

THE COMMUNITY PARSHA SHEET



PARSHAT KORACH

London's Leading Young Professionals Platform and Jewish Communal Centre



RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL
TAL Founder & Director

WHAT IS A TRUE JEWISH LEADER?

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.

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

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KIDS ZONE
Quiz & Comic

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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.

This past week is the Yhortzeit of Rav Mordechai Elyahu Z"L with whom I had the privilege of learning in his Kolel in Yerushalyim. 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 Elyahu strengthen us and 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 Mashich and see the building of the Third Temple, a binyan adai ad speedily in our days. Amen.



RABBI DAVID BAADANI

Director - TAL Chazanut Program

PARSHAT KORACH

Moshe Rabbeinu's biggest dream was to have the privilege of entering the Land of Israel. Moshe poured out five hundred and fifteen prayers before G-d until the Lord said to him, רב־לך אלי עוד בדבר הזה: "Enough! Never speak to me of this matter again!"

G-d chooses to use the same language that Moshe himself chose regarding the controversy of Korach and his congregation, רב־לכם בגי לוי, Enough! You have gone too

far, sons of Levi. G-d told him as well, רב־לך. Although the way of Moshe and Korach to fulfill their dream was completely different from each other, because, while Korach chose the path of controversy that is not for the sake of Heaven, a path that arouses envy, hatred, and competition, a path that takes one out of their own world, Moshe Rabbeinu chose the path of prayer, outpouring of the soul, and pleas. Nevertheless, they both received the same message, רב־לך, רב־לך. It is true that you have a dream, a dream to develop, to transcend, to be sanctified. But sometimes the dream, even though it is special and important, for

some reason (by the cause of the causes) is unfulfillable.

G-d says and so did Moshe Rabbeinu say, רב־לך. This is enough. Do not now look at your life as a complete failure, as if anything of what you have accomplished so far is worth nothing just because you have not fulfilled this specific dream. רב־לך. You have a very special role in this world, a role given only to you. Although it does not include entry into the Promised Land, it does not include a priesthood or kingship, but it includes the special part that has been especially designed only for you in the world.



RABBI YEHONATAN SALEM

APPROPRIATE CONFIDENCE

The Jewish People had been redeemed from Egypt in order to receive the Torah, and then to enter the Holy Land. The scenario was to be the ultimate possible until the coming of Mashiach (who we so eagerly await.) The Land of Israel would be populated by all the nation, the Bet Hamikdash would be standing and we would have a ruling king. However, en route, whilst travelling through the desert, there were those who doubted G-d's guarantee that our Promised Land was divinely-destined and tailor-made for our nation. They wanted to see for themselves whether the land was

conquerable, manageable, fertile and compatible to their needs. They therefore beseeched Moshe Rabbeinu to allow them to send messengers to spy out the land. Our Sages explain that although the spies who were sent were men of stature and princely positions, yet, due to their vested interests in the outcome of their mission, their vision was distorted. They knew that when they would enter the Land they would lose their prestigious posts, that were only required in the desert. This perverted their attitude towards the land, and on their return they painted a pessimistic picture to the Jewish People. They succeeded in slandering our Holy Land and causing the nation to rebel against G-d's wish that they enter it. The spies who were involved in portraying a bleak future died an uncanny death for their

part in leading their brethren astray. The Jewish People, on their part, took the forecasted destruction very much to heart, to the point that they spent that night weeping. Conversely, the two spies Yehoshua and Kalev, tried convincing the people that Hashem is on our side and that we (the Jewish People) will consume them (the nations of Eretz Yisrael) like one eats bread. We are all confronted occasionally with situations where it is difficult to know how to proceed in the best possible way. The circumstances may be complicated by pressures of a financial nature, relationships or health issues, child-rearing or even baseless pessimism. In all these situations, we must try to weigh up the various solutions, taking the appropriate professional or rabbinical advice wherever

possible, and praying for divine assistance and guidance to decide upon the best course of action. Then, once we have reached a decision, we should move forward optimistically. Since we have included G-d "in the picture", after having planned the necessary steps of action, we may move forward with the faith that He will assist us to do what is best for us. G-d will help us overcome any hurdles, obstacles or hindrances, when we take the appropriate steps with a positive mind-set.

