

Bamidbar Chapter 20 - Transcript

Shiur Overview

Summary: Bamidbar Chapter 20 — The Narrative of the 40th Year

Structural Context: The Third Part of the Desert Narrative

Chapter 20 marks the transition to the third major section of the desert narrative — the story of the 40th year, when Bnei Yisrael begin approaching Eretz Yisrael. The narrative structure divides as follows:

1. **The beginning of the journey** — starting in Parshat Behaalotecha, traveling toward Eretz Yisrael, ending with the Meraglim episode in Parshat Shelach, which pushed off entry by a full generation.
2. **The Korach rebellion** — possibly before or after the Meraglim; either way, it belongs to that earlier cluster of events.
3. **The 40th year** — beginning here in chapter 20, dealing with the transition of generations.

This division is confirmed in Sefer Devarim, where Moshe's opening speech structures events the same way. The location of Kadesh is significant — it was where the Meraglim were sent from, and now it's where the final chapter begins.

The connection to the preceding Parah Adumah section (purification from tumat met) is notable: this chapter contains the deaths of Miriam and Aharon, plus the decree causing Moshe's future death — three deaths in total. This chapter effectively "kills off the main characters" — not yet their actual deaths in every case, but the decree that Moshe and Aharon will die in the desert and someone else will lead the people into the land. The chapter lays the groundwork for a generational and leadership transition.

Pesukim 1–2: Death of Miriam and the Water Crisis

Pasuk 1: Bnei Yisrael arrive at Midbar Tzin, specifically at Kadesh, in the first month (assumed to be the 39th or 40th year). Miriam dies and is buried there. As the oldest sibling — she watched over baby Moshe — her death first symbolizes the passing of the generation, including its leadership.

Pasuk 2: There is no water for the Edah. The Midrash connects Miriam's death to the disappearance of water (the "well of Miriam"), which is a plausible but not textually explicit association.

This water crisis belongs to a recurring series of desert complaints. The repetition is not problematic — in a desert, water crises naturally recur, and the same type of complaint is entirely expected.

Pesukim 3–5: The People's Complaint

The people fight with Moshe — "**Vayarev ha'am im Moshe**" — using language of quarrel (*riv*) rather than the usual *teluna* (complaint), echoing the language from Beshalach.

Their complaint contains several elements:

- "**Velu gavanu bigva acheinu lifnei Hashem**" — "Would that we had died with our brothers before Hashem." The meaning of "lifnei Hashem" is debated: it may refer to those

who died by divine fire or plague (as with Korach's followers or the Meraglim), deaths considered preferable to dying of thirst. Alternatively, it echoes the earlier wish to have died in Mitzrayim.

- They invoke the term "**Kehal Hashem**" — a concept emerging from Korach's rebellion, asserting that the entire congregation has a relationship with God, not just Moshe.

- They accuse Moshe of bringing them to a place with no planting, no figs, no grapes, no pomegranates, and no water.

Pesukim 6–11: Moshe's Response and the Striking of the Rock

Moshe and Aharon follow their usual pattern: going to Petach Ohel Moed, falling on their faces, and receiving a revelation of Hashem's glory. But here, critically, **Hashem does not complain about the people** — a departure from the usual pattern where God redirects the complaint toward Himself and punishes the people.

Hashem's instruction: Take the staff, gather the people with Aharon, and **speak** to the rock (*sela*), which will produce water.

What Moshe actually does:

- Takes the *mateh* from "lifnei Hashem" — a divine staff with some kind of power

- Addresses the people: "**Shimu na hamorim**" — "Listen, you rebellious ones"

- Says: "**Hamin hasela hazeh notzi lachem mayim?**" — "Shall we bring water from this rock for you?"

- Raises his hand and **strikes** the rock twice; water flows out

Pasuk 12: The Divine Rebuke — A Novel Reading

Instead of punishing the people, Hashem is angry at Moshe and Aharon: "**Ya'an lo he'emantem bi lehakdisheni le'einei Bnei Yisrael**" — "Because you did not trust in Me to sanctify Me before the eyes of Bnei Yisrael."

