

# THE COMMUNITY Parasha Sheet



LONDON'S LEADING PLATFORM FOR STUDENTS AND YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

This weeks Parasha is sponsored Lirfuat Rav Yona Ben Chava Betoeh Shaar Cholei Yisrael

## RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

DIRECTOR  
TAL



### PARASHA INSIGHTS

To become a leader one needs stamina, charisma, to be persistent, powerful and pushy in his drive. One needs to walk over others that step in his path, pushing them aside, and work hard to keep his position. I am of course talking about a leader in the secular world. When one looks at the leaders the nations are producing, be it the ruthless dictators of the middle east where killing is normally involved in their ascent to the top, or the popular politicians of the west, where secrets are hidden from the public eye, yet ruthlessness is rife. To succeed and go for the top one must believe in themselves be haughty and not let anyone get in your way.

Not so the Torah way of thinking!

Our greatest leader Moshe Rabenu was chosen by Hashem first and went through no such process. On the contrary Hashem chose him for his Anava – modesty, rather than for his haughtiness. The same is true about Aharon. He was chosen to be the Kohen Hagadol – not because he was the toughest man around, not because he knew how to manipulate people, and promise things he would never deliver on, but rather due to his righteousness and devotion to Hashem.

Yet one man and his cohorts decided to rebel in the wilderness.

Korach and his men, leaders of the assembly, gathered together against Moshe and Aharon. "It is too much for you! For the entire assembly -- all of them -- are holy and Hashem is among them; why do you exalt yourselves over the congregation of Hashem (Bamidbar 16:3)?"

Although they assailed both Moshe and Aharon, their main complaint was against Aharon. Each of these men envisioned himself in the position of Kohen Gadol (high priest). It was Aharon's post they wished to usurp. And of course, chief among them was Korach, Aharon's cousin.

How would we expect Aharon to respond to such incriminations? Should he defend himself and his appointment? Perhaps he should fight them physically and put the rebels in their place? What should he do?

In the very next verse, the Torah tells us what Aharon did. "Moshe heard and fell on his face."

That's right Moshe fell on his face. What about Aharon? Why did only Moshe fall on his face? And where was Aharon?

Sometimes what is not stated rings louder than what is.

The Ramban reveals to us that: "Aharon, with his ethical perfection and sanctity, did not respond at all during this entire altercation. He remained quiet and conceded, as it were, that Korach was of a higher stature than himself. But [Aharon] acted according to the word of Moshe, fulfilling the decree of the king."

Aharon did absolutely nothing. He remained statue-like, and did not respond in the least. What about the way he felt, his degradation in public?

On the one hand, Aharon knew that he had been appointed Kohen Gadol by the acting king of Klal Yisrael, Moshe Rabbeinu. As such, he had no recourse but to accept his assignment. Deep down, however, he genuinely considered the possibility -- or even the probability -- that Korach was more deserving and spiritually suitable than he. Ever the man of peace (Avot 1:12), Aharon was truly a servant of the people and an absolute master over his emotions. Aharon trained himself to remain silent by realizing that he is only human and that there could very likely exist others genuinely greater than he. Why then should he argue? Who says he is better?

Despite his low profile, Hashem came to his aid and proved without a doubt that he was chosen Kohen Gadol due to his merit and not because of ulterior motives. ►

2<sup>nd</sup> TAMMUZ 5779

SHABBAT BEGINS: 9:01 PM

SHABBAT ENDS: 10:31 PM

### > MAZAL TOV

Udi Ildi & Leah Ezekiel  
on their upcoming wedding

Nirit & David Schemtob  
on Lior's bat mitzvah

Zac Yaacov Kenton & Roxana  
Miriam Jebrel  
on their upcoming wedding

Mickey & Lindsey Evan  
on the birth of their baby girl

”THE WEEKLY QUOTE

“When one door of happiness closes, another opens; but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one which has been opened for us.”

### > UPCOMING EVENTS

For our upcoming events  
check our website  
www.torahactionlife.com

• 17<sup>th</sup> JULY

Young Professionals event



DVAR TORAH

Parasha Insights  
RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

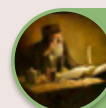
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DVAR TORAH

Choose your friends  
RABBI YEHONATAN SALEM

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OUR CHACHAMIM

RABBI YAAKOV ABIHSSIRA

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HALACHOT

If One Realized After "Boneh Yerushalayim" ... RABBI ELI MANSOUR

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Q&A & CARTOON

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This newsletter contains Divrei Torah and may contain Sheimot - Please dispose of accordingly

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Tsadik Katamar Yifrach - "The righteous blossom as the palm tree". The Ari z'l notes that the last letter of these three words spell the name KRH (Korach). He explains that the "Tamar" (literally palm tree) is the opposite of and correction (tikkun) for Korach. The Hebrew word "karah" means "bald". There is a midrash about the frustrations of a man who had two wives, one older and one younger, with the older removing the black hairs (so he look older) from his head and the younger removing the white hairs (so he look younger). In the end he was left completely bald

Kerach can also refer to Ice. Both words have one idea in common: neither provides fertile soil for growth and development. Hair does not grow on a bald head, and grass or flowers do not emanate from ground covered with ice.