We must explain, though, what correct confidence entails. If a person is oblivious to the possible obstacles on the path that he is taking, or he just does not care about them, then we would say that he just lacks sense and responsibility. We would not say that faith is driving him and enabling him to have a positive outlook, and even if he is successful, it is only by default. The correct outlook however, is to understand all the possible difficulties, obstacles or drawbacks that may evolve, but neverthe-

less do what needs to be done, while trusting in G-d. Then, with a positive and optimistic drive, he may hope for success, as the verse says in Tehillim(37:3): "Betach bahashem va'ase tov" – "Trust in Hashem and take the correct actions."

When you are next in a dilemma, stop and assess the situation, determine your motives, and if necessary, take advice to plan your course of action. Then, placing your trust in G-d, move forward optimistically, hoping for success.



OUR CHAHAMIM

Rabbi Naphtali Amsterdam

The sixth of Adar is the Hilloula of Rabbi Naphtali Amsterdam Zatzal. He was born in 5592 (1832) in Salant, and his father was Rabbi Shlomo Zatzal. During his youth, he was extremely diligent in study, to the point that everyone called him "Naphtali the matmid." He was among the great students of our teacher Rabbi Israel Salanter Zatzal. He took on the role of Rabbi in the cities of Helsinki and Novogrod, where he did much to elevate the level of Torah observance and the fear of Heaven. Next, he returned to Kovno where he settled down to study. To sustain his family, his wife ran a bakery, and to better their income Rabbi Naphtali accepted the rabbinate of Yaswerin and Elkost. After a certain time, he gave up all public responsibility in order to devote himself uniquely to the study of Torah. In 5666 (1906), he went to live in Jerusalem, settling down in the Strauss district next to his friend Rav Yitzchak Blazer Zatzal. He left this world in 5716 (1916). Rabbi Naphtali spent all his life spreading Torah and the fear of Heaven. When it was not in an official capacity, he gave Mussar courses in his home, in the Beit Hamussar

of Kovno, and in the Slabodka Yeshiva. He attributed great importance to the power of speech, encouraging everyone to verbally express his thoughts and ideas on Torah and the fear of Heaven. One day he said, "The power of speech, made in the depths of the soul, is such that it has a greater impact than deeds."

When he wanted to emphasize the prime importance of speech, Rabbi Naphtali relied on the opinions expressed by certain researchers concerning the fact that speech is lacking in babies. "It is not that they cannot speak, since nothing is lacking for this, but that they do not yet have the necessary intelligence to do so."

This consists of the intelligence that man was endowed with, and which is at the root of speech. This is its very essence, the instrument that allows man to actualize his thoughts by means of words. When the source of speech is intelligence, everything can be found therein, given that it is used judiciously.

Rabbi Naphtali gave an example to explain the importance of actualizing what we have in mind. When we ask ourselves what is

preferable, the bread that we eat or the gold we accumulate, everyone will agree that gold is worth more than bread, because it allows a person to purchase everything that he needs, including bread.

Yet when someone is lost in the desert, if he possesses a certain amount of gold but nothing to eat, he will die. However, if he had bread he would survive. That which is more important is therefore not the potential, but that which is tangibly present. Therein lay the interest to capitalize on man's intellectual strength. That is, furthermore, the role of man, said Rabbi Naphtali: "The entire goal of Creation was to make man descend into the world of action to perform concrete mitzvot, for example in taking the skin of an animal to make Tefillin, or taking linen and wool to make Tzitzit."

The same idea applies to the words of Torah and the fear of Heaven. Rabbi Naphtali Amsterdam Zatzal ends by saying that even though we can also accomplish the study of Torah by simple reflection, "the one who wants the Torah's fruit to be born in him, not to be forgotten or removed, should practice it verbally."