The key interpretation: Moshe's sin was **adopting the people's perspective**. When they complained about no water, Moshe essentially said, "What do you want from me? It's a desert!" His tone conveyed that the situation was genuinely impossible — aligning himself with their complaint rather than projecting confidence in Hashem's power. This echoes Hashem's earlier rebuke in Behaalotecha: "**Hayad Hashem tiktzar?**" — "Is Hashem's hand too short?"

Moshe did ultimately perform the miracle, but his frustrated rhetoric — "Shall *we* bring water from this rock?" — failed to sanctify Hashem. His job was to communicate that a desert poses no problem for God. Instead, his frustration made it sound like he shared the people's doubt.

The punishment's logic: The generation of the Meraglim was condemned not to enter Eretz Yisrael because they lacked trust — they said "we can't." Now Moshe has displayed a parallel failure of confidence. Though he directed his frustration at the people, the underlying tone conveyed that he had lost his courage, and Hashem's confidence in him. Therefore: "you will not bring this community to the land

which I have given to them." He receives the same fate as the generation he was supposed to lead.

The concluding verse — "These are the waters of strife (*Mei Meriva*) where Bnei Yisrael fought with Hashem, and God was sanctified by them" — means that God ultimately did bring water, but Moshe failed to participate correctly, and therefore both he and Aharon are condemned to die in the desert.

Pesukim 14–21: The Edom Episode — A Second Detour

Geographic and Narrative Parallel to Beshallach

From Kadesh, passing through Edom would bring Bnei Yisrael directly to Eretz Yisrael. This creates a striking parallel to the very beginning of the journey in Parshat Beshallach, where they could have gone through Eretz Plishtim but were rerouted because of fear. Now there is *another* detour — they cannot pass through Edom. The pattern of being unable to take the direct route recurs.

The Diplomatic Mission (Pesukim 14–17)

Moshe sends *malachim* — best translated as "ambassadors," important messengers carrying a message from the king — to the king of Edom. The address is striking: "**Thus says your Edom is treated as a** (כה אמר אחיך ישראל). "**brother Yisrael** sibling nation, descended from Eisav, Yaakov's brother. There is an echo here of Parshat Vayishlach, where Eisav offered to travel together with Yaakov and Yaakov politely refused — this episode is in some sense the repercussions of that earlier .dynamic

The message recounts their hardships: descent to Egypt ("you didn't go to Mitzrayim — you went to Edom, but we went down"), long suffering, the Egyptians hurting them and their ancestors, crying out to Hashem, and Hashem sending a *malach* to take them out. The use of *malach* is notable — "He sent a *malach*, and we're sending you a *malach*." The *malach* who took them out of Egypt is obviously Moshe himself, but he speaks in the name of Yisrael, not in his own name.

The rhetorical strategy is to arouse compassion (*me'orer rachamim*): we've struggled so long, we're finally close to our destination, please let us pass. They promise not to go through fields or vineyards — when an army passes through a land, the first thing they do is ruin the countryside and food supply. Instead, they will travel on the *derech hamelech* — literally "the king's way," meaning the highway, the royally maintained road that doesn't cut through agricultural land. They won't deviate right or left.

Edom's Refusal and Escalation (Pesukim 18–21)

Edom refuses: "Do not pass or I will come against you with a sword." This refusal is not entirely unreasonable — Bnei Yisrael are traveling as an army, and allowing an army through one's territory is genuinely dangerous, regardless of promises.

Bnei Yisrael try again with even more concessions: they'll go on *mesillah* (paved ways — even more restricted than the king's highway), and if they drink from Edom's wells, they'll pay for the water. They emphasize: "just let us pass through on foot" — meaning no heavy equipment, no horses, no military apparatus, just people walking.

