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B'S'D'

INTERNET PARSHA SHEET ON Korach - 5761

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From: RABBI MORDECHAI KAMENETZKY rmk@torah.org To: drasha@torah.org Subject: Drasha - Parshas Korach - Job Placement Dedicated in Honor of the Bar Mitzvah of Yitzchok Youlus of Silver Spring Maryland Mazel Tov to the parents, Rivka and Menachem Youlus and the entire family

Once again, this week, Moshe comes under fire. This time he is attacked by his very own cousin, Korach, who claims that partiality and not Heavenly direction resulted in the choosing of Aharon as the Kohen Gadol.

Korach did not come alone. He riled up 250 prominent leaders to vilify Moshe, and question the entire process of appointing both the princely and the priestly leadership.

But Moshe did not cower. He gave them an offer they could not refuse. All 250 men were to try to offer the k'tores, a highly potent combination of spices and fragrances that the kohen offered each day "in that way we will know, who is "the real, (pardon the pun,) McKoyhen."

He spoke to Korach and to his entire assembly, saying, "In the morning G-d will make known the one who is His own and the holy one, and He will draw him close to Himself, and whomever He will choose, He will draw close to Himself (Numbers 16:5). The double expression is troubling. If He will draw those holy close to himself, then of course those who He chooses will be drawn close to Him. Why the specific repetition of drawing near?

In the mid 1800s, Rabbi Avraham Shmuel of Aishishok served as the Rav of the town of Rassein, a small village near Kownus, Lithuania. A brilliant scholar and the author of the Amudei Aish, the community revered him and afforded him the utmost respect. Unfortunately, the Czar government of that era had different visions for a rabbi and appointed their own lackey, a puppet of the state known as a Rav Mitaam. The Rav Mitaam served as the official liaison to the Russian Government and any official dictate or transaction, having to do with Judaism, went only through the Rav Mitaam. Unfortunately for that Rabbi, the townsfolk knew of his very limited capabilities, and relegated him to a seat in the middle of the congregation near the Bimah as opposed to the traditional place up front near the Holy Ark.

But one week the young designate decided that he had enough. He wanted to be afforded the same dignity as Rabbi Avraham Shmuel. He woke up early that Shabbos and came to shul before anyone arrived. He sat himself down in the seat designated for Rabbi Avraham Shmuel next to the Aron Kodesh (Holy Ark). No one had the nerve to say anything to him for fear of government reprisal.

During that era, immediately before Musaf, all congregations throughout Russia said a special prayer on behalf of the Government and Czar Nikolai. That week the chazan, it is not known whether it was an orchestrated ploy or a lapse in memory, forgot to say the prayer. He was about to continue with the Musaf service when suddenly an elderly Jew, a former cantonist soldier who was captured as a youngster and forced to

serve in the Czar's army for many years, jumped up from his seat and charged toward the front of the synagogue. He began raining blows on the official designated rabbi, the Rav Mitaam.

"What kind of Rabbi are you!" he shouted. "How dare you allow the chazan to forget the prayer on behalf of our benevolent leader? I served the Czar faithfully for twenty years and you forget to bless him?!" The congregants joined the fray, some trying to separate the older soldier from the bedazzled rabbi, others getting in the blows they always longed to afford the government appointed rabbi.

It was not long before the police arrived, and arrested the soldier, who was dragged out of the synagogue, yelling and hollering about the lack of honor afforded his Majesty. "After all the years I worked for the czar, I will not allow this poor excuse for a rabbi, to belittle the dignity of His Majesty!" The local policeman could not decide the fate of the soldier who struck a government official, to defend the honor of the Czar.

Finally the case was brought to the Governor General of the region who asked the "rabbi" to defend his inaction. "You see," stammered the Rabbi, I was sitting very far from the bimah and I truly did not hear the chazan skip, the prayer. After all, I was sitting next to the Holy Ark all the way up front!

The decision came down from the governor's office. No more would the official Rabbi be allowed to sit up front. From now on, he must sit amongst the people to make sure that all the prayers are said correctly.

People may feel that they are holy, but at the end of the day, it only matters who Hashem, the One who knows the true spirit of the heart and mindset of the spirit chooses to be close to. Some may run to be near the ark, when in truth, though they may physically situate themselves at the front, they have no spiritual place-setting there.

The story of Korach reminds us of the enduring saga of confused positions and roles that we often find in our community. It is the story of the chazzan who thinks he is the Rabbi, the Rabbi who thinks he is the President, and of course, the President who thinks he is the Creator! It is a parsha that reminds us that though we all have a place in Hashem's heart, our ego should not define our place in the community. Good Shabbos 1 2001 Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky

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From: RABBI YISSOCHER FRAND ryfrand@torah.org To: ravfrand@torah.org Subject: Rabbi Frand on Parshas Korach "RavFrand" List - Rabbi Frand on Parshas Korach - Dedicated This Year Le'eluy Nishmas Chaya Bracha Bas R. Yissocher Dov - In memory of Mrs. Adele Frand - Sponsored this week by Ahavat Achim Orthodox Congregation, Fair Lawn, NJ Come Spend a Comfortable Shabbos with us! <http://www.ahavatachim.org>

The 'Explicit Name' Is Only Given Over To The Financially Independent

In Parshas Korach, Moshe Rabbeinu defended himself against the onslaught of Korach and his assembled supporters. Among the things that Moshe said was, "I did not take a single donkey from them! I did not do any harm to any of them!" [Bamidbar 16:15]. There are not many rabbis today who can make the statement "I never took a dime from anyone". Unfortunately, rabbis and Torah professionals must rely on the good graces of their congregations and their community. That is the way the system works.

But this 'system' sometimes compromises leaders. If the leaders are

beholden to individuals, that sometimes makes it difficult for them to properly function. Moshe Rabbeinu was not like that. Moshe could say - in effect - "I never took a dime from anyone." Our Sages tell us that Moshe was personally well off. G-d allowed him to keep the "leftovers" from the hewing out of the Tablets of Stone containing the Asseres HaDibros [Ten 'Commandments'] [Nedarim 38a].

The Imrei Shammai cites an interesting passage from the Jerusalem Talmud [Yoma Chapter 3]: It was necessary for Moshe to never have received any monetary favors from any member of the Jewish people. The Talmud says that anyone who is in control of the 'Shem HaMeforash' [the Explicit Name of G-d], can never have had benefit from any individual. In other words, we do not trust anyone with this Holy Name if he has ever taken anything from anyone.

The Yerushalmi says that we are afraid that someone who once received something from someone might become angry at that person, and then - if he knows the 'Shem HaMeforash' - might curse him with that Name, with fatal results. The Imrei Shammai argues that since we know that Moshe Rabbeinu knew the 'Shem HaMeforash' [Rashi on Shmos 2:14], therefore we know that he never took anything from anyone.

Think about this. Does it make sense? Is it not more logical to say "if I GAVE something to someone and then became angry with him, then I may come to curse him with the Explicit Name of G-d"? If I HELPED him and did him favors and he double-crossed me, then I might become so enraged that I would curse him with the 'Shem HaMeforash'. However, that is not what the Yerushalmi says. The Yerushalmi says the exact opposite: If someone gave something to ME, then I may become so angry with him that I curse him".

The Yerushalmi relates that there was a certain doctor who knew the 'Shem HaMeforash' and wanted to give it over to Rav Pinchas bar Chama. However, Rav Pinchas bar Chama refused to learn it. He insisted that he did not qualify because he used to take tithes (ma'aser) from different individuals. Having benefited from various individuals he could not be trusted with the 'Shem HaMeforash', lest he come to use it against them.