The palm tree represents the opposite to this situation. It with proper nurture will produce lush dates. The Tsadik just like the date tree needs nourishing, he must work endlessly developing himself. Korach wished to usurp Aharon, he was impatient, and he did not go via the right

path. He chose a path of ridicule and enticement, in order to get what he desired and therefore failed.

Aharon was Ohev Shalom VeRodef Shalom. He kept calm whilst all around him were panicking, he developed himself to earn being the Kohen Gadol.

As I had began writing my Dvar Torah this week, I learnt of the sad passing of our Great Teacher and leader Rav Mordechai Elyahu Z'L. I had the privilege of learning under him in his Kolel in Yerushalym and personally together with hundreds of thousands of people worldwide feel the great loss.

The Rav was turned to for guidance in great matters of halacha and policy. Phone calls came to him from all over the world. I once attended his home after midnight and was shocked to see that the Rabbi a man in his late 70's the time was still receiving calls. Rabbis of all sorts turned to him. Sefardim and Ashkenazim. Yet he was always available to everyone, no matter what background, not matter what question, the Rav had time

for you. The Rav was a giant on the shoulders of giants, versed in the revealed Torah and secrets of the Torah. He had served and learnt with the greats of the previous generation, the Chazon Ish, the Baba Sali, R Tsadka and R Y Kaduri to name but a few. Yet one character trait always shone through - that of modesty. One could feel it in the air. His respect to all, his love and devotion to Hashem and his people were second to none.

May the memory of HaRav Eliyahu strengthen us in our time of mourning. May we strengthen ourselves in our devotion to the Land, Torah and people of Israel and take upon added intention in our observance of G-d's mitzvot. May we too prepare our days in full faith that we merit to greet the Mashiach and see the building of the Third Temple, a binyan adai ad speedily in our days. Amen.

## Shabbat Shalom

## RABBI YEHONATAN SALEM - SHALOM LAAM DIASPORA



### CHOOSE YOUR FRIENDS

In this week's parashah we encounter another tragic incident during the journey phase of the Jewish People in the wilderness. Korach the Levite and his followers, two hundred and fifty dignitaries from the neighbouring tribes, were casting aspersions as to the fact that the priestly duties were heavenly-allocated. The argument was not settled until the authenticity of Moshe Rabbenu's and Aharon Hakohen's divinely-assigned roles was miraculously verified. This happened when the main perpetrators of the dispute, along with their families and belongings, were swallowed alive as the ground opened up and they descended to purgatory alive. The two hundred and fifty dignitaries, who challenged Moshe by bringing ketoret- incense, also died instantaneously, as a clear sign to all that Moshe and Aharon had not just taken these positions on their own accord..

How did Korach manage to convince others to join his rebellion against Moshe Rabbenu, risking their lives for it, if they knew that the position of kohen gadol could only be occupied by one person?

Our Sages tell us that Korach managed to rally his neighbours to his cause, since those closer in proximity to a person are more easily influenced by him. Even without consciously joining or including oneself in one's neighbour's activities, a person is automatically affected, either positively or negatively. Just as one who walks into a perfume shop, or on the other extreme, a leather tannery

is automatically affected. The scent attaches itself to the person even without him having any physical contact with the objects that emit a smell. So it is with the actions and opinions of those in one's environment, and even their way of talking. Until today, I still have a Mancunian accent even though I have been living in Israel for twenty-five years. It is so ingrained in me, that unless I make a conscious effort to change it, it will remain so.

Additionally, a person will be influenced by his surroundings and society, since he wants

to be socially accepted by them. He does not want to feel different or stick out "like a sore thumb," but rather, he wants to be popular and well-liked in his locality.

For these reasons, a person must be very particular when choosing where to live, to see who the neighbours are, where he will pray, what sort of educational system is available for his children, and what type of friends they will have. All these factors are highly influential on a person, whether he/she is aware of it or not.

Similarly, when choosing a friend, we must consider if they are going to be a positive influence on us or not. A person who agrees to everything that we do or say is not necessarily the best match for us. A person who is willing to correct us when seeing a fault, or when they see us entering a dangerous situation, is a much better option.