Edom refuses again and backs up threats with action, coming out (בעם כבד וכי) **with a heavy army and a strong hand** Bnei Yisrael turn away — not only because they couldn't (זוקה) fight, but because Hashem (as stated in Sefer Devarim) explicitly told Moshe not to fight Edom, since that land .belongs to Edom

Pesukim 22–29: The Death of Aharon at Hor Hahar

The Decree and Succession

Traveling around Edom, they arrive at Hor Hahar. Hashem אל — tells Moshe and Aharon that Aharon will die Aharon will be gathered to his people." This expression "עמיו, means gathered to his dead family: when a person is born they are separated from their greater family (living and dead), and when they die they return to where they came from. The because you" — על אשר מריתם את פי — .rebelled against My word" at Mei Meriva

The Transfer of the Priestly Garments

Hashem instructs Moshe to take Aharon and his son Elazar up the mountain, remove Aharon's clothing (the *bigdei kehunah*), and put them on Elazar. As established in Parshat Tetzaveh, Parshat Naso, and elsewhere, the dressing of the kohein in the priestly garments is what constitutes his power and status. Removing them from Aharon and placing them on Elazar is the act of succession itself. This is done publicly — Moshe comes down the mountain with Elazar so everyone can see that Elazar is now the kohein.

Mourning for Aharon

The people see that Aharon has died and mourn for thirty days all the people. This follows a pattern seen with כל בית ישראל, — Yaakov and later with Moshe: when an important leader dies, there is a report of the people mourning for thirty days. Other places mention seven days (*shiva*), which is why mourning practice includes both shiva and shloshim at different levels of .intensity

Full Transcript

Bamidbar Chapter 20: The Narrative of the 40th Year — Miriam's Death and Mei Merivah

Introduction: The Third Section of the Desert Narrative

We are reading Bamidbar chapter 20. This chapter is straight back into the narrative, or maybe in a certain significant sense, this is where the narrative switches to the third part of the narrative, which is what we call the narrative of the 40th year of the Midbar — the narrative of Bnei Yisrael getting closer to Eretz Yisrael and what happens at that stage.

Of course, there is an interesting connection between that and the mitzvah that we've just come from, which is the mitzvah of

Parah Adumah [the Red Heifer], which is the purifier from Tumat Met [impurity from a corpse]. Because this chapter has a bunch of deaths — at least, I mean, the chapter has two deaths in it, and actually talks also about the thing that caused Moshe's death. So in some sense it has three deaths in it. But of course, the chapter is not an organic division of the text. But it does — we do for sure have the death of Miriam right after, and of course the Midrash already noticed this connection. But I think that that's some kind of association.

The Structure of the Desert Narrative

But really we're getting back to the narrative, and the division that I'm making within the narrative is something that we can see and is also very clear again in Sefer Devarim, where Moshe gives his famous speech in the beginning of it, where he divides it this way. Because we have the kind of — although there was the narrative of their travel that started in Parshat Behaalotecha, where they're traveling to Eretz Yisrael, that narrative sort of finishes in Parshat Shelach, where the Meraglim [spies] caused that plan to be abandoned, to be pushed off for a full generation.

Then the Machloket [dispute] of Korach might have happened before that or after that. It's not clear, but definitely doesn't have much to do with the end. Of course, we have these people over there complaining that Moshe is not bringing them to Eretz Yisrael. So maybe a response to what happened with the Meraglim, or in any case, thought that belongs to that series of events. We can see it as the beginning of the journey in the desert. Now we're getting to the end of the journey and starting to discuss the actual giving over of the generations. This generation, including its leaders — Moshe, Aharon, and Miriam — are going to die, and we start getting to the next generation, which is going to Eretz Yisrael.

So that's really where it starts, and the location where it starts is this place called Kadesh. Very clearly in Sefer Devarim we see that Kadesh is where the second part of the story starts. Of course, the Meraglim might have been sent already from there, so — but then they went back. So in any case, Kadesh is the place where this part of the story starts.

The Contents of Chapter 20

So let's just read. There's a few — like I said, this chapter, we could see some kind of organic whole in it because of what I discussed. It has the stories of Miriam dying, and then the story of Mei Merivah [the Waters of Strife], and then the story of the attempt to go through Eretz Edom [the land of Edom], and then also the death of Aharon in the same place, or in Hor HaHar, which is around next to Edom. But that's just the chapter division that makes that sound connected. It's of course also one parashah, Parashat Chukat, but in general, this is where we're up to.

The Death of Miriam (Pasuk 1)

So let's start from the beginning. So they come to a place called Midbar Tzin, and within that, apparently a city or an oasis, a place called Kadesh. And in the first month — it doesn't give us which year; we're to assume this is in the 40th or the 39th year of the journey of the desert — they come there, and over there Miriam dies and is buried there. So Miriam's grave, so to speak, is in Kadesh, somewhere, wherever that is.