What is the meaning of this? It is a very important insight into human psychology. We tend to get angry very easily at people who have done favors FOR US. A human being does not like to be beholden to anyone. Therefore, in an irony of human behavior, we are more apt to dislike and sometimes even to hate the people who have done favors FOR us, not the people for whom we have done favors. We do not want to admit, "I owe you."

The best way to illustrate this concept is through something [Rav Yakov Ruderman zt"l, (1901-1987)] the Rosh Yeshiva [Dean, of Ner Israel Rabbinical College, Baltimore] used to say in the name of the Chasam Sofer (1762-1839). The Chasam Sofer used to say, "I do not know why this person dislikes me - I never did any favors for him." At first glance, this sounds backwards. He should have said "...I never hurt him" or "...I never did him an injustice." However, the Chasam Sofer said "I never did him a favor" -- because those are the people that one has to watch out for!

This is also why, on a certain level, there is so much tension between parents and children. Parents do so much for children and the children feel so beholden to their parents that there is often tension - and in some cases much worse than tension - between children and parents. It is sometimes very difficult to live with the fact of our enormous debt of gratitude to our parents.

Rav Ruderman used to say a slightly different expression, "I know that I did him a favor. I know that he will turn against me, but hopefully he will at least throw small stones, not big stones." It was taken for granted that eventually the person would be throwing stones.

This is the explanation of the Yerushalmi. We cannot trust the Explicit Name of G-d to anyone who received something from someone

else. Human psychology being what it is, it is highly conceivable that one day the person who received the favor will eventually become angry at his benefactor. We are afraid that he might use the Name unjustly. Consequently, Moshe Rabbeinu, who had knowledge of this Name, had to be able to say "I never took a dime from anyone in my life."

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dhoffman@torah.org These divrei Torah were adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Tapes on the weekly portion: Tape # 288, "Masiach L'fi Tumoh": The Coca-Cola Question Tapes or a complete catalogue can be ordered from the Yad Yechiel Institute, PO Box 511, Owings Mills MD 21117-0511. Call (410) 358-0416 or e-mail tapes@yadyechiel.org or visit <http://www.yadyechiel.org/> for further information. RavFrand, Copyright 1 2001 by Rabbi Yissocher Frand and Torah.org. This list is part of Torah.org: The Judaism Site (Project Genesis, Inc.). Torah.org depends upon your support. Please visit <http://torah.org/support/> or write to dedications@torah.org or donations@torah.org . Thank you! Torah.org: The Judaism Site
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From: Yeshivat Har Etzion Office[SMTP:office@etzion.org.il] To: yhe-sichot@etzion.org.il Subject: SICHOT61 -33: PARASHAT KORACH SICHA OF HARAV YEHUDA AMITAL SHLIT"A

HALAKHA AND AGGADA Summarized by Dr. Benjamin Ellis

And they were assembled against Moshe and Aharon, and said to them... Why do you lift yourselves above the assembly of G-d? (Bemidbar 16:3)

In this verse we encounter a problem: How could Bnei Yisrael accept such an accusation? Moshe, we are told, is the most humble man ever to have lived, and of Aharon it is written that he loved peace and pursued peace. Moshe and Aharon do not appear to be the type of leaders who "lift themselves above the assembly of G-d!"

Rashi (16:1) explains the accusation by quoting the Tanchuma's description of Korach's and his followers' actions:

They then came and stood before Moshe [wearing garments colored entirely with tekhelet, a blue dye needed on only one string in each corner of a four- cornered garment,] and said to him, "Does a garment that is made entirely of tekhelet require tzitzit or is it exempt?" He replied to them, "It requires tzitzit." They began to laugh at him: "If a normal garment is exempted by one thread of tekhelet, can a garment made purely of tekhelet not exempt itself?"

Korach and his followers thought that since all of Bnei Yisrael were holy, all having been at Mount Sinai and having heard G-d speak directly, there was no need for the special spiritual leadership of Moshe, Aharon, the kohanim, and so on.

This misunderstanding of the nature of leadership can be traced back to an earlier event. Rashi (Bemidbar 7:3) explains why the nesim'im (princes of the tribes) were the last to donate to the Mishkan:

The princes said, "Let the community in general contribute all they wish to give, and what will then be lacking, we shall supply."

Korach and his followers mistakenly believed that the role of leadership was merely functional. If the masses are holy enough, there is no need for a special leadership, just like a garment made entirely of tekhelet (in their eyes) requires no tzitzit. They considered the role of a leader to be merely one of completing that which the masses cannot, of compensating for that which the wider community is lacking. However, leadership is something far more intrinsically important than that. Leaders have to direct the people, inspire them, carry the people along.

Korach and his followers believed they understood the basis for leadership (and, in the midrash, the reason for tzitzit) and on that basis they wanted to determine Halakha.

In discussing the giving of reasons for mitzvot, Rambam states

that although the general principle of a mitzva can be given a reason, the finer halakhic details cannot. Of tzitzit, for example, it can be said that since clothes are a purely human creation, they require a reminder of G-d. Attaching a thread of tekhelet (which is blue) reminds us of the sea, which causes us to contemplate the heavens, and in turn to reflect on G-d's Throne of Glory. This is fine for a devar Torah at seuda shelishit, but ultimately it is aggada, and we do not determine halakha on that basis. An all-tekhelet garment requires tzitzit nevertheless.

Nowadays, there are streams within Judaism who are repeating the error of Korach and his followers. They believe that they know the reasons for mitzvot, and, on that basis, rule halakha. However, although there is nothing inherently wrong in deducing general reasons for mitzvot, halakha is halakha, aggada is aggada, and the former is not to be based on the latter.

(This sicha was delivered on leil Shabbat Parashat Korach 5755 [1995].)

From: RABBI YISROEL CINER ciner@torah.org To: parsha-insights@torah.org Subject: Parsha-Insights - Parshas Korach
This week we read the parsha of Korach. Korach, who was jealous of Moshe and the positions of authority that he and others held, began a rebellion against Moshe.

"And they gathered against Moshe and Aharon and said: You have (taken) too much! The whole congregation is holy (they all stood at Sinai and heard the words of Hashem) so why have you lifted yourselves over the congregation of Hashem? [16:3]"

Korach's rebellion was an attempt to reform the Torah of Moshe. He and his followers didn't dare to try to challenge the divinity of the Torah--they themselves had stood at Sinai! Rather, they tried to cripple Moshe's authority by claiming that since the entire nation heard Hashem speak at Sinai, they had the authority to interpret the Torah according to their understanding and as they saw fit. This challenge to Moshe was actually an attempt to undermine the entire Torah and would have shattered its transmission throughout history.

Moshe's attempts to quell the rebellion through peaceful means were categorically rejected. Moshe then turned to Hashem with the following prayer: "Do not accept their mincha {offering}. [16:15]"

On a simple level, Rashi explains that this mincha is referring to the incense that they were planning to offer to Hashem the next day.

The Ramban explains that all sacrifices and prayers are called by the name mincha. As such, Moshe was asking Hashem not to accept their offerings or their prayers.

The Saba of Kelem zt"l makes a beautiful observation. Moshe was afraid of the prayers that Korach and his cohorts would offer for the success of their rebellion. Even though their success would have resulted in the ruination of the Torah, Moshe was still afraid of their prayers. From this, he points out, we see the incredible power that prayers contain.

On Yom Kippur {the Day of Atonement} the Kohen Gadol {High Priest} would enter the Kodosh Kadashim {area of the Temple known as the Holy of Holies} to perform a special service--the holiest man, on the holiest day, in the holiest place. He would then offer a short prayer in the Heichal {area before the Holy of Holies} before exiting.

The Talmud teaches that amongst the prayers for the entire nation's welfare, the Kohen Gadol would include a plea that Hashem should not listen to the prayers of the travelers [Yuma 53B]. Rashi explains that travelers would pray that there shouldn't be any rain.