Let us act responsibly by putting ourselves and our families in positive surroundings. Additionally, let us be a positive environment for those who come into contact with us.

## Shabbat shalom

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## OUR CHACHAMIM

### RABBI YAAKOV ABIHSSIRA

Our saintly and venerated teacher Rabbi Yaakov Abihssira, may his memory be blessed, was born in Tafilaeth, Morocco in the year 5567 (1807). At the time he was born, a great brightness illuminated his room, and his father Rabbi Messod and the entire community were joyous. They knew that a child prodigy had just been born.

In growing up, Rabbi Yaakov showed a particular interest, and a seldom-seen aptitude, for Torah study. His father initiated him in the different disciplines and the young man showed a great ability for understanding. Rabbi Yaakov soon grew to adulthood and his love for Torah increased ever more. He quickly became a Kabbalist and saintly man renown for his great piety. He slept very little and would spend the entire week, night and day, in the Beth Hamidrash devoting himself to the study of our Holy Torah. He would leave only on the eve of Shabbat to go home. When necessary, he would journey from city to city to collect funds for the destitute and sick. Even when bothered in the middle of the night, he would never complain. He was a generous man and his home was open to all who visited. People came from everywhere to consult with him, and he was ever careful to ensure that peace reigned between the members of his community. He had a sharp sense of justice, even if his decisions appeared at times surprising. Thus a rabbi who was staying with him for an entire year had the impression that Rabbi Yaakov was judging cases in ways that hardly conformed to the Din (Jewish Law), and this greatly surprised him. Yet in every case, the truth suddenly dawned upon him and it turned out that Rabbi Yaakov had correctly judged from the outset. It is said that the truth was shown to him from Heaven, and that G-d had steered him clear of the least trouble.

Rabbi Yaakov Abihssira was infused with Ruach Hakodesh (the Holy Spirit) and had the power to perform miracles. Examples of such are numerous and are illustrated by authentic recounts that have been transmitted across time. His body, people say, was connected to the earth, but his spirit sailed about in the upper worlds.

Rabbi Yaakov Abihssira authored twelve books. Some find an allusion to these works in the verse that states, "The sons of Jacob [Yaakov] were twelve" (Gen 35:22). Among his books are commentaries on the Torah: Pituei Hotam, Mahsof Halavan, and Levona Zacca; Responsum: Yoru Michpatcha Leyaakov; a collection of Drashot: Doresh Tov; and works on Kabbalah: Bigde Haaserad and Guinze Hamalech. All of these were printed after the death of the Tzaddik.

One day his son, Rabbi Messod, asked his father for permission to publish his works. Rabbi Yaakov replied, "My son, you will not print them until after I join the next world. There I will see if they have G-d's consent, and I

will let you know in a dream." In fact, after the death of the Tzaddik, Rabbi Messod saw his father in a dream, at which point his father asked him to publish his works, for he then knew that they had been approved by G-d.

His love for the Holy Land ran deep. On several occasions he expressed the desire to leave everything and go there, but the community never wanted to separate from the Tzaddik. When he had reached an advanced age, he informed his entourage that the time had come for him to move. He felt compelled as by an overwhelming force, yet wasn't sure that he could realize his dream. He managed to travel all the way to Egypt, to the city of Damanhour (near Alexandria). This place would be the last step of his long journey. Once, at the outset of Shabbat, while he was preparing to recite Kiddush, a candle suddenly went out without apparent reason. He then said, "Fine! May the soul return from where it came and may the body go to where it should." Those who heard these remarks were perplexed.

The next morning Rabbi Yaakov fell ill. His condition became worse during the entire week that followed, to the point that he found himself on death's door by Thursday. His host, Mr. Saroussi, had a doctor come by, a pious man, who announced that, unfortunately, there was nothing that could be done for the Rabbi and he would certainly pass away that night. When the doctor left, Rabbi Yaakov got up and asked his host what he had said. Mr. Saroussi, however, didn't want to reveal the doctor's remarks to him, but on the Rabbi's insistence he eventually did.

"I must still live until just after Shabbat," Rabbi Yaakov said in correcting the doctor's prognosis, "and I have certain things to do." Friday morning, when the doctor returned to confirm the death (for he was convinced that the Rabbi was already dead), he was stunned to see the Rabbi (clearly better) with a Torah book in his hand.