That's one note, and like I said, it's an important note. Miriam was obviously the oldest of the three siblings — Moshe, Aharon, and Miriam. You can see that Miriam was, if she's the sister that watched over Moshe already when he was a baby, she's the oldest of the siblings. So she dies first, and this is, I think, symbolizing how the generation is finishing, dying, including its leaders. Of course, everyone died, but we don't talk about the plain people so much. We talk about the leadership. And now, next story.

The Water Crisis and the People's Complaint (Pesukim 2-5)

Of course, again, the connection between this story and Miriam's death is something that the Midrash has elaborated

on a lot. Apparently Miriam has something to do with the well. This is a plausible idea, but it's not explicit in the text. It's an association that's built out of it.

The Recurring Pattern of Water Complaints

But what the story is more reminiscent of is the same stories that we've had at the beginning of the Midbar. Also they're called Merivah sometimes. Masah or Merivah might be a different place, might be the same. There was some parshanim [commentators] that understood this the same story, but it's not necessarily so. It's definitely the same structure. The physical story might have happened more than once. The desert is obviously a place with no water, and sometimes they somehow survived, they found water somehow all the time, but every time it's a new challenge. But the challenge can repeat itself again and again.

So it's not the fact that it repeats itself isn't really a problem. Even the fact that it's the same kind of complaint, the same kind of Merivah, the same kind of sign — it's also not something that's really a problem, because that's to be expected from the story. If you know the story, you would expect that. So that's not really a problem. But I'm just mentioning that this is a story that belongs to that series of problems.

The Complaint Itself

Very basic story problem: you're going to desert, one big problem is that there's no water. So that's what happens. They're in Kadesh, there's no water. The Edah [congregation] has no water, so they gather to Moshe and Aharon, and they fight. This is the language — I think this language is in another place — **Vayarev** [and they quarreled]. They complain, and here they fight with Moshe. **Vayarev ha'am im Moshe** means they literally fight, or they have an argument with him. Of course, this language, like I said, is in Shelach, and the story of the rock and the water is the same language.

And what do they say? **Velu gavanu bigva acheinu lifnei Hashem** [Would that we had died when our brothers died before Hashem]. Where's this **lifnei Hashem**? I'm not clear what are they talking about.

Then they complained. They say, why did you bring **Kahal Hashem** [the congregation of Hashem]? So again, we see this thing of Kahal Hashem beginning from Korach already — how they consider themselves Kahal Hashem. We're not just — Moshe is this one that has connection with Hashem and we just need him and therefore we can't complain. No, we're also Kahal Hashem. And Moshe, to bring Kahal Hashem to the Midbar where they will die along with their animals.

Why did they go? So that's one thing. And the same thing: why did they take us out of Mitzrayim to bring us to this bad place, which is not a place of planting, not a place with any figs, any grapes, any pomegranates, **u'mayim ayin lishtot** [and there is no water to drink]? So there's no trees, there's no water.

Interpreting "Lifnei Hashem"

But where's this **lifnei Hashem**? Where they want to have died — they might mean something like, we should have taken our complaint earlier about Korach until the end and then died **lifnei Hashem**, like the people that died in — Rashi says on this **lifnei Hashem**, some kind of death by fire or by plague, which is called **lifnei Hashem**, and dying of thirst is worse than that. It's like you die just from not having water.

Or **lifnei Hashem** means they should have died in the desert like — sorry, in the time like they said in Shelach. They said we should have died in Mitzrayim, or there's nothing — there's no point in coming to the Midbar, in any case.

Moshe and Aharon's Response (Pesukim 6-8)

And Moshe and Aharon act in the similar way as they always act. They come to Petach Ohel Moed [the entrance of the Tent of Meeting], they fall on their face, and the **Kevod Hashem** [glory of Hashem] is revealed to them, **Vayera aleihem Kevod Hashem**.

