

Parashat Korach for Kids

Torah reading: Numbers 16:1-18:32

Read on Shabbat: June 20, 2026 · July 10, 2027 · June 24, 2028 (diaspora)

THE STORY IN TWO MINUTES

What happens in this parasha?

Korach was a Levi — part of the tribe with the special job of carrying and caring for the Mishkan, the travelling sanctuary. It was an important job. But Korach looked at his cousins Moshe and Aharon and thought: why are THEY the leaders? Why not me? He gathered 250 followers and started a big argument in the camp: “Why are you in charge?”

Moshe didn't shout back. He said: let's let Hashem show us. Tomorrow, everyone brings a firepan with ketoret — fragrant incense — and we will see whom Hashem has chosen. The next day, the answer came in a way no one could argue with: the ground opened up like a great door beneath Korach's camp and closed again, and the argument was over.

Then came the gentle proof — the part children remember. Each tribe's leader placed his wooden staff in the Mishkan overnight. In the morning, Aharon's staff had come alive: it had sprouted, flowered, and grown almonds — a dry stick turned into a blossoming branch. Hashem had chosen Aharon to be the Kohen, and now everyone could see it.

The parasha ends with the Torah describing the special jobs of the Kohanim and the Levi'im — because the real answer to Korach is that everyone in the camp had a job that mattered.

THE ONE BIG IDEA

Jealousy whispers that someone else's job is better than yours. Korach had a holy job of his own — he just stopped seeing it. The blooming staff says: every person flowers in their own place.

READY TO TEACH · AGES 5-9

The 30-minute lesson

1

Tell the story

5 MIN

Use the version above. Linger on the staff: a dry wooden stick, left overnight, found covered in white almond blossoms in the morning.

2 Wonder together

5 MIN

Ask: “Korach’s job was carrying the holy things of the Mishkan. Why do you think that stopped feeling special to him?” Talk about how comparing steals the fun from what we have.

3 Learn the Hebrew word

5 MIN

This week’s word: *machloket*, an argument. The Sages say Korach’s was an argument NOT for the sake of heaven — it was for himself. Ask: what would an argument FOR a good reason look like?

4 Make a blooming staff

10 MIN

Craft: a brown paper “staff” (rolled paper or a stick) + white tissue-paper almond blossoms glued on. While you glue, name the jobs in your family — whose “staff” blooms at dinner, at bedtime, at cleanup?

5 Wrap up with a blessing

5 MIN

Go around: each person says one job someone ELSE in the family does that secretly holds everything together. That’s the anti-Korach move — seeing other people’s gifts without wanting to take them.

HEBREW, ONE WORD AT A TIME

This week's Hebrew words

SAY IT	WHAT IT MEANS	HEBREW
<i>Korach</i>	The Levi who started the argument — the portion is named for him	קֹרַח
<i>machloket</i>	An argument or quarrel	מַחְלֻקָּת
<i>ketoret</i>	Fragrant incense offered in the Mishkan — the test	קֶטֶרֶת
<i>mateh</i>	A staff — Aharon’s burst into flower	מֵטֶה
<i>shkedim</i>	Almonds — what grew on Aharon’s staff overnight	שְׂקָדִים
<i>kohen</i>	A priest serving in the Mishkan — Aharon’s chosen role	כֹּהֵן

AT THE SHABBAT TABLE

Three questions to ask

- What is a job in our family that is secretly super important — even if nobody claps for it?
- What could Korach have said to Moshe instead of starting a fight?
- If your “staff” bloomed with the thing YOU are best at, what would grow on it?

A GENTLE NOTE FOR PARENTS

For young children, tell the earth-opening moment briefly and calmly — “the ground opened like a door under Korach’s camp and closed, and the argument was over” — and then move to the blooming staff, which is the portion’s true picture-ending. Don’t dwell on the swallowing; the Torah itself moves on to the almond blossoms, and so should the lesson.

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