Just as this rod will never bud and blossom, so will you never be able to return to your people! The gates of repentance are shut tightly before the likes of you."

The wicked man's shoulders sagged. His head bowed even lower. He turned and left the room.

R' Yehudah went back to his study. Time passed. One day, as he was grappling with a very complex problem, his hands reached out for the smooth rod. To his surprise, it was no longer

smooth. He looked at it; it had turned green; buds had formed on it; it was blooming!

"Am I dreaming?" he asked himself. But his fingers felt the buds; he could even smell a scent. No, it was not a dream, the rod was budding and blooming.

"There must be something to this!" he thought. "This is no chance occurrence, but a sign from heaven!"

Suddenly, he remembered. The apostate! He had told that evil man that just as the rod could not bloom, so could he not repent his many sins. Well, the rod had evidently bloomed, so, apparently, the convert had repented wholeheartedly and his teshuvah had been accepted!

R' Yehudah Hechasid immediately sent for the man. He came at once. This time, R' Yehudah welcomed him. The man's glance fell upon the blooming rod with its fragrant blossoms and he cried with great emotion.

"You have caused a great miracle to happen," said R' Yehudah. "I see that your teshuvah has been accepted. Tell me, what great deed did you do to be so worthy? How did you succeed in unlocking the Gates of Repentance?"

The man suddenly became very confused. "I don't recall having ever done anything worthwhile. My deeds have been evil throughout my life."

He was thoughtful for a moment, then said hesitatingly, "Yes, I do recall something. Actually, it was the turning point in my life, for it was then that I began to repent. Shortly before the Passover holiday, upon leaving my house one day, I found a mob of Christians. 'Death to the Jews!' I heard them shouting. I quickly learned that the murdered body of a Christian child had been found in the Jewish section of the city. The crazed and frantic mob was demanding Jewish blood for revenge. It was another blood libel; the Christians claimed that Jews had slain

the child in order to use its blood for their matzos . . .

"The crowd was growing by the minute. Many were armed with cudgels, hatchets, pitchforks — anything they could lay their hands on. And they were clamoring for Jewish blood.

"In the midst of the confusion and tumult, a messenger came riding through. He had a declaration from the governor: no Jew was to be harmed until the libel was proven true. It must be proven that, indeed, Jews used Christian blood in baking their matzos. All eyes suddenly focused on me. I was the notorious informer, the convert, the authority on all Jewish matters. I was the one who could reliably tell the governor if Jews really needed blood for their matzos. The mob seized me and dragged me off to the governor's house to testify.

"My thoughts were in a turmoil. I could not decide what to say when I got to the governor. If I spoke against the Jews, as I had always done and as I was expected to do now, I would be reinforcing my position. I would be honored and feted as never before. But, this would mean sentencing a whole community to death. The mob would descend upon the Jewish quarter and butcher its inhabitants. Yet, if I were to defend the Jews and say the truth, that Jewish ritual abhorred blood in any form, I would lose the confidence of my gentile friends and would become a despised outcast.

"My decision had not yet been made, when I, suddenly, found myself thrust before the imposing figure of the governor. My knees shook; my heart sank.

"As a former Jew, do you know if it is Jewish practice to use gentile blood for the ritual baking of unleavened bread?" he asked me. It was at this very instant that I reached a crisis in my life. My good inclination, the yetzer tov, dormant for so many years, suddenly, awoke and overcame his opponent, the yetzer hara. I spoke up, 'Your Excel-

Henrietta Szold

December 21, 1860- February 13, 1945

Henrietta Szold was a U.S. Jewish Zionist leader and founder of Hadasah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America. Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America is an American Jewish volunteer women's organization. Founded in 1912, it is one of the largest international Jewish organizations, with 330,000 members in the United States. Hadassah fundraises for community programs and health initiatives in Israel, including the Hadassah Medical Center, a leading research hospital in Israel renowned for its inclusion of and treatment for all religions and races in Jerusalem. In

the US, the organization advocates on behalf of women's rights, religious autonomy and US-Israel diplomacy. In Israel, Hadassah supports health education and research, women's initiatives, schools and programs for underprivileged youth. Henrietta Szold was born in Baltimore, Maryland, the daughter of Rabbi Benjamin Szold, who was the spiritual leader of Baltimore's Temple Oheb Shalom. She was the eldest of eight daughters.

