

THE COMMUNITY Parasha Sheet



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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." ►

> MAZAL TOV

Louis & Stephanie Schwartz
on the birth of a baby girl

Tara Cohen & Jonathan Zeilinger
on their engagement

Zac & Ayala Gold
on the birth of a baby boy

Chaya & Sam Guidi
on the birth of a baby boy

Simon & Louise Abraham
on Joshua's Bar Mitzvah

Biba Gabay & Yehuda Cope
on their wedding

Natalie & Josh Kanter
on the birth of their son Arie Gavriel

” **THE WEEKLY QUOTE**
"Every small positive change we make in ourselves repays us in confidence in the future"



DVAR TORAH

Parasha Insights
RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

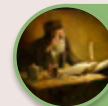
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Aharon did absolutely nothing. He remained statue-like, and did not respond in the least. What about the way he felt, his degradation in public?

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.

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. ■ **Shabbat Shalom**

RABBI DOV LEVY - PORAT YOSEF SYNAGOGUE

**DVAR
TORAH**



EXTRA SENSITIVITY

In Parashat Korach we are told of the dispute raised against Moshe and Aharon, concerning challenging the leadership, Kehunah Gedolah and ultimately the veracity of all Moshe Rabbeinu's communication with Hashem.

The land swallowed up Korach, Datan, Aviram and their families whilst the two hundred and fifty followers from the tribe of Reuven were consumed by a fire from Hashem, as they held Ketoret pans. They disputed Aharon's right to be Kohen Gadol and so as firstborns brought Ketoret themselves and were killed in the process. Since the pans were used for the service of Hashem, they became sanctified and thus had to be gathered and used for a

holy purpose. Elazar the son of Aharon was instructed to collect the pans but curiously not Aharon HaKohen himself. Why was Aharon HaKohen not asked to collect the pans? Why was this job given to his son Elazar? We don't find Elazar taking any prominent role before succeeding his father, so why here?

The Gemara in Masechet Berachot (27b) relates an incident where a dispute erupted in the highest Bet Hamidrash of Yavneh between Rabban Gamliel and Rabbi Yehoshua, resulting in Rabban Gamliel being deposed as Nasi and leader of the Chachamim. Whilst certainly a Torah giant, he was however deemed too harsh on the students. The Gemara implies that Rabbi Yehoshua was worthy to succeed him but was turned down since he was the 'Baal Maaseh', the individual around whom the dispute revolved. Rashi comments that installing Rabbi Yehoshua in his place would cause particular upset to Rabban Gamliel. The Meiri explains that whenever a senior figure is deposed, the adversary who triggered the dispute

should not replace him, as it causes extra suffering to the deposed leader.

He shows this idea from Parashat Korach, where Hashem instructs Elazar, in place of Aharon his father, to collect the holy Ketoret pans. This was a lesson to teach sensitive and thoughtful conduct towards the defeated in the dispute. Therefore an alternative, respected and suitable individual must be found. This applies even where the other party is no longer around, like here where the two hundred and fifty had been killed. A sensitive attitude is expected whether the recipient will or will not actually feel anguish. The Meiri adds that one should avoid Machloket, especially where the public is involved but when it is unavoidable, the Torah is stressing the importance of being sensitive and sympathetic to others at all times. May we see only peace and harmony amongst all Klal Yisrael! Shabbat Shalom. ■

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OUR CHACHAMIM

RABBI DAVID OPPENHEIM ZATZAL

Rabbi David Oppenheim was born in 1664 (5424) in Worms. He learned Torah from Rabbi Guershon Ashkenazi of Metz, Rabbi Yaakov Ashkenazi (the father of Chacham Tzvi), Rav Binyamin Wolf Epstein of Fridberg, and Reb Yitzchak Binyamin Wolf of Lensberg (author of Nahalat Binyamin).

At the age of 25, he was named rabbi of the community of the large city of Nickelsburg, as well as rabbi of the province of Moravia. He founded a yeshiva that he supported with his own money and in which he gave courses to numerous students.