And here, other than in other places, Hashem doesn't complain about much. So this is the fascinating story. I can't give theories in this shiur [class] about what is really going on. Actually, I will give a slight theory. But remember that in this series of complaints in the desert, always the same structure: people complain about Moshe, and Hashem takes over the complaint. He says, you're complaining about me. He listens, he punishes the people. Here's something very different happens, and let's hear what happens.

Hashem's Instructions

What happens is, first Hashem speaks to Moshe: **Kach et hamateh** [Take the staff], take your rod, your stick. Gather the people together with Aharon, and speak to the rock — **vedibartem el hasela** [and you shall speak to the rock] — and he will give you water. You will bring water out from the rock, and you will give them to drink, them and their animals. And that's what he does. He takes them out **mei hamerivah** [the waters of strife]. So this is a **mateh Elokim** [divine staff], something that has some kind of powers.

Moshe Strikes the Rock (Pesukim 9-11)

And he brings them together, and he tells them: **Shimu na hamorim** [Listen now, you rebels]. **Hamin hasela hazeh notzi lachem mayim?** [Shall we bring forth water for you from this rock?] That's what he says. And this is Moshe rebuking them, which is something we expect. They're complaining. He says, you're complaining all the time. Look, we can get water out of the rock. That's basically how it should be read, I think.

Or he's saying, like, maybe he might be saying something similar to what he said **mimacharat** [the next day] — what do you want from me? Should I give you water out of a rock? We're in the desert. We're trying to get to Eretz Yisrael, we're trying to do something, but you are just being rebellious. That's literally basically what he's saying.

And but Hashem told him he's going to do that. So this is why it becomes interesting, right?

So this is in Pasuk 10. And he raises his hand, he hits the rock twice, and water comes out, and they all drink. So we solved the problem of water.

The Divine Rebuke: Moshe's Sin (Pasuk 12)

Now, instead of Hashem complaining about the people or being angry at the people, Hashem is angry at Moshe and Aharon. And he says: **Ya'an lo he'emantem bi lehakdisheni le'einei Bnei Yisrael** [Because you did not trust in Me to sanctify Me in the eyes of Bnei Yisrael]. In other words, Moshe — and I think this is a **peshat** [straightforward reading] on the **chumash** [Torah] — Hashem is saying to Moshe: **Vayomer Hashem el Moshe ve'el Aharon**.

Understanding Moshe's Failure

It seems like at this point, Moshe put — screamed back or returned the complaint of the people to them. They're saying, why do you take us to the desert? There's nothing to drink here. Moshe says, what do you want from me? It's a desert.

And Moshe forgot that his job was to say: No problem, a desert. That's not a problem for Hashem. That's a problem for other people. Hashem doesn't have a problem.

And of course, it's not that Moshe didn't do that. Of course, he himself went with the stick and brought water from the rock. But he was frustrated with them, and he was upset at them for sort of expecting this miracle and being upset that there's no miracle right away.

Of course, maybe this was originally the plan — they're going to get water out of a rock. That's the plan. There's no other plan. There obviously must have been a plan. But Moshe spoke to them in a way which signified that he is somewhat on their side. He's somewhat agreeing with the argument that there's no water in the desert. And what do you want from me? He's using it to say, like, what do you expect? Why are you complaining all the time? Why are you just being rebellious?

But the tone was that Hashem can't. And Hashem was upset at Moshe and he said: You did this, therefore you will have the same fate as them. Remember, they were punished not to come to Eretz Yisrael because of the Meraglim — because they did not have the same kind of trust. Because they said we're not going to be able to.

And now Moshe is saying we can't go in the desert. Although he's saying it to them, in some sense he is saying that he's not worthy. So he's lost his confidence. He lost his courage. He lost Hashem's confidence in him. Therefore, you will not bring this [generation into the Land].

Moshe's Punishment and the Loss of Confidence

But he was frustrated with them and he was upset at them for sort of expecting this miracle and being upset that there's no miracle right away. Of course maybe this was originally the plan, they're going to get water out of a rock, that's the plan, there's no other plan, there obviously must have been a plan. But Moshe spoke to them in a way which signified that he is somewhat on their side, he's somewhat agreeing with the argument that there's no water in the desert and what do you want from me? He's using it to say like, what do you expect? Why are you complaining all the time? Why are you just being rebellious? But the tone was that Hashem can't and that Hashem was upset at Moshe and he said, you did this therefore you will have the same fate as them.