Further discussion for older kids

In 1877, she graduated from Western High School. For fifteen years she taught at Miss Adam's School and

Oheb Shalom religious school, and gave Bible and history courses for adults. To further her own education, she attended public lectures at Johns Hopkins University and the Peabody Institute. Szold established the first American night school to provide English language instruction and vocational skills to Russian Jewish immigrants in Baltimore. Beginning in 1893, she worked for the Jewish Publication Society, a position she maintained for over two decades.

LEADER TIP:

In what ways can you make a difference? Can you visit the sick or elderly?

PUZZLERS ANSWERS

PARSHA CODE

1. KORACH was MOSHE and AHARON's COUSIN
2. KORACH was JEALOUS that MOSHE didn't APPOINT him to be a KOHEN
3. KORACH took a GARMENT made of TECHAYLIS and asked MOSHE why it needs TZIZIS
4. 250 PEOPLE JOIN'ed KORACH's FIGHT against MOSHE
5. MOSHE TOLD KORACH to BURN KETORES
6. The GROUND OPEN'ed up and SWALLOW'ed up KORACH and his FAMILY, along with DASAN and AVIRUM
7. Every OBJECT they owned, even if someone BORROW'ed it, was SWALLOW'ed up
8. a FIRE came and BURN'ed up KORACH's 250 FOLLOWERS
9. the PAN's used by KORACH to BURN KETORES was made into the COVER for the MIZBAYACH
10. it is a MITZVAH to REDEEM your FIRST BORN SON when he is 30 DAYS OLD for 5 SHEKALIM from a KOHEN

TORAH RHYMES & RIDDLES

1. Korach.
2. Dasan & Aviram.
3. Ohn ben Peles.
4. Incense.
5. Aharon.
6. Mouth.

TEST YOUR PARSHA KNOWLEDGE

1. 24
2. A father must give money to a Cohen instead of giving his first-born son to H
3. Because they learned from his bad ways, and also rebelled against Moshe
4. Everyone person offered a pan of וטק תר and 'ה killed all those who were fighting against Moshe & Aharon
5. It grew leaves, flowers and almonds.
6. They were burned by a fire from וי .
7. Levi
8. They were swallowed up by the earth.]
9. וק' תר wife]
10. 16-6 - Yes.
11. 16:1 - Because they were his neighbors.
12. 16:1 - Korach was jealous that Elizafan ben Uziel was appointed as leader of the family of Kehat instead of himself.
13. 16:12 - Egypt and Canaan.
14. 16:15 - When he traveled from Midian to Egypt.
15. 16:19 - Korach went from tribe to tribe in order to rally support for himself.
16. 16:27 - Twenty years old.
17. 16:7 - That his sons would repent.
18. 17:13 - Because the people were deprecating the incense offering, saying that it caused the death of two of Aharon's sons and also the death of 250 of Korach's followers. Therefore G-d demonstrated that the incense offering was able to avert death, and it is sin, not incense, which causes death.
19. 17:21 - So people would not say that