HALACHOT BY RABBI ELI MANSOUR

Zimun If Ten People Ate Together But Not All of Them Ate Bread

In a previous edition of Daily Halacha, we discussed the situation of ten people who ate a meal together, nine of whom ate bread, whereas the tenth ate other foods or drank. The Halacha in this case, as established in the Gemara and Shulhan Aruch, is that the ten men may recite a Zimun with Hashem's Name ("Nebarech L'Elokenu She'achalnu Mi'shelo"). Even though only nine people ate bread, the tenth can count toward the Minyan if he ate a Ke'zayit of other food, or drank a Rebi'it of a beverage other than water. (Since water does not provide any nourishment, its consumption does not suffice for one to be included in the meal.) Thus, for example, if nine men ate bread, and a tenth who was with them ate a Ke'zayit of vegetables, such as a salad, or ate "Mezonot" food, and even if he just drank a Rebi'it of juice

or wine, they may recite a Zimun with "Elokenu." The question arises as to whether this Halacha would apply if fewer than nine of the ten men ate bread. Suppose only eight, seven or six men ate bread, and the rest ate other foods or just drank. Does the group recite a Zimun with "Elokenu," or is this allowed only if just one person did not eat bread?

The Shulhan Aruch (Orah Haim 197:2; listen to audio recording for precise citation) writes that a group of ten may recite the Zimun with "Elokenu" as long as at least seven men in the group ate bread, and the rest ate or drank something other than water. Zimun differs in this respect from Kaddish, which a group of ten people may recite even if only six – the majority of a Minyan – are responding. When it comes to Zimun with "Elokenu," the Shulhan Aruch explains, Halacha requires that a recognizable majority had eaten bread. This is defined as

seven people, and thus if six or fewer people in the group ate bread, "Elokenu" is not recited in the Zimun. But if at least seven people ate bread, "Elokenu" is recited, provided that the other three either ate a Ke'zayit of a different food or drank a Rebi'it of a beverage other than water.

It should be noted that, as the Shulhan Aruch rules, only a person who ate bread may lead the Zimun. In cases when fewer than ten people ate bread but the Zimun is recited with "Elokenu," the person who leads the Zimun must have eaten bread.

Summary: If ten people ate together, they recite a Zimun with "Elokenu" if at least seven of them ate bread, and all the rest either ate a Ke'zayit of other food or drank at least a Rebi'it of a beverage other than water. The one who leads the Zimun, however, must have eaten bread.



WEEKLY PARSHA OVERVIEW

Parshat Korach

Korach, Datan and Aviram, and 250 leaders of Israel rebel against the authority of Moshe and Aharon. The rebellion results in their being swallowed by the earth. Many resent their death and blame Moshe. G-d's "anger" is manifest by a plague that besets the nation, and many thousands perish. Moshe intercedes once again for the people. He

instructs Aharon to atone for them and the plague stops. Then, G-d commands that staffs, each inscribed with the name of one of the tribes, be placed in the Mishkan. In the morning, the staff of Levi, bearing Aharon's name, sprouts, buds, blossoms and yields ripe almonds. This provides Divine confirmation that Levi's tribe is chosen for priesthood and verifies Aharon's position as Kohen Gadol, High Priest. The

specific duties of the levi'im and kohanim are stated. The kohanim were not to be landowners, but were to receive their sustenance from the tithes and other mandated gifts brought by the people. Also taught in this week's Torah portion are the laws of the first fruits, redemption of the firstborn and various laws of offerings.

Rabbi Sinclair, *Seasonsofthemoon.com*



1 Why did Datan and Aviram join Korach?

16:1 - Because they were his neighbors.

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

16:1 - Yaakov prayed that his name not be mentioned in connection with Korach's rebellion (Bereishet 49:6).

3 What motivated Korach to rebel?

16:1 - Korach was jealous that Elitzan ben Uziel was appointed as leader of the family of Kehat instead of himself.

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

16:1 - They laughed.

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

16:6 - Only one person would survive.



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