Remember they were punished not to come to Israel, why? Because of the miracle, because they did not have the same kind of trust, because they said we're not going to be able to. And now Moshe is saying we can't go in the desert. Although he's saying it to them, in some sense he is saying that he's not worthy so he's lost his confidence, he lost his courage, he lost Hashem's confidence in him, therefore you will not bring this community to the land which I have given to them.

So that's the punishment and this is why, this is really the parasha that predicts Moshe's death and Moshe being part of this curse of the desert, part of this curse of the generation of the desert, that they're not going to Israel, Moshe also not going because of the story of Mei Meriva [the Waters of Strife]. And as the passage finalizes and finishes, these are the waters of strife, the waters of fight that people, the people of Israel

fought with Hashem and God was sanctified in them, in other words God in the end did bring water, but Moshe didn't participate in this correctly and therefore Moshe and Aharon died in the desert.

The Transition of Leadership

So this is a very important parasha which finally sort of kills off the main characters, it's not that they didn't die but telling that they will die, the main character is Moshe and Aharon and there will be someone else to bring them to Eretz Yisrael. So that's the end of this chapter and that's why I think this piece is this parasha where very clearly the ground is laid for the generations and the leadership of the generations to change and not Moshe bringing them to Eretz Yisrael.

But Moshe is still the leader at this stage, Moshe is still the leader and he's still the military leader of the people, he's still bringing them closer to Eretz Yisrael.

The Edom Episode: A Second Detour

Geographic Context and Historical Parallel

Now that they're in Kadesh, so if you look in the geography you'll see that from Kadesh if you pass through Eretz Edom, right there you get right to Eretz Yisrael. This is very interesting because right at the beginning of the parasha of Beshalach already, they could have went through Eretz Plishtim when they were afraid, so therefore they had to go around through the desert in a different way. And now there's one more detour, sort of, very interesting, one more detour where they can't go through Edom. Moshe and Sefer Devarim has a slightly different version of this story, but this is what he tells us here.

The Diplomatic Mission to Edom

So Moshe sends messengers or we could translate **malachim** [malachim] I think would be a nice translation, would be ambassadors, always an important messenger, like he carries a message from the king. He sends the messengers to the king of koh amar achicha Yisrael — **כה אמר אחיך ישראל**, Edom saying so Edom is considered a brother of Yisrael, of Yaakov, so they're literally treating each other as brother, sibling nations, so he's asking him for permission as a brother to let them through.

You'll remember of course that Eisav already asked Yaakov this once in the parasha of Vayishlach and Yaakov refused in a nice way and this is sort of the repercussions of that.

The Appeal to Compassion

And they tell him, look, you know all the hardships that we've went through, we went down to Mitzrayim, remember you didn't go to Mitzrayim, you went to Edom, but we went down to Mitzrayim, our parents, and we were there for many days, the Mitzrayim hurt us and our parents, right, because our parents were in Mitzrayim, we're just their descendants, but we've screamed to Hashem and he's heard our voice, he sent a messenger, so interesting, he sent a messenger, we sending you a messenger, and Hashem sent a messenger and took us out of Mitzrayim. The messenger obviously is Moshe himself, but he's speaking in the name of Yisroel, he's not speaking in the name of himself.

And here we are in Kadesh, next to your border, and we're asking you, therefore we're asking you, so they're sort of like being **me'orer rachamim** [me'orer rachamim — arousing compassion], they're trying to arouse the compassion of Bnei Edom, their brother, saying look, we've struggled so long,

finally we're getting close to where we're supposed to get to, let us go through your land.

The Promise of Peaceful Passage

And they promise them, we're not going to go through your fields, your vineyards, in other words we're not going to take your food, we're not going to ruin, right, when an army passes by a land, the first thing they do is they ruin the countryside, they ruin the food and the vineyards, they think we're not going to do that, we're going in **derech hamelech** [derech hamelech — the way of the king], we're going the highway. Derech hamelech means literally the way of the king, but what this means is like the highway, the king's responsible for like having highways which don't go through fields and that, we're not going to go right or left, until we go through.