- Aharon's staff bloomed because Moshe placed it closer to the Shechina.
20. 17:25 - That only Aharon and his children were selected for thekehuna.
21. 17:5 - He is stricken with tzara'at, as was King Uziyahu (Divrei HaYamim II 26:16-19).
22. 18:10 - Male kohanim may eat them and only in the azara (forecourt of the Beit Hamikdash).
23. 18:19 - Just as salt never spoils, so this covenant will never be rescinded.
24. 18:8 - Since Korach claimed the kehuna, the Torah emphasizes Aharon's and his descendants' rights to kehuna by recording the gifts given to them.
25. 16:1 - Korach was jealous that Elizafan ben Uziel was appointed as leader of the family of Kehat instead of himself.
26. 16:1 - They laughed.
27. 16:1 - Yaakov prayed that his name not be mentioned in connection with Korach's rebellion (Bereishet 49:6).
28. 16:19 - Korach went from tribe to tribe in order to rally support for himself.
29. 16:27 - They all blasphemed.
30. 16:6 - Only one person would survive.
31. 16:7 - That his sons would repent.
32. 16:7,3 - Rav lachem appears twice in this week's Parsha. It means "much more than enough greatness have you taken for yourself (16:3)" and "It is a great thing I have said to you (16:17)."
33. 17:21 - So people would not say that Aharon's staff bloomed because Moshe placed it closer to the Shechina.

"If you will give up your wealth and fall into the category of a poor man," R' Meir answered with a small smile, "then you will be able to serve as she-

liach tzibbur!"

The rich man, always very protective of his money, decided to give up his

dream of davening for the congregation on the Yamim Nora'im that year — and he never asked again!

STORIES MY GRANDFATHER TOLD ME

Standing Up to Evil

"Separate yourselves from amid this assembly" (Bamidbar 16:21)

R' Isser Zalman Meltzer was known for his soft heart. He was a man of supreme compassion and good nature; but when a matter touched upon the fundamental laws of Torah and Judaism, R' Isser Zalman could be hard as a cedar and strong as a lion.

A secular resident of Slutzk once purchased the city's largest flour mill, which happened to be located right beside the town's mikveh. In order to cut down on his operating expenses, the man shut down the mikveh — either to use its water supply or else, simply, just to annoy the mitzvah-ob-servant community.

R' Isser Zalman attempted to discuss the matter with the miller, but to no avail. The man even refused to accept money in return for reopening the mikveh. When R' Isser Zalman saw that well-mannered behavior was getting him nowhere with the man, he announced that, on the following Shabbos, everyone was to gather outside the town's largest shul.

This announcement shook Slutzk's Jewish community. On Shabbos morning, they all congregated outside the big shul: a huge throng of men, women, and children.

"What value have our prayers," R' Isser Zalman began, "when the foun-

dation of our holiness, the purity of our families, is floundering: a Jewish city without a kosher mikveh!"

A gathering storm grew in the hearts of the listeners, and the crowd turned as one with cries of fury against the obstinate miller.

When the miller heard what had transpired outside the shul, he grew frightened of the crowd's anger. At once, he announced that he would reopen the mikveh and do everything that the Rav ordered him to do.

dream of davening for the congregation on the Yamim Nora'im that year — and he never asked again!

STORIES MY GRANDFATHER TOLD ME

A Timely Warning

"All Israel that was around them fled at their sound, for they said, 'Lest the earth swallow us!'" (Bamidbar 16:34)

R' Yehoshua Leib Diskin had a faithful messenger. R' Sa'adyah was a pious man who could be relied upon 100 percent. When it came time to get the jute sacks from the Rebbetzin to fill with clay for building a matzah oven, R' Yehoshua Leib knew that R' Sa'adyah would guard the sacks zealously from any contact with chametz.

It was a spring day, shortly before Pesach. R' Sa'adyah came to the Rav's house, picked up the sacks, and was about to leave the city for the place

where Arab workers were digging the clay from the ground to be sold to Jewish women before the holiday.

Suddenly, he heard R' Yehoshua Leib call him back inside. "Don't go out to work today," the Rabbi advised.

As R' Sa'adyah hesitated, R' Yehoshua Leib said persuasively, "I will pay you your day's wages. Please, go to the yeshiva and say Tehillim. Don't go out to work today!"