This prayer was certainly motivated by selfish self-interests and was contrary to the needs of the nation at large. If so, why was it necessary for the Kohen Gadol in the Temple on Yom Kippur, to counter these prayers?

The Saba explains that traveler's prayers were fervent and heartfelt,

based on the realization that only Hashem could help them. Such sincere prayers soar through the heavens and come right before Hashem's throne. That necessitated the Kohen Gadol's involvement.

In a similar vein, one who killed unintentionally would remain in a city of refuge until the death of the Kohen Gadol. The Mishna [Makkos 2:6] teaches that the Kohen Gadol's mother would supply food and clothing for the murderers residing in the cities of refuge in order that they wouldn't pray for the Kohen Gadol to die. "I really want to leave this city and go home but I don't want that sweet old lady who is knitting me a sweater to be sad..."

Once again we see that a heartfelt prayer, even for the death of a tzaddik {righteous individual} like the Kohen Gadol, wields tremendous power.

If prayers that are meant to hurt Hashem, His Torah or his children are so potent, we can only imagine the power and energy contained within a prayer for the safety and welfare of Klal Yisroel {the Jewish people}.

We here in Israel are living through one of the more difficult times in the history of the state. There is a clear, genuine desire on the part of people all over the world to help. I receive daily e-mails to vote in polls and to boycott certain newspapers or news stations. "I just did my part to save the Jews in Israel. Now you do it too, click here..."

Without minimizing the importance of these activities, shouldn't we at least give equal time and effort to the most potent means at our disposal to help?

I recall reading an article about a U.S. serviceman who was held captive in Iraq during the Gulf War. His wife received a tremendous amount of letters and calls of support. One that made a very strong impression on me was a woman who had set a timer to go off throughout the day. Every time it rang, she would step out of her daily routine and pray for this man's welfare.

"The voice is the voice of Yaakov and the hands are the hands of Esav. [Breishis 27:22]" The power of Yaakov lies in our voices. Only Hashem can and will determine the outcome of these tumultuous times. He is waiting to hear those voices. Let's do our part...

Good Shabbos, Yisroel Ciner

This is dedicated to my sister, Devorah Pessel bas Asher Chaim, a ^h, whose yahrtzeit is the 30th of Sivan. TNZB"H Parsha-Insights, Copyright © 2001 by Rabbi Yisroel Ciner and Torah.org. Rabbi Ciner is a Rebbe [teacher] at Neveh Zion, <http://www.neveh.org/>, located outside of Yerushalayim [Jerusalem, Israel]. Torah.org depends upon your support. Please visit <http://torah.org/support/> or write to dedications@torah.org or donations@torah.org. Thank you! Torah.org: The Judaism Site <http://www.torah.org>

http://www.torahweb.org/torah/2000/parsha/rsch_korach.html [From last year] RABBI HERSCHEL SCHACHTER

All Men Are Created Equal

The Torah, in describing Korach's revolt against the authority of Moshe, states that Korach argued that "the entire nation is equally holy", i.e. they were all present at Mt. Sinai and all received the same Torah directly from Hakodosh Baruch Hu. Why, Korach asked, should Moshe alone be the final authority on all halachic matters? Shouldn't each individual have the right to interpret the Torah according to his own understanding?

This attitude of Korach is not unique to him alone. Any intelligent human being wants others to respect his intelligence, and prefers to maintain his independence in making decisions that affect him. People do not like being subservient to others.

According to the tradition recorded in the Talmud (Shabbos 88a), at the occasion of Ma'amad Har Sinai G-d had to force the Torah upon the Jewish people by threatening to bury them alive if they did not accept it (Shemos 19:17). The commentaries have great difficulty with this statement. The Torah seems to say explicitly that the entire Jewish nation

accepted the Torah at Har Sinai out of their own free will (Shemos 24:7). Why did G-d have to force it upon them?

The Medrash Tanchuma (Parshas Noach) suggests that perhaps the two passages referred to above correspond to the two parts of the Torah. The people were prepared to accept the Torah Shebiksav, as this comes directly from G-d; man does not find it that humiliating to humble himself before G-d. The Jews were not that keen on accepting the Torah Shebeal Peh, which includes much rabbinic input, and whose main principle is "Lo mesora hakosuv ella lechachomim" (Chagigah 18a). This aspect of Torah dictates that one person's view is binding upon another, i.e., your opinion counts more than mine. This concept is a very bitter pill to swallow. The Jewish people, who had just gained their freedom from Egypt, were not yet prepared to accept the rabbis' role in developing the Torah Shebeal Peh. Therefore, Hakodosh Baruch Hu had to force the Torah Shebeal Peh upon them.

Many generations later, after the miracle of Purim occurred, the rabbis instituted the first mitzvah midirabanon, of reading the megillah. At that time, according to tradition of the Talmud, Bnei Yisroel accepted anew the oral Torah; this time out of their own free will. The rabbis of that generation, the Anshei Kneses Hagedolah, established the texts of blessings and prayers and standardized the observance of the mitzvos. The Seder Olam Zutta remarks that after the passing of the prophets Chagai, Zecharia, and Malachi, prophecy terminated (until the return of Eliyahu before the coming of Moshiach), and a new period began. Hence forth we had to "bend our ear, and listen to the words of the chachomim". This passage apparently refers to this new period where Bnei Yosroel had accepted the authority of the rabbis, and therefore the Torah Shebeal Peh was able to develop much more than ever before. This acceptance was the rejection of Korach's position that Judaism be "every - man's religion", that each person who learned Torah should be entitled to his own opinion. The nation as a whole had officially accepted the authority of the chachomim to develop the Torah Shebeal Peh .

We sometimes hear from religious people in our own circles that since Rav Soloveitchik has passed away, there is no one around to whom they can refer their shaalos. Many of those people use the passing of the Rav as an excuse to ignore the piskei halacha of contemporary poskim. They elect to make their own halachic decisions, justifying themselves by arguing that everyone in our generation is entitled to express their opinions equally, and all have equal authority. This was Korach's view, who stated that "the entire nation is holy", we all learned Torah together, and "all men were created equal". The Rav himself spoke out explicitly against such an attitude (See Reflections of the Rav, Volume One, Chapter 13).

From: RABBI LIPMAN PODOLSKY podolsky@hakotel.edu To:
Shiur List Subject: Parshas Korach 5761
Parshas Korach 5761
A Powerfully Rising Sun

For years, a certain Talmudic teaching has left me perplexed (Shabbos 88b). "The rabbis taught: Those who are offended but do not offend [in response], those who hear their humiliation but do not respond, those who perform out of love and rejoice in their suffering, of them the verse says, 'Those who love Him are like the powerfully rising sun (Shoftim 5:31)'."

This teaching represents the ideal aspiration of a Jew. Utter stoicism. Nothing makes a dent. On the contrary, one accepts derision and embarrassment as a Divine decree, fully aware that "everything the Merciful One does is good (Brachos 60b)."

My perplexity stems from a practical question. How do I do it? I've received my lion's share of insults, and the feeling is not pleasant. The temptation to retaliate is almost unbearable. What can I do? I'm just a

human being, not an angel. How am I to train myself to become "one who hears his humiliation but does not respond?"

Misery loves company (or so they say). Had I been the only person ever to have suffered so, it would have probably been unbearable. Needless to say, I am not the first (nor the last, unfortunately). Korach and his men, leaders of the assembly, gathered together against Moshe and Aharon. They did not mince their words. "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? Should he 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." Rega! Didn't the people accost both Moshe and Aharon? Why did only Moshe fall on his face? And where was Aharon? Sometimes what is not stated rings louder than what is. Aharon did absolutely nothing. He remained frozen, statue-like, and did not respond in the least. "Those who are offended but do not offend..."