Besides writing many introductions and approbations for different books, and besides the many manuscripts that he refused to have published during his lifetime, Rabbi David Oppenheim published more than 30 books. He later became the rabbi of Prague, dying in the year 1737 (5497).

From across a span of 300 years, it is difficult, if not to say impossible, to trace in detail all the incidents, stories, and decisions that the Gaon Rabbi David Oppenheim lived through and participated in. Who today can explain to us the exact nature of that which troubled the Jews of Nickelsburg, of Prague or in the province of Moravia and its regions between 1689 and 1737 (5449 and 5497)? We are, however, cognizant of this man who possessed astounding virtues and an exceptional character, a man who saw unfurled and heaped onto his plate all that happened in the Jewish world during these several dozen years.

Rabbi David Oppenheim was among the greatest decision makers of his generation. In almost every domain, he left an incalculable number of responsum in which the truth shines forth. He speaks of his teachers – the great of the previous generation – with great respect and reverence, and he cites their views with trembling and love. However it still remains that when, having worked for a long time on a question asked of him, he arrived at a conclusion that was different than that of his predecessors, he did not hesitate to express his opinion. And just as with every dispute that is for the sake of Heaven, he began by saying just how insignificant he felt in comparison to those whose decisions he disagreed with.

He maintained a particularly loving relationship with his students. His commentaries were often written as if he was speaking directly to them, and they knew it. This is why today we are in possession of numerous letters that they addressed to their great Rav long after they had grown up and gone out into the world. These letters not only contain questions pertaining to Halachah, but also requests for help in gaining a livelihood or questions concerning their rabbinic roles in different communities. Rabbi David was for them not only a Rav, but also a father. In a letter that one student, Rabbi Meir Segal Horowitz, sent him from the Hanover Beth Midrash, the expression Adoni hamelech ("My lord the king") is unceasingly used to designate Rabbi David. This attests to the veneration that the letter's author had for his great teacher. When we look at the original letter, we see that Rabbi David, who apparently could not stand the honors that the letter bestowed upon him, crossed out in ink every place where the term "the king" was used to describe him.

His first years as Rabbi of Nickelsburg were a difficult period for the Jews. Four years earlier, in 1686 (5446), Austria had conquered Oben Castle, and in the course of that war the Jews of the region suffered greatly. Numerous communities had been entirely destroyed and others decimated. An echo of those painful days reverberated in the responsum of Rabbi David, and he took upon himself the difficult task – both physically and emotionally – of taking care of the numerous agunot whose husbands had disappeared during those horrific times. He gave himself no respite and worked relentlessly to provide them with help in accordance with Halachah.

His community work did not diminish in the years that followed, when he was designated as Rav and Av Beit Din of Prague. Much to the contrary, he was recognized as state Rabbi and the supreme authority in everything that concerned the community. He enacted decrees and oversaw all that occurred in the community, be it important or not. In one of his responsa, he described his crushing work schedule as follows: "You are very familiar

with the weight of the tasks that burden me, beginning with the worries of our yeshiva, where we study from the middle of the night until the middle of the day, and proceeding to the affairs of the community and the state. I don't even have time to swallow my spittle."

If we had asked a contemporary of Rabbi David Oppenheim to give a title to the following story, it is probable that he would have chosen one that expresses the misfortune of a series of events. Today, more than 250 years after the passing of Rabbi David, it turns out that the events of this story seem far from misfortunate, and that the story should in fact be entitled The Extent of Divine Providence.

Rabbi David's library had 7000 works in its collection, which even for us is a large number (and how much more so for that era, when books were rare and precious). Yet that is not all. The library shelves were also filled with more than 1000 manuscripts that had not been published. Of all the books published at that time dealing with Torah, there was not a single one that he did not have a copy of. If he heard people speaking of a manuscript that he did not have, he tried to obtain it, and if that was impossible, then at least to have it copied. When the Amsterdam Talmud was published in 1714 (5475), he prepared a parchment made from deerskin and asked that a copy of that Talmud (which was the most beautiful of the era) be printed on it, an undertaking that he paid 1000 gold coins for.