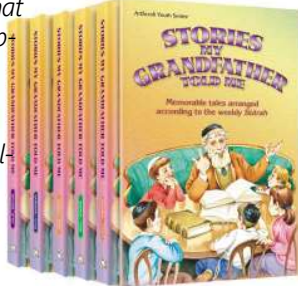
Without understanding why, R' Sa'adyah obeyed his Rebbe.

The next day, the news came to light:

On the previous day, in that very

same quarry, an avalanche of stones had buried the Arab workers and their donkeys alive. Because of R' Yehoshua Leib's advice, R' Sa'adyah's life had been spared!

Stories My Grandfather Told Me by Zev Greenwald (Author) Libby Lazewnik (Translator) and Tova Katz (illustrator) is packed with short pleasant stories that teach children important life lessons from the weekly Parsha. The five-volume set is available from your favorite Jewish book store, or at artscroll.com.



lency,' I said in a loud, confident voice, 'not only do the Jews not need blood, but, on the contrary, they are forbidden to use it; they abhor it. They do not even eat meat before it has been properly salted to draw out the blood. An egg with a drop of blood is thrown away and not eaten. It is criminal to accuse Jews of using blood to bake their matzos!'

"Can the Rav imagine how stunned the mob was to hear these words coming from the mouth of a Jew-hater like myself? They were flabbergasted, but effectively silenced. I had had the final word. The governor dispersed the grumbling crowd and the Jewish community was spared.

"And from that time on, a change has come over me. I had turned a critical

point in my life and changed my direction altogether. I was seized by strong yearnings to return to my people and came to you. Even after you rebuffed me, I did not lose hope, but worked at purifying myself and seeking the truth."

"You labored so hard that you caused this rod to bloom," said R' Yehudah Hechsid.

TALES OF TZADIKIM

Prayer Before Everything

The first part which they shall give unto Hashem (18:12)

A group of chasidim had spent a Shabbos with the Rebbe, R' Mordechai of Chernobel, but now the time had come to part. Each one, in turn, went in to the Rebbe to say his goodbye and ask for a blessing. Among the group was a simple innkeeper. When he entered the Rebbe's room, he was asked, "What is your daily schedule?"

He replied, "I wash my hands as soon as I get up. I get dressed and then hurry out to the town market square in order to get the best and freshest produce for my customers. Then I go home to say my morning prayers."

He was about to continue, when R' Mordechai interrupted him. "Your daily schedule is wrong. You should pray first, then turn to your daily business, not the other way round!"

"But," said the innkeeper, "if I wait until I finish praying, then all the fresh fruits and vegetables will have been snapped up and nothing will be left for me! The farmers begin their day before dawn. They sell their produce quickly and then return home to do their daily chores. I must adapt myself to them."

"Let me tell you a story," said the Rebbe:

A man once went forth to seek his fortune. He traveled far from home and did very well. After amassing great wealth, he decided that it was time to

return home. He exchanged all of his money for gold coins; he then had twelve sacks of gold coins. He also kept one copper coin in his pocket. He now began the long journey home, traveling until, one Friday afternoon, he reached a wayside inn and decided to remain there over Shabbos. Not knowing anyone in that village, he asked the innkeeper to hold his money for him in safekeeping.

The traveler was very uneasy, however. He kept wondering if the innkeeper was really trustworthy, if he was reliable and would return the entire sum when he requested it. His thoughts disturbed him all through the Shabbos — during prayers and meals, at night and during the day.

All day long, the man counted the hours that yet remained to the Shabbos. At its close, after the very moment that havdalah was recited, he went to the innkeeper and, in a hoarse voice, demanded his money back. The innkeeper, an honest man, saw how anxious he was and hurried to give it back.