True, Aharon did nothing. But what did he feel? What emotions were churning inside him in the face of an extremely unpalatable episode? How I would have felt I have already described. What about Aharon HaKohen?

Reveals the Ramban: "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."

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 (Avos 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? Aharon was a living embodiment of "one who performs out of love and rejoices in his suffering."

We too can attain this all-important midda (character trait). It's not easy, but it is of infinite value. As the Ramban writes: "Every person should be greater than you in your eyes. If he is wiser or wealthier, you have to respect him. And if he is impoverished and you are wealthier or more wise than he, consider in your heart that you are more culpable than he and he is more worthy than you, for when he sins, it is unintentional; you, however, act maliciously (Iggeres haRamban)."

And when we finally do acquire this vital midda, Hashem will surely shine His much-needed grace upon us. As the verse promises, "Those who love Him are like the powerfully rising sun (Shoftim 5:31)."

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<http://www.artscroll.com/parashah.html> Parashah Talk
Parashas Korach Excerpt from Living Each Week, by RABBI
ABRAHAM J. TWERSKI, M.D.

Moses said to G-d, "Do not attend to their offering. I have not carried off one of their asses nor have I offended even one of them" (Numbers 16:15).

Moses' statements are difficult to understand. Why did Moses have to pray to G-d not to accept the offering of Korach? Inasmuch as Moses knew that Korach was defying the Divine will, was it not self-evident that G-d would not accept this offering? Certainly, the reason that Moses gave for his asking G-d to reject Korach's offering seems irrelevant. What difference would it have made if Moses had received some slight personal benefit or had offended one of them? The simple fact was that Korach was rebelling not against Moses and Aaron, but against the word of G-d, and Moses knew this to be the fact, as he stated, "Therefore you and your community have assembled against G-d" (16:11) This was more than ample reason why Korach's offering should be rejected.

The effectiveness of prayer is something which is not easily explained. It is indeed a mitzvah to pray, but how and why does prayer work? If it is the will of G-d, say, that a person be afflicted with illness, will someone's praying for him cause G-d to change His mind? Or will my asking G-d for success cause Him to give me something which He might not have given me otherwise? Is the Divine will subject to change due to someone's intervention? These questions abound in the works of philosophy of religion.

While some aspects of prayer may be beyond our grasp, one of the explanations is that prayer is not intended to bring about a change in G-d, but in the supplicant. When we relate to G-d in prayer, we may undergo salutary changes. For example, one woman who was bitterly disappointed when her newborn child turned out to have Down Es Syndrome, related that she had prayed fervently, "Please G-d, You have performed so many miracles, do just one more. Change him." She then went on to say, "One day the mirace occurred: G-d changed me." What she was really saying was that ultimately her prayers helped her accept the will of G-d.

The Talmud states that prayers on behalf of another person, for the very thing that one needs oneself, are quickly answered. Rabbi Elimelech of Lizhensk explains this as follows: Suppose, for whatever reason, the Divine judgment decreed a certain amount of distress for A. If B now empathizes with A so profoundly that he suffers because of A's distress, the G-d will relieve A of his distress because Divine justice will not permit B to endure suffering that was not ordained for him. Thus, by sharing another person's distress, we can relieve him of it, and if it affects us so deeply that we accord it priority over our own needs, that prayer is quickly answered. This is one way in which prayer is effective.

Furthermore, fulfilling the mitzvah of prayer should stimulate one to think, "What right do I have to approach G-d, and particularly, how do I merit that my prayers be answered?" This should lead one to reflect on oneself, and doing a thorough soul searching should bring about constructive changes in one's character, rendering one more receptive to the Divine bounty. G-d's benevolence is constantly emanating from Him, but we are not always in a state of receptivity. Achieving this condition of receptivity can be accomplished by sincere prayer.

We can now understand that Moses, finding himself in a state of distress, did what the Torah prescribes: He prayed for Divine assistance. His prayer resulted in a soul-searching inventory, and in his profound humility, Moses did not find any virtues to merit his requesting Divine assistance. All he could say was that he had not been remiss; he had not done anything to provoke the rebellion. Moses' prayer, like all sincere prayer, was thus not intended to bring about any changes in G-d, but in himself. That is what all prayers should do.

LEIB SCHEINBAUM PARSHAS KORACH

Is it not enough that you have brought us from a land flowing with milk and honey to cause us to die in the wilderness. (16:13) Korach was not a fool. Yet, everything that he asserted could not be the words of a smart man. To attempt to usurp Klal Yisrael's leadership - is audacious and foolish. To malign Moshe and Aharon - constitutes brazen disrespect. To refer to a land that was the source of so much suffering, persecution and death as a land flowing with milk and honey - is downright insane! Korach was neither foolish nor insane. He was mistaken. He misled himself. Where did he go wrong? What led him to act in a way so inconsistent with his own character? Horav Eliyahu Eliezer Dessler, zl, explains that the stimulus for his behavior was negios, personal, vested interests. When someone is subject to negios, he neither perceives accurately nor acts normally. Indeed, as Horav Aharon Kotler, zl, observes, Korach was an enigma, his behavior paradoxical. On the one hand, he sought to ascend to a loftier spiritual plateau, to become closer to Hashem. On the other hand, he did not care how he achieved his goal. He did not care whom he stepped on, whom he destroyed - even himself - so great was his obsession to perform a greater spiritual service for the Almighty.

Horav Dessler cites a powerful, penetrating analogy which is related by Rav Hai Gaon that clearly demonstrates this idea. It once happened that a lion who was hunting for food came upon a fox. As the lion was about to eat the fox for dinner, the fox spoke up, "Why would you want to eat me? I am nothing more than skin and bones. Let me show you a hefty man whose flesh is more than sufficient to provide a satisfying meal for you." The lion listened and proceeded to follow the fox to a place where there was man sitting in a clearing, right next to a hole in the ground, which was covered with branches and leaves. This trap was there to protect the man from any harmful animals that might strike him - like the lion. When the lion saw the man, he turned to the fox and said, "I am afraid to attack the man because of his ability to pray. His prayers will prevent my successful attack and will probably harm me." "Do not worry," said the fox. "His prayers will have no immediate effect on you. They will, however, affect your descendants two generations in the future."

The lion listened to the fox and made a running leap for the unsuspecting man sitting peacefully in front of him. As expected, the lion fell into the trap and was severely injured. He looked at the fox and exclaimed, "You told me that the man's prayers would have no effect on me. They would only affect my grandchildren, but look what happened. Apparently, you were wrong."

The fox, using his natural guile, responded, "It appears to me, my dear lion, that you are being punished for your grandfather's sin. You forget that you are someone's grandson." The lion looked at the fox with questioning eyes and exclaimed, "Why should I be held responsible for the sins of my ancestors?" The fox turned to the lion and with a dead-pan look said to him, "Why did you not care about your descendants?"

This narrative's message is clear and simple: when the lion was not personally involved, when he had no negios, he did not care if others would pay for his sins. Now that he is the one that is paying, the entire perspective is altered.

Korach was a wise, erudite man until it affected him personally. He then became a fool. When someone wears blue glasses, everything he sees is blue. The spectacles of vested interests distort a person's vision - regardless of the individual's stature. A truly great person is able to transcend his personal negios in order to avoid becoming a victim of the resulting myopia.