Today, too, there are many book collectors. However Rabbi David Oppenheim was certainly not a collector. His great passion did not come from shelves loaded with beautiful volumes of works; it came from Torah, which he loved with every fiber of his being, which he studied with all his strength, and which he always had on his lips. He possessed a complete understanding of the Gemara, and in his numerous responsa he cited different versions thereof, as well as the remarks of commentators taken from the books in his library. It is therefore astonishing to realize that during his entire life, he almost never had access to his library and hardly managed to profit from it.

At the beginning, the library was located in Nickelsburg. However when he left for Prague, he made it follow by way of Worms. He waited in vain in Prague for the arrival of his books that were so precious to his heart. Yet it was not to be, as a fire ignited and burned everything in the library, down to the last book. In a letter dated to that year, he wrote, "I am like a craftsman that no longer has the tools of his trade." Would he accept this? Would he become discouraged? Not him! He began again from scratch, one book after another, one manuscript after another. Yet again, he could not have them by his side. For one reason or another, he had to spend some years in Vienna while his books stayed in Nickelsburg. He wrote, "I possess only that which I know by heart. I ascend and descend the Talmud only by what I have on my tongue."

Next he returned to Prague, but at the time there was an official censorship policy in place that prevented his books from entering the country. This was due to a fear that some books could contain material offensive to Christianity. Thus each time he needed to consult one of his books, the Rav of Prague was forced with great regret to go to his father-in-law in Walfendithal, near Hanover. He thus left this world far from his books, which were sold by his son after his death and purchased by Oxford University's Bodleian Library in England.

Divine Providence in this story can be fully seen today in all its strength. Many works and manuscripts would have certainly been burned over the course of the years and during times of persecution. Only the refusal of librarians to permit these books to be taken out allowed a great number of them to remain intact until our day. These books have subsequently been copied and scholars have made great use of them. The Rav Itzhak Dov Feld of London, a Holocaust survivor, worked tremendously hard to publish the works that Rabbi David Oppenheim had written. The Nazis had left him but one finger intact, and he used it to type the works of Rabbi David Oppenheim, which in this way were saved.



HALACHOT

RABBI ELI MANSOUR

THE PROHIBITION OF MEAT AND MILK TOGETHER

The Torah prohibits meat and milk together on three levels: Cooking, Eating and Deriving any benefit. They are only prohibited when cooked together, "Derech Bishul." If they were put together cold, that does not constitute the Torah transgression. Many authorities, including the Peri Hadash (Rav Hizkiya Da Silva, 1656-1695), hold that not only cooking in liquid, but also roasting, frying and baking constitute cooking from the Torah. However, pickling meat and milk together would only constitute an Issur D'rabanana – a Rabbinic prohibition. While both the Torah and Rabbinic violation are, of course, forbidden to be cooked or consumed, the difference between them is that it is permitted to derive benefit from a D'rabanana level mixture of meat and milk.

The Halacha requires disposing of meat and milk that were cooked together. Ideally it should be buried, but flushing down the toilet or putting securely in the garbage can is also acceptable. One must be careful not to discard it in the public domain so that dogs will not eat it. Feeding the dogs would be considered a violation of deriving benefit. Even if one burnt it, the ashes are also forbidden and may not be used as ingredients in soap.

One common case that must be avoided occurs when people have the same sink for meat and milk. They may pour cold milk in the sink and later put in a dish with meat residue. This in itself is not such a problem, because it is all cold. However, if one then rinses the sink with hot water from a Keli Rishon, such as an instant hot faucet, that would constitute a Torah violation of cooking meat and milk, even if he does not eat it!

SUMMARY

Those who use one sink for meat and milk must be careful that the sink does not contain cold meat and milk before pouring hot water into it. ■



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STORY

IT'S NOT MY JOB

Mom, where is the phone book?

Over there in the cabinet, Avi. Maybe I can help you. Whose phone number do you need?

I want to call a boy in my class. He cheated by looking at my paper during the test today. I am so upset. He deserves a punishment. I am really going to tell him what I think about him. That will teach him a lesson.