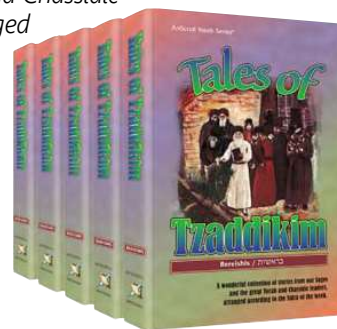
The traveler snatched his sacks, ran back to his room and began counting the coins feverishly. When the number tallied with the amount he had entrusted, he was overjoyed. Suddenly, he recalled that he had also had a single copper coin and, searching frantically, he found that, too. Now, his relief and joy were complete.

"Let us stop to think for a moment," the Rebbe added, "was that man not foolish to make such a fuss over the copper coin? Having seen that the contents of the twelve sacks were intact, why was he so concerned over an insignificant copper coin? And why was he so overjoyed when he found it? Was such behavior not ridiculous?"

"The truth is that his attitude is very much like your own. Each night you entrust an invaluable treasure into the hands of Hashem — your soul. When you awake each morning you see that He has returned it to you intact. How, then, can you doubt that He will provide your needs, even after you have prayed first?"

The man conceded the Rebbe's point and took the lesson to heart. And, as soon as he returned home, he changed his habits. Instead of going to the market each morning upon rising, he prayed first. And, only then, went about his business.

Tales of Tzadikim by G. Matov is a wonderful collection of stories from our Sages and the great Torah and Chassidic leaders, arranged according to the Sidra. The five-volume set is available from your favorite Jewish book store, or online at artscroll.com.



PARSHA PUZZLERS

TEST YOUR PARSHA KNOWLEDGE

by Sammy Schaechter & Dovid Saleman
Answers on page 7.

EASY Qs

- How many presents are given to a Cohen?
- What is a Pidion Haben?
- Why was it bad for shevet reuven to live near Korach?
- What proved that 'n chose Moshe & Aharon for their jobs?
- What nes did 'n do with the stick of Levi?
- What happened to the 250 men who brought the fire pans?
- From which Shevet was Korach?
- How was Korach and his family killed?
- Whose wife caused her husband to rebel and later be destroyed?

MEDIUM Qs

- Did Moshe want to be the kohen gadol?
- Why did Datan and Aviram join Korach?
- What motivated Korach to rebel?
- What lands are described in this week's Parsha as "flowing with milk and honey"?

LEADER TIP:

What was so bad about Korach trying to be the leader and help out?

- When did Moshe have the right to take a donkey from the Jewish community?
- What did Korach do the night before the final confrontation?
- Before what age is a person not punished by the Heavenly Court for his sins?
- What event did Korach not foresee?
- Why specifically was incense used to stop the plague?
- Why was Aharon's staff placed in the middle of the other 11 staffs?
- Aharon's staff was kept as a sign. What did it signify?
- What happens to one who rebels against the institution of kehuna? Who suffered such a fate?
- Who may eat the kodshei kodashim (most holy sacrifices) and where must they be eaten?
- Why is G-d's covenant with the kohanim called "a covenant of salt"?
- Why are the 24 gifts for the kohanim taught in this week's Parsha?

HARD Qs

- What motivated Korach to rebel?
- What did Korach and company do when Moshe said that a techelet-garment needs tzizit?
- Why is Yaakov's name not mentioned in Korach's genealogy?

CRACK THE PARSHA CODE

by Rabbi Yaakov Levine
Answers on page 7.

- K was M and A C
- K was J that M didn't A him to be a K
- K took a G made of T and asked M why it needs TZ
- 250 P J K F against M
- M T K to B K
- The G O up and S up K and his F, along with D and A
- Every O they owned, even if someone B it, was S up
- a F came and B up K 250 F
- the P used by K to B K was made into the C for the M
- it is a M to R your F B S when he is 30 D O for 5 S from a K

Rabbi Yaakov Levine is the 5th grade rebbe and afternoon mashgiach at Yeshiva Toras Moshe in Queens, NY. He is also the Night Activity Director and a rebbe at Camp Lemala. Rabbi Levine can be reached by email at rabbylevine@gmail.com

- What did Korach do the night before the final confrontation?
- What sin did Datan and Aviram have in common specifically with Goliath?
- What warning did Moshe give the rebels regarding the offering of the incense?
- What event did Korach not foresee?
- What does the phrase rav lachem mean in this week's Parsha? (Give two answers.)
- Why was Aharon's staff placed in the middle of the other 11 staffs?