Horav A. A. Mishkovsky, zl, Rosh HaYeshiva of Knesses Chizkiyahu, was such a unique individual. He distinguished himself in his ability to see beyond himself and maintain the lucidity needed to advise others, even if the decision would have an adverse effect upon

From: listmaster[SMTP:listmaster@shemayisrael.com] To: Peninim Parsha Subject: PENINIM ON THE TORAH BY RABBI A.

him personally. There was once a student in the yeshivah whom the administration had decided was not living up to the standard of the institution. They decided that it would be best to ask him to leave. They elected to allow him to complete the zman, term, before notifying him of their decision. Meanwhile, unknowingly, this student made an appointment with the Rosh HaYeshivah to determine if it was best for him to remain in the yeshivah, suggesting that perhaps it would be better for him to pursue other areas of endeavor. The Rosh HaYeshivah, being a man of uncompromising integrity, told him that it was best for him to remain within the yeshivah environment.

When his colleagues in the administration heard of this incident, they were taken aback. "Why didn't you tell him to leave? It would have saved us a big headache if he had left on his own," they asked him. "He asked me what was best for him - not what was best for the yeshivah," said Horav Mishkovsky, "and I gave him the correct advice." This is an example of why he was a gadol - a Torah giant. It is the small people who are restrained as a result of their vested interests. Greatness is determined by one's ability to rise over one's pettiness.

It is an eternal covenant of salt before Hashem. (18:19)

Rashi explains that Hashem entered into a covenant with Aharon HaKohen. He called it by the name of something which is healthy - meaning it does not spoil - and which makes others healthy - meaning it preserves other things from spoiling. Salt's unique properties; its own "health," and ability to preserve the "health" of others make it the symbol of the covenant.

It is a well-known and accepted fact that the study of Torah has a lasting effect on a person. The question that, regrettably, has been the source of contention is: does the study of Torah influence others in its proximity? Does a yeshivah or kollel in a community raise the spiritual and moral consciousness of that community? Or, is the effect exclusively centered upon the lomed, learner, himself? Horav Chizkiyahu Mishikovski, Shlita, relates the following incident that occurred between Horav Arye Leib Shteinman, Shlita, and a wealthy philanthropist that sheds light on the above question.

The philanthropist asked Horav Shteinman the following shailah, halachic query: "For many years, I have been supporting a number of yeshivos in America, yeshivos in which the students are engrossed in all-day Torah study in the tradition of old. Recently, I have been approached by the leadership of a number of reputable kiruv, outreach, yeshivos to lend my financial support to their institutions. Shall I diminish my annual contributions to the "mainstream" yeshivos, so that I can support the kiruv yeshivos or not? After all, if I decide to diminish my yearly contribution to the regular yeshivos, it will not have an effect on their learning. Their spiritual development will continue unabated. If anything, their physical state of affairs might change, but their learning will not change. If I contribute to the kiruv yeshivos, however, I might reach those who would otherwise not be reached. I will be saving young Jewish men from spiritual extinction. What should I do?"

Horav Shteinman responded with the following powerful statement: "Do you think that the unparalleled surge of young people returning to the fold is a gift from Heaven? No! It is because there are young men studying unpretentiously in yeshivos throughout the world. The merit of their Torah study has brought about a resurgence of desire for spiritual development among our people. If you decrease your contribution to the yeshivos, you will cause a reduction in the number of baalei teshuvah, those who are returning to Torah Judaism."

We may add that Horav Shteinman was not addressing someone who was distant from Torah, but one who was a ben Torah himself. It is regrettable that we do not appreciate the value and far-reaching effect of our learning. Perhaps, if we did, our diligence in Torah study would increase, and so would our pride in this endeavor.

From: Jeffrey Gross[SMTP:jgross@torah.org] To: weekly-halacha@torah.org Subject: Weekly Halacha - Parshas Korach BY RABBI DONIEL NEUSTADT Rav of Young Israel of Cleveland Heights

A discussion of Halachic topics. For final rulings, consult your Rav.
RETURNING THE SEFER TORAH

At the conclusion of Kerias ha-Torah, the Sefer Torah is returned to the aron, there to remain until the next time it will be used. Returning the Torah to the aron, however, is a procedure unto itself involving the following steps:

After the keriah is over, a half-kaddish is recited. Whenever there is a maftir aliyah the kaddish is recited before maftir; when there is no maftir the kaddish is recited after the last aliyah.(1) This kaddish should be recited by the Reader(2). If a mourner or one who has a yahrtzeit received the last aliyah (shelishi on a weekday or the last aliyah on Shabbos or Yom Tov) he may recite this kaddish.(3) Other poskim maintain that this kaddish belongs to a mourner or one who has a yahrtzeit even if he was not called up for the last aliyah.(4) and some congregations follow this opinion.(5)

If, by mistake, the kaddish was omitted before maftir, it is recited after the final blessing after the haftarah.(6) If, on a day that three Sifrei Torah are used, the kaddish was mistakenly recited after the keriah of the first sefer, the kaddish is repeated before maftir.(7)

HAGBAHAH

When the keriah is over, the Torah is raised so that it can be viewed by the entire congregation. Since the entire congregation must be able to see the writing, the Torah should be rotated slowly to face both sides of the shul, first to the right and then to the left.(8) One who merely raises the Torah but does not display it to the entire shul commits a grave sin.(9)

Even though receiving hagbahah is considered a greater honor than gelilah,(10) one who is honored with hagbahah but feels that he does not have the strength to lift the Torah and hold it up long enough for the entire congregation to see, should decline the honor.(11)

The magbiah should maneuver the Torah so that the connecting stitches show in the center. This is done in case the Torah tears during the gelilah process - the stitches will tear and not the panels themselves.(12)

Before the Torah is lifted, it is unrolled(13) so that at least three columns(14) are visible when it is raised.

As the Torah is lifted up high, it is a mitzvah for all of the men and women(15) in shul to direct their gaze(16) at the "face" of the written parchment(17) and to recite the verse(18) Vezos ha-Torah.(19) One who is not facing the Torah as it is lifted is not allowed to recite Vezos ha-Torah.(20)

GELILAH

The Torah is rolled up by a person chosen for this honor; often, a minor. This is considered proper chinuch for mitzvos.(21)

It is common practice to set the Bereishis side of the Torah above the Devarim side.

The Torah is bound with its special sash (the gartel) around its upper half. The knot should be tied on the side of the Torah facing "up" so that when it is used next, it is ready to be unrolled without turning it over.

When the Torah is rolled up, care should be taken that the parchment is not touched with one's bare hands. Similarly, if the panels need to be adjusted or tightened, they may not be touched with bare hands even if one washed his hands before. If any adjustment needs to be made, a tallis or the mantle should be used.(22) [Other scrolls, such as Megillas Esther or a scroll used for the haftarah, may be touched with bare hands only if one previously washed his hands.(23)]

Some poskim(24) rule that it is prohibited to make a single knot and a bow [or a single knot with the ends tucked in under the sash] when

putting away the Sefer Torah on Shabbos at Minchah. Since this knot will remain intact for over twenty-four hours, it should not be made on Shabbos. The custom in most places, however, is to be lenient, and many poskim accept this leniency.(25) Another option is to wind the sash around the Sefer Torah without making any knot at all, and then to tuck the ends underneath.(26) [Those congregations that use a band with metal clasps or a special band called a wimple(27) avoid this potential problem altogether.]