Let us think about this a minute before you call him, Avi. Are you sure that he cheated?

100% Mom. I saw him looking at my paper and writing down my answers.

I see. The first thing that you should try to do is correct his mistake. I suggest that you wait until you are a little calmer. Then you can call him and explain to him that what he did was wrong.

Mom, I don't want to correct his mistake. I just want to teach him a lesson.

Hmmm. Avi, you know that the Torah forbids that. We are not allowed to take revenge.

But Mom, I'm so upset.

I understand Avi dear. Let me tell you what happened to me yesterday. I hired a woman to help with the housecleaning. We agreed that she would do the dishes, laundry, vacuum the rugs, and mop the floors. She came and did a very good job. Then I asked her to do the windows. Do you know what she said?

It's not my job.

Right. I was a little upset. However, she was 100% right. She never agreed to do windows. She knew very clearly what jobs were hers and what jobs were not.

That is very nice, Mom, but what does it have to do with cheating on the test?

In this week's parsha, Avi, Korach rebelled against Moshe Rabbeinu, our teacher Moses. He made false accusations. He started an unjustified argument. He mocked Moshe Rabbeinu. He refused any attempts to make peace. He turned many people against their beloved leader.

Those are all pretty terrible things, Mom. He really deserved punishment for them.

He certainly did, Avi, and he got it.

Who gave it to him? Moshe Rabbeinu?

Not at all, Avi. Moshe Rabbeinu tried to make peace with him. Moshe went to Korach privately, in order to avoid embarrassing him. Moshe answered all of Korach's accusations and patiently explained the reasons for his actions. However, all of his attempts failed.

What happened next, Mom? Did he punish him?

No, Avi. That was not his job. That was G-d's job. Moshe Rabbeinu's job was to try to make peace with Korach. He tried to correct Korach's mistakes and set him on the straight path. He tried to help Korach in every possible way. However, nothing succeeded. There was no choice but to punish him. Right, Mom. Some people deserve punishment.

Yes, Avi. However, that is not our job. It is G-d's job. He delivers the reward and punishment. G-d punished Korach and all of his followers.

Mom, what you are saying is that I should not try to teach this boy a lesson. It is not my job.

Exactly, Avi.

Mom, sometimes you and Dad punish me. You say that you are only doing it to teach me a lesson. What is the difference? We are your parents, Avi. We have a mitzvah to educate you properly. Sometimes, punishment is a necessary part of education. Teachers are also trying to help you when they punish you. That is their job. But, it is not your job.

But it is so unfair Mom! How can he get away with that? How can that boy cheat and not pay for it?

Avi, nothing is unfair. G-d is running the world. No one gets away with anything. We all have faith in G-d. He does not allow any wrong deed to go unpunished. Punishment is His job. This is a very important lesson, Avi.

What you are saying Mom, is that we have to do our job, and leave G-d to do His job.

You've got it. This rule will bring you much happiness and peace of mind. You will never get upset like you did today. You will never be trying to do G-d's job.

Mom, from now on I am going to change. I am going to stop trying to do other people's jobs and just concentrate on doing my job as well as I can. Whenever I feel myself wanting to take revenge or teach the other person a lesson, I am going to say to myself, "It's not my job."

Avi, now you've got your job down pat.

TEST YOURSELF - Q&A

❶ Why did Datan and Aviram join Korach?

❷ Why is Yaakov's name not mentioned in Korach's genealogy?

❸ What motivated Korach to rebel?

❹ What did Korach and company do when Moshe said that a techelet garment needs tzitzit?

❺ What warning did Moshe give the rebels regarding the offering of the incense?

Answer

❶ 16:1 - Because they were his neighbors. ❷ 16:1 - Yaakov prayed that his name not be mentioned in connection with Korach's rebellion (Bereishet 49:6). ❸ 16:1 - Korach was jealous that Elitzafan ben Uziel was appointed as leader of the family of Kehat instead of himself. ❹ 16:1 - They laughed. ❺ 16:6 - Only one person would survive.