Sunday morning, numerous merchants in the city came to see him for a blessing. He told them, "Today you will not go to work, for the time has come for me to leave this world." Then he looked at them one by one and called out two Rabbits among them, asking them if they were prepared to take care of his body after his death. He warned them, however, that it wouldn't be long before he died. The two learned men agreed. And so Rabbi Yaakov began to recite the Song of Songs, Vidui, and other prayers to ask forgiveness for his sins. He was then asked if he wished to be buried in Damanhour, and he agreed on condition that it be in a Jewish cemetery. Finally, he recited the Shema and entrusted his soul to G-d.

He passed away on Sunday, Tevet 20, 5640 (January 4, 1880). ■



## HALACHOT

### RABBI ELI MANSOUR

#### IF ONE REALIZED AFTER "BONEH YERUSHALAYIM" IN BIRKAT HA'MAZON OF SE'UDA SHELISHIT THAT HE FORGOT "RESEH"

The Shulhan Aruch (Orah Haim 188:7) addresses the case of one who is reciting Birkat Ha'mazon on Rosh Hodesh, and after completing the Beracha of "Boneh Yerushalayim," before beginning the next Beracha, he realized that he had forgotten to recite "Ya'aleh Ve'yabo." In such a case, the Shulhan Aruch writes, the individual recites at that point in lieu of "Ya'aleh Ve'yabo" the brief blessing, "Baruch Asher Natan Rosheh Hodashim Le'amo Yisrael Le'zikaron." This special blessing is recited without Hashem's Name either at the beginning or at the end.

In the next passage, the Shulhan Aruch writes that Birkat Ha'mazon after Se'uda Shelishit (the third meal) on Shabbat has the same status as Birkat Ha'mazon on Rosh Hodesh in this regard. When it comes to the first two Shabbat meals, one who realizes immediately after reciting "Boneh Yerushalayim" that he had omitted "Reseh" recites a complete Beracha, with Hashem's Name: "Baruch Ata Hashem Elokenu Melech Ha'olam Asher Natan Shabbatot Li'mnuha...Baruch Ata Hashem Mekadesh Ha'Shabbat," as printed in many Siddurim. Regarding Se'uda Shelishit, however, the Shulhan Aruch writes that the Halacha in this case is the same as it is on Rosh Hodesh. This seems to mean that since there is no strict requirement to eat bread for this meal as there is for the first two Shabbat meals, Se'uda Shelishit resembles a meal on Rosh Hodesh, and thus the law governing the case of one who remembers after "Boneh Yerushalayim" that he forgot "Reseh" is the same as that which applies in the parallel case on Rosh Hodesh. Thus, the individual would recite an abridged blessing - "Baruch Asher Natan Shabbatot Li'mnuha..." without Hashem's Name in the beginning, and without the conclusion of "Baruch Ata Hashem Mekadesh Ha'Shabbat." This is, indeed, the ruling of the Kaf Ha'haim (Rav Yaakov Haim Sofer, 1870-1939).

However, Hacham Ovadia Yosef, in his Yabi'a Omer (vol. 6, 28:7), rules otherwise. In his view, even in Birkat Ha'mazon after Se'uda Shelishit, a person in this case recites the full text of "Asher Natan Shabbatot Li'mnuha," with Hashem's Name in the beginning and with the conclusion of "Baruch Ata Hashem Mekadesh Ha'Shabbat." Despite the Shulhan Aruch's ruling, Hacham Ovadia showed that in truth, the full text of the Beracha should be recited in such a case, even after Se'uda Shelishit.

(Hacham Ovadia added that if one remembered his mistake before he finished "Boneh Yerushalayim," after reciting "Baruch Ata Hashem," he should then say the words "Lamedeni Hukecha," and he can then recite "Reseh" and proceed as usual with "Ve'tibneh Yerushalayim.")

Summary: If somebody reciting Birkat Ha'mazon on Shabbat realizes immediately after "Boneh Yerushalayim," before beginning the next Beracha, that he forgot to recite "Reseh," he recites at that point in lieu of "Reseh" the full text of the special Beracha, "Asher Natan Shabbatot Li'mnuha," which appears in many Siddurim. This applies to all three Shabbat meals, including Se'uda Shelishit. ■





## TEST YOURSELF - Q&A

- ❶ Did Moshe want to be the kohen gadol?
- ❷ What event did Korach not foresee?
- ❸ What does the phrase rav lachem mean in this week's Parsha? (Give two answers.)
- ❹ What lands are described in this week's Parsha as "flowing with milk and honey"?
- ❺ When did Moshe have the right to take a donkey from the Jewish Community?

❶ 16:6 - Yes. ❷ 16:7 - That his sons would repent. ❸ 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)." ❹ 16:12 - Egypt and Canaan. ❺ 16:15 - When he traveled from Midian to Egypt.

Answer

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## MONDAY NIGHTS

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