Whoever chants the haftarah should not begin until after gelilah is finished. But on Monday and Thursday when Yehi ratzon is recited, there is no need to wait for gelilah to be over before beginning the Yehi ratzon.(28)

RETURNING THE TORAH

When returning the Torah to the aron, one must approach the aron from the right side of the shul facing the aron. The magbiah and the gollel, as well as those by whom the Torah passes, should follow along as the Torah makes its way through the shul towards the aron.(29) On Shabbos the congregation recites Mizmor l'David as the Torah is carried to the aron, while during the week [even on Yom Tov] l'David Mizmor is recited.(30)

Once the Torah is back in the aron, it is prohibited to remove it for any other purpose(31) except for Kerias ha-Torah in the same shul.(32) According to some poskim(33) it is even prohibited to take it to another room in the same building, even for Kerias ha-Torah. The custom, however, seems to follow the lenient opinions who allow transferring a Torah to another room in the same building.(34)

It is permitted to temporarily move a Torah to another location,(35) such as a house of a mourner or a groom, if the Torah is brought to the other location in advance, placed in a spot prepared for it especially, and will be returned to that spot after the keriah is over. It is common practice to transfer a Torah to another place only if it will be used at least three times at the temporary location.(36) While this is a proper custom that should be upheld, it is not mandatory and can be disregarded when difficult to fulfill.(37)

There are some exceptions to the above rule about transferring a Torah to a temporary location even if a place for it was not prepared in advance: 1.If an important Torah sage needs a Torah for Kerias ha-Torah, it is permitted to bring the Torah to him. 2.If ten or more people are unable to come to where the Torah is housed, e.g., they are in a hospital, it is permitted to bring the Torah to them.(38) 3.For the reading of Parashas Zachor it is permitted to bring a Torah to a sick or elderly person or to anyone who cannot make it shul.(39) 4.On Simchas Torah it is permitted to bring a Torah to shul just for the hakafos.(40) 5.A privately owned Torah may be taken from the owner's home to shul even for one time and then returned.(41)

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FOOTNOTES:

1 Whenever a keriah takes place before Shemoneh Esrei, the kaddish is delayed until after the Torah is returned to the aron. 2 Match Efrayim (Kaddish 3:1); Sha'arei Efrayim 10:9. 3 Ibid. Harav S.Z. Auerbach explains that this kaddish was specifically reserved for those who passed away and do not have a relative to say kaddish for them. This kaddish, therefore, should not be recited by an individual mourner or someone who has a yahrtzeit, unless he was called for the last aliyah (Halichos Shelomo 12:27). See Sdei Chemed (Aveilus, 163). 4 Elef ha-Magen (Kaddish 3:3). 5 Orchos Rabbeinu, vol 2, pg. 31; Shevet ha-Levi 8:163-3. 6 Mishnah Berurah 282:29. 7 Igros Moshe O.C. 1:101. 8 If the congregation surrounds the bimah from all four sides, then the Torah should be rotated in a complete circle starting from the right side; Harav S.Z. Auerbach (Halichos Shelomo 12:28). 9 See Ramban, Devarim 27:26, based on Yerushalmi Sotah 7:4. 10 Mishnah Berurah 147:19. 11 Mishnah Berurah 147:7. 12 O.C. 147:3. See Sha'arei Efrayim 10:17. 13 It is also permitted to raise the Torah while it is closed and then unroll it while raising it, but this should only be attempted by one who is strong enough to do so; Sha'arei Efrayim 10:14. 14 A stronger person should unroll the Torah more widely than three columns' width; Mishnah Berurah 134:8. 15 When a woman is a niddah, however, she should not gaze upon the Torah during hagbahah; Mishnah Berurah 88:7. 16 Although not recorded in any of the

classical sources, it has become customary to point at the Torah during hagbahah; see Teshuvos Lev Chayim 2:167. Conversely, while Shulchan Aruch rules that one ought to bow during hagbahah, it is not customary to do so; see Har Tzvi O.C. 64. 17 The Kabbalists recommend that one place himself close enough to the Torah so that he can actually make out the letters; Mishnah Berurah 134:11. But this should be done only by one who is recognized as a person whose actions are l'shem Shamayim; Sha'arei Efrayim 10:13. 18 In most siddurim the wording is: *VeZos ha-Torah asher sam Moshe lifnei Bnei Yisrael al pi Hashem byad Moshe*. Several poskim, however, note that such a verse does not exist; see Siddur ha-Gra and Aruch ha-Shulchan 134:3. 19 Although some poskim consider the recital of *VeZos ha-Torah* to be so vital that an individual interrupts his Birchos Kerias Shema in order to recite it (Birkei Yosef 134:4; Sha'arei Teshuvah 134:2), many other poskim disagree and hold that it should not be recited even during Pesukei d'Zimrah ;see Chayim Sha'al 68; Tehillah l'David 66:8; Kaf ha-Chayim 134:20. 20 Mishnah Berurah 134:12. 21 Mishnah Berurah 147:7. 22 Mishnah Berurah 147:2. 23 Rama O.C. 147:1 and Beur Halachah (s.v. v'tov). 24 Minchas Shabbos 80:155. According to this view, it is also prohibited to tie a knot on a sash of a Sefer Torah in this fashion on Thursday, since it has been untied on Shabbos morning. 25 Ketzos ha-Shulchan 123:9; Tzitz Eliezer 7:29; Harav S.Z. Auerbach quoted in Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasa 15, note 178 and Halichos Shelomo 12, note 91. 26 See explanation in The Weekly Halachah Discussion, pg. 173. 27 Used mainly in German congregations. According to Harav S. Schwab (quoted in Knots on Shabbos), this type of band was introduced in order to avoid the issue of knotting on Shabbos. 28 O.C. 147:7. 29 Rama O.C. 149:1. 30 Mishnah Berurah 147:8. 31 It is permitted, however, to remove a Torah from its place for repairs or to air it out. According to some opinions, it is even permitted to remove a Torah in order to display its beauty, as this is considered an honor to the Torah; see Kaf ha-Chayim 135:79. 32 It is also permitted to read Shnayim mikra from a Sefer Torah; Mishnah Berurah 285:1. 33 Ma'asei Rav 129; Sha'arei Rachamim quoting several opinions. 34 Da'as Kedoshim Y.D. 282; Beis Shelomo O.C. 34. 35 It is customary that when a Torah is moved it is wrapped in a tallis. The source for this custom is unknown; Tzedakah u'Mishpat 16, note 3. When a Torah is temporarily relocated, ten people should accompany it (Kaf ha-Chayim 135:74), but this does not seem to be common practice. 36 Aruch ha-Shulchan 135:32. 37 Igros Moshe Y.D. 4:61-13. See Sha'arei Rachamim 22 who refers to this custom as a "minhag ta'us." See also Emes l'Yaakov O.C. 135:14; Halichos Shelomo 12:38 and Kinyan Torah 4:18. 38 Beur Halachah 135:14. 39 Mishnah Berurah 135:14. 40 Mishnah Berurah 669:9. 41 Kaf ha-Chayim 135:82. Weekly-Halacha, Copyright © 2001 by Rabbi Neustadt, Dr. Jeffrey Gross and Torah.org. The author, Rabbi Neustadt, is the principal of Yavne Teachers' College in Cleveland, Ohio. He is also the Magid Shiur of a daily Mishna Berurah class at Congregation Shomre Shabbos. The Weekly-Halacha Series is distributed L'zchus Doniel Meir ben Hinda. Weekly sponsorships are available - please mail to jjgross@torah.org. Torah.org depends upon your support. Please visit <http://torah.org/support/> or write to dedications@torah.org or donations@torah.org. Thank you! Torah.org: The Judaism Site <http://www.torah.org/>

From: Kerem B'Yavneh Online[SMTP:webmaster@kby.org] Sent: Thursday, June 21, 2001 6:44 PM To: kby-parsha@kby.org Subject: Parshat Korach "They ... Descended Alive to the Pit"

ROSH HAYESHIVA RAV MORDECHAI GREENBERG SHLITA

There is a very strange phenomenon in our parsha. Moshe Rabbeinu loved Am Yisrael deeply, and beseeched on their behalf many times, even to the point of foregoing his share in Olam Haba at the sin of the golden calf -- "If not, erase me now from Your book that You have written" (Shemot 32:32), which the Zohar explains as Olam Haba. Why was he so extreme in his punishment of Korach, and sought a death that did not exist before? "If Hashem will create a new creation, and the earth opens its mouth and swallows them and all that is theirs, and they will descend alive to the pit -- then you shall know that these men have provoked Hashem." (Bamidbar 16:30) If Moshe had said that a snake should bite them, or that a fire should come forth from heaven and burn them, this would have provided the same proof that G-d sent him and that they are the disproven!