PARSHA PUZZLERS

TORAH RHYMES & RIDDLES

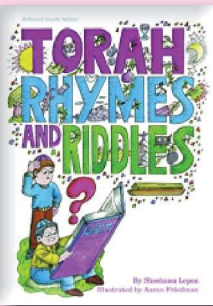
Answers on page 7.

- "Why should Aharon and Moshe lead? Are they holier than us?" These are the words I spread about That started so much fuss. But in truth I did not care About my fellowman. I wanted greatness for myself, That was my hidden plan. _____
- We're helping Korach to rebel And Moshe knows us very well. When he killed an Egyptian, long ago,

- We watched him and let Pharaoh know. _____ and _____
- I would have joined Korach If not for my wife She kept me at home And this saved my life. _____ ben _____
 - Two hundred and fifty men Did a very great offense. Hashem sent a fire to strike them down When bringing the _____
 - Twelve staffs standing in a line,

- And almonds blossom just from mine. _____
- East and west, the people ran They scattered north and south. The earth began to rumble And it opened up its _____

Torah Rhymes and Riddles by Shoshana Lepon (Author) and Aaron Friedman (Illustrator) is filled with rhyming riddles that test young children's comprehension of the weekly Parsha. For more great children's Torah books, visit artscroll.com



PARSHA STORIES

STORIES MY GRANDFATHER TOLD ME

The Choice

"It is much for you! For the entire assembly — all of them — are holy and Hashem is among them, so why do you exalt yourselves over the congregation of Hashem?" (Bamidbar 16:3)

One year, just days before Rosh Hashanah, a group of community leaders from a nearby town came to see R' Meir of Premishlan.

"There is a wealthy and headstrong Jew who lives in our town," they told R' Meir. "And now he has decided that he must lead the davening on the Yamim Nora'im (the High Holy Days). Had he possessed a sweet voice or a pleasant manner of davening, that would have been fine. The problem is, his voice is not sweet and his davening is not pleasant to hear. And, to top it all off, the man is exceptionally stingy, always refraining from giving tzedakah. It is no wonder that the entire congregation opposes having this man serve as our sheliach tzibbur!"

The tzaddik listened to their story. Then, when the delegation had departed, he sent for the rich man himself.

The man arrived, and R' Meir opened the discussion.

"The book of Tehillim mentions three tefillos," he said. "'Tefillah L'David' ('A prayer for David,' Tehillim 17:1), 'Tefillah L'Moshe' ('A prayer for Moshe,' Tehillim 90:1), and 'Tefillah L'ani' ('A prayer for a poor man,' Tehillim 102:1). What lesson do these three prayers have for us?"

"They teach us that even someone who does not possess a sweet voice, someone who is heavy of mouth and tongue, can pray — if he is a tzaddik like Moshe Rabbeinu. If he is not such a tzaddik, but nevertheless has a pleasant way with song, the way David HaMelech did, then he, too, can lead the davening.

"But a man who is neither a tzaddik

like Moshe nor a singer like David can only be a sheliach tzibbur if he is poor and heartbroken.

"You," continued R' Meir, "are neither a tzaddik like Moshe nor a singer like David. You are not even poor! In that case, you have no permission to lead the davening." He paused. "I do, however, have one possible solution."

"What is it?" the rich man asked quickly.

Stories My Grandfather Told Me by Zev Greenwald (Author) Libby Lazewnik (Translator) and Tova Katz (illustrator) is packed with short pleasant stories that teach children important life lessons from the weekly Parsha. The five-volume set is available from your favorite Jewish book store, or at artscroll.com.