Edom's Refusal

Bnei Edom didn't trust them, and he said, do not pass, I will come cross you with a sword, in other words, with the military, he doesn't accept this offer for peace. Of course, it's hard to say that he's entirely wrong because, you know, these people are, as we've mentioned many times, they're traveling as an army, they're not really traveling in peace, and to let an army go through your land is a dangerous thing, it's not simple, they might have, they probably meant it seriously, that they're not going to act that way, but it's not clear what they would give him to make them trust him.

The Second Appeal with Additional Concessions

And they ask him again, which again means something like, we'll go in the, in the paved ways, we're not even going to make our way, we're not even going to go in derech hamelech, we'll go in some paved ways, and they promise something else, they say, we'll drink, so first they said, we're not going to use your, we're not going to drink your wells, we'll somehow have our own water or something, now they're promising even better, no, we'll use your wells, but we'll pay you for it, just, we're not going to do anything, just let us go through with our feet, in other words, we're not going to bring, what we say, heavy artillery, we're not bringing along any, any horses, any guns, anything important, we're just walking through.

The Final Refusal and Military Confrontation

But it didn't help, Edom said, do not go, and he also followed through on his promise, he went, he came out in front of them with, with a heavy army, the strong hand, in other words, armed, and they showed very clearly, they backed up their threats with actions, and didn't let the Yisroel pass through.

And therefore, they couldn't conquer him, they couldn't fight with him, as it says in Sefer Devarim, that Hashem told Moshe not to fight with him, so it's not only they couldn't, it was also, Hashem said that Edom belongs to Edom, we should not fight with them, and therefore, they went around the other way.

The Death of Aharon at Hor Hahar

The Divine Decree

So, now, going the other way, they go from Kadesh, and around Eretz Edom, they come to a place called Hor Hahar, and now, Hashem speaks to Moshe and Aharon in Hor Hahar, and Hashem tells them, Aharon will die. So, **ye'asef Aharon el amav** [ye'asef Aharon el amav — Aharon will be gathered to his people], Aharon will be gathered to his people, which means, to his dead people, right, to his family, to his, he's going to go back apart, so, in some sense, when you're born, you're separated from your greater family, which includes the

living and the dead, you go, you're dead, you go back where you came from with your family.

Because, he's not coming to the land, as we've discussed five seconds ago, because, **al asher maritem et pi** [al asher maritem et pi — because you rebelled against My word], because you've rebelled against my word at Mei Meriva, so, here, we see, very clearly, Aharon is considered together with Moshe, **maritem et pi** [maritem et pi — you rebelled against My word], they didn't follow what Hashem said, or they didn't believe in him enough, trust him enough.

The Transfer of the Priestly Garments

So, Hashem tells Moshe, take Aharon and his son Elazar, take them up to this mountain, take Aharon, take off Aharon's clothing, in other words, the **bigdei kehunah** [bigdei kehunah — priestly garments], put them on Elazar, so, this is very clearly, as we've seen, in Parshat Tetzaveh, in Parshat, later, in Parshat Naso, in other places, we saw, very clearly, that the dressing, the kohein, in these clothing, in the bigdei kehunah, is what constitutes, in some sense, his power, his

being the kohein, so, this is the succession, you take it off from Aharon, and you give it to Elazar, so, he succeeds him.

And that's what he does, they go, and they, Moshe takes off Aharon's clothing, puts it on Elazar, and, basically, everyone, very publicly, everyone sees that Elazar is now the kohein after Aharon, Aharon dies, and they both come down, Moshe comes down with Elazar, they show that Elazar is now the kohein.

The Mourning for Aharon

And we have the report of the **aveilus** [aveilus — mourning], the crying, they all see that Aharon died, they cry for him, thirty days, all the places, all the people cry for Aharon, this is the reports that we've had, for Yaakov, we're going to have it for Moshe, when an important leader dies, there's reports of the people crying for him, for thirty days, which is the accepted amount, in other places, it says **shiva yamim** [shiva yamim — seven days], right, so, that's why we have shiva yamim, with different levels of mourning, but in any case, there's this report of the crying of the mourning for Aharon, since he died, and that's the end of this chapter.