Rav Goren zt"l provides a novel interpretation of this strange phenomenon. The families of Kehat were appointed over the vessels of the Mishkan. "Their charge was the Ark, the Table, the Menorah, the Altars and the sacred utensils." (3:31) Midrash Tanchuma teaches that Korach was among the bearers of the Ark, and there was a special prohibition not to cause them death, "Do not let the tribe of the Kohatite families be cut off from among the Levites. Thus you shall do for them so that they shall live and not die: when they approach the Holy of Holies..." (4:18-19) It says about this in the Midrash (Bamidbar Rabbah 5:1):

This is what it says, "Behold the eye of Hashem is on those who fear

Him ... to rescue them from death." (Tehillim 33:18:19) This is the tribe of Levi.

R. Elazar b. Pedat says: From what death are they saved? If from death of the world -- there is no being that doesn't die. Rather, from the death of the Ark. How so? At the time when Israel would travel, two sparks of fire would come out from the two poles of the Ark to strike the enemies ... and when the sparks would come out, the fire would knock those who bear the Ark and they would be burned and their numbers reduced ... Each and every one would run. This one would take the Table; this one would take the Menorah; this one would take the Altars; but they would avoid the Ark, since it would harm them...

G-d said to Moshe and to Aharon: Do something for the children of Kehat so that they will not be cut off from the world: "Thus you shall do for them so that they shall live and not die." (4:19)

Thus, Moshe and Aharon were especially commanded to look out for the lives of the descendents of Kehat, and were warned in this regard with a positive and negative commandment: "Do not let the tribe of the Kohatite families be cut off from among the Levites;" "Thus shall you do for them so that they shall live and not die."

Accordingly, Moshe was forbidden to ask for the death of the children of Korach, the bearers of the Ark, in any form, because then he would violate the special commandment, "so that they shall ... not die." There was no death with which to kill them, because Moshe and Aharon were commanded to look out for their lives. Therefore there was a special request, "the earth opens its mouth and swallows them and all that is theirs, and they will descend alive to the pit,." without dying.

This is, indeed, what happened. "The earth opened its mouth and swallowed them ... They and all that was theirs descended alive to the pit; the earth covered them over and they were lost from among the congregation." (16:32-33) The goal was not that they should die, but that they should be lost from the congregation. Therefore the Torah emphasizes, ""The sons of Korach did not die." (26:11)

The Chassidic Masters say that Moshe asked that they should go down alive out of his mercy, so that during their fall they would have the opportunity to repent. This, indeed, is what happened: "They contemplated Teshuva in their hearts, and therefore a place was fortified for them in Gehinom and they sat on it and sang." (Sanhedrin 110a)

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From: listmaster[SMTP:listmaster@shemaisrael.com] To: Weekly_parsha@shemaisrael.com Subject: WEEKLY PARSHA BY RABBI BEREL WEIN

PARSHAS KORACH The great rebellion against Moshe, fomented by his jealous kinsman, Korach, turned into a disaster for Korach and his family. The earth opened under their feet and dwelling places and swallowed them, man, woman and child. The fires of dispute are always so great that they scorch even the otherwise innocent. Because of his venomous divisiveness, Korach and his family were doomed to destruction and to disappearance. But were they? In the book of Psalms, chapters of immortal poetry and comfort are attributed to "Bnei Korach" as well as other chapters authored by Assaf, who was also a descendant of Korach. So it seems, that Korach's family was not obliterated, even when the ground swallowed them whole. In fact, the Torah itself tells us in the Book of Dvarim that "the sons of Korach did not die." What are we to make of their survival? How did they extricate themselves from their doomed position?

The Midrash and the Talmud tell us that the sons of Korach did not fall all the way down into the bowels of the earth. The elegant phrase used to describe their rescue from oblivion is that "a place was fortified for them above Gehinom" where they were able to survive. And in that place, in the ruins of their lives and former beliefs, they rethought their

father's erroneous and unfair rebellion against Moshe and admitted the truth to themselves and to others. Again, Midrash tells us that their voices could be heard proclaiming: "Moshe is true and his Torah is true." It is this act of honesty, of the ability to rethink and review one's positions and prejudices, that saved the descendants of Korach from death and oblivion and even brought them to immortality and piety. They were able to climb out of the pit when they realized how wrong and suicidal the path of their father had been. They stated loud and honestly that Moshe was right and true and that they and their ancestor were false and wrong. It is not easy to do so, even when the facts of the matter fly in your face and debunk your previously held theory and belief. It was therefore this act of moral courage and searing honesty that allowed the Torah to say "that the sons of Korach did not die."

The twentieth century has been to a large extent, the century of Korach. Rebellion against tradition and the old and the veneration of new theories of social engineering, morality and religion have been the unfortunate hallmark of this, the bloodiest of all centuries. Nowhere has this been more noticeable than in Jewish life. Socialism, Communism, Secularism, Nationalism, atheistic Zionism, Reform, Conservatism, Reconstructionism, Feminism and other assorted theories and movements arose in this century to claim the place of prominence in fashioning the Jewish people and its future. All of them have proven themselves to be woefully inadequate for the task set forth. Much of the ruin currently clearly visible in the Jewish world is directly traceable to the rebellion against Moshe and his Torah, against Holyoke and tradition, which marks every one of these theories and movements and is in fact the common denominator for all of them. From our perch just above the abyss of Jewish destruction and assimilation, there are determined Jews who shout out loudly that "Moshe is true and his Torah is true." But there are many sons of Korach who still maintain the belief in the false shibboleths of this past century. After an intermarriage rate approaching seventy percent in America, one strains to hear the admission of error from these groups. Unless there is an honest reappraisal of theory and belief on the part of these groups, these sons of Korach will not survive. An admission of change of policy would be most helpful on their part and a boon to the Jewish world at large.

Shabat Shalom, Rabbi Berel Wein

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THE YISRAEL SHIMON TURKEL MASECHES KIDUSHIN INSIGHTS INTO THE DAILY DAF brought to you by Kolllel Iyun Hadaf of Yerushalayim daf@dafyomi.co.il, http://www.dafyomi.co.il KIDUSHIN 36-40 - sponsored by a generous grant from the Darchei Noam Foundation. Kolllel Iyun Hadaf is indebted to them for their encouragement and support and prays that Hashem will repay them in kind. KIDUSHIN 44 - dedicated by Rav Mordechai Rabin (London/Har Nof), on the day of the Yahrzeit of his mother (28 Sivan). *** Please send your D.A.F. contributions to : *** D.A.F., 140-32 69 Ave., Flushing NY 11367, USA

Kidushin 40 THE MITZVOS THAT BEAR FRUIT IN THIS WORLD QUESTION: The Gemara quotes a Mishnah in Peah (1:1) which lists five Mitzvos for which one receives reward ("Peros") in this world. However, when we say Birkos ha'Torah each morning, we list many more Mitzvos that have "Peros" in this world.

(a) What is the source for the other Mitzvos that we list? (b) Why does the Gemara omit those Mitzvos?

ANSWERS: (a) We find, actually, two sources for the lists of the Mitzvos that have "Peros" in this world. First, the Mishnah in Peah (1:1) cited by our Gemara lists: Kibud Av v'Em, Gemilus Chasadim, Hava'as Shalom, and Talmud Torah (even though the Gemara, when it cites this Mishnah earlier (39b), mentions "Hachnasas Orchim" as well, that does not seem to be the correct Girsas in the Mishnah). Second, Rebbi Yochanan (in Shabbos 127a) lists: Hachnasas Orchim, Bikur Cholim, Iyun Tefilah, and Hashkamas Beis ha'Midrash.

In contrast, we list ten Mitzvos in the paragraph we say after Birkos ha'Torah every morning. Our list after Birkos ha'Torah is a combination of the Mishnah in Peah with the list of Rebbi Yochanan.

(However, this still gives us a list of only eight. The two that are missing are Hachnasas Kalah and Halvayas ha'Mes. Indeed, in the version that appears in the Rambam's Nusach of Tefilah and in the Sefardic Sidurim, Hachnasas Kalah, Halvayas ha'Mes, and Iyun Tefilah are *omitted*. For this reason the MAHARSHAL (Teshuvos) writes that Hachnasas Kalah and Halvayas ha'Mes should indeed be deleted. The LIKUTEI MAHARICH points out that Hachnasas Kalah and Halvayas ha'Mes are subcategories of Gemilus Chasadim, as these

Mitzvos are often associated with Gemilus Chasadim in the Midrash (see Makos 24a, and the Midrash cited by Rashi, Bereishis 47:29). Therefore, we specify them in our Tefilah-version of the Beraisa.)

(b) The Mishnah in Peah includes all of the Mitzvos that involve performing a kindness to someone else in the Mitzvah of "Gemilus Chasadim" (Gemara, Shabbos 127b).

This does not seem to explain why the Tana leaves out Iyun Tefilah and Hashkamas Beis ha'Midrash, which Rabbi Yochanan also mentions. Rashi (Shabbos ibid.), however, explains that Iyun Tefilah also involves Gemilus Chasadim. Tefilah. Citing a verse (Mishlei 11:17) that connects Chesed ("Gomel") to Tefilah ("Nafsho"), implying that prayer is also a form of Chesed. Hashkamas Beis ha'Midrash, according to Rashi, is included in the category of Talmud Torah.

Another reason the Mishnah left out Iyun Tefilah and Hashkamas Beis ha'Midrash might be as follows. These two Mitzvos are in a different category than those mentioned in the Mishnah. The Mitzvos mentioned in the Mishnah bear Peros by arousing others to reciprocate acts of kindness with each other, thereby benefiting the person who initiated the kindness, as the RAMBAM explains (in Perush ha'Mishnayos). (This applies to Talmud Torah as well, as the Rambam explains. The Mitzvah of Talmud Torah receives the same benefit because learning Torah brings about the performance of good deeds.)

In contrast, the benefit that accrues to a person because of Iyun Tefilah comes about in an entirely different manner. When a person prays with concentration, Hashem answers his specific prayer. Even though Rabbi Yochanan calls this "Peros," the Tana of the Mishnah is not listing benefits that come because a person directly requested them in his Tefilos, but rather indirect benefits that come as a result of the performance of good deeds.

Hashkamas Beis ha'Midrash also refers to praying to Hashem with a specific request, as we find in the Gemara in Gitin (7a, "Hashkem v'ha'Arev A'leihem l'Veis ha'Midrash..."). Through Hashkamah, a person's prayers are answered because of his Zerizus, his diligence, in coming to the Beis ha'Midrash, as opposed to Iyun Tefilah, in which his prayers are answered due to his depth of concentration. The Tana of the Mishnah does not include this Mitzvah in his list of Mitzvos that have Peros in this world, because this Mitzvah does not bear Peros as a secondary consequence of his action like the other Mitzvos that the Tana lists.

40b ONE WHO REGRETS HIS GOOD DEEDS QUESTION: The Gemara says that if a person dies a sinner and regrets all of the good deeds that he performed in his life, then he does not receive any reward for the good deeds that he performed. The MESILAS YESHARIM (ch. 4, Zehirus, DH v'Im Tomar) asks what place there is for Hashem to have mercy and to do kindness if a person must receive punishment for his sins.

He answers that there are two places where the mercy of Hashem is manifest. With His trait of "Erech Apayim," Hashem does not punish immediately, but rather He gives to a person a chance to do Teshuvah. Second, when a person does Teshuvah, according to Midas ha'Din it should not have an effect because the Aveirah was done and the act cannot be revoked. With the trait of Midas ha'Chesed, Hashem considers the removal of the thoughts of doing an Aveirah as the removal of the Aveirah itself that was done. It seems clear from this that without this special Chesed of Hashem, regret alone cannot remove an Aveirah. If so, how can a person's regret remove a *Mitzvah* that he performed? (RAV ELCHANAN WASSERMAN, Bi'urei Agados Al Derech ha'Peshat #3)

ANSWERS: (a) RAV ELCHANAN WASSERMAN asked this question to the CHAFETZ CHAIM who answered that even according to Midas ha'Din, regret for a sin uproots the sin. The Chesed inherent in Teshuvah serves a different role, and it is not to uproot the sin. He explained that we know that there are two types of Teshuvah -- Teshuvah m'Ahavah (repentance out of love for Hashem) and Teshuvah m'Yir'ah (repentance out of fear for Hashem). When a person does Teshuvah m'Ahavah, not only does Hashem uproot the sins that the person did, but he considers the sins to be Zechuyos, merits (Yoma 86a).

When a person does Teshuvah m'Yir'ah, on the other hand, he does not really regret the actions that he did. He only regrets that he will be punished for doing them. In such a case, it is only the Chesed of Hashem that uproots the deeds that the person did and allows the person to achieve atonement.

(b) RAV ELCHANAN argues that the words of the Mesilas Yesharim seem to imply that every form of Teshuvah, even Teshuvah m'Ahavah, involves some form of Chesed.

He suggests, therefore, that there are two parts to every Aveirah. The first is the fact that the person rebelled against Hashem Who commanded him not to act in that way. The second part is that Hashem commanded a person not to act that way for a reason -- because by acting in such a manner, he will bring about undesirable consequences on himself and on the world, the negative repercussions that result from his act, either in this world or in the World to Come.

He explains that when a person regrets having done Aveiros, logically his regret should be able to uproot only the aspect of rebellion, since by wishing that he had not sinned he is now subjecting himself to Hashem's will and remedying his past rebellion. His regret should *not* be able to uproot whatever harm was done as a consequence of his Aveirah. The Chesed of Hashem's acceptance of Teshuvah is that Hashem even removes the consequences brought about by the act.

A Mitzvah, too, has two parts -- the subjugation of oneself to Hashem's will, and the positive consequences that occur to a person and to the world as a result of his act of performing a Mitzvah. When the Gemara says that if a person regrets doing good deeds then he does not receive reward for them, it only means that he does not receive reward for subjecting himself to Hashem's will, because, indeed, he countered that acceptance of Hashem's will with a rebellion against His will. However, he does receive reward for whatever benefit his act brought about. For example, if he raised Talmidim and his Talmidim are still learning Torah, then he will receive benefit for that Mitzvah, even though he will not receive reward for subjecting himself to Hashem's will since he regretted it in the end.

Kidushin 41 THE MITZVAH THAT A WOMAN PERFORMS WHEN SHE GETS MARRIED QUESTION: The Gemara asks why the Mishnah teaches that a man himself can be

Mekadesh a woman, when it has already taught that a man's Shali'ach can be Mekadesh a woman on his behalf. If his Shali'ach can do it, then it should be obvious that the man himself can be Mekadesh a woman! Rav Yosef answers that the Mishnah is teaching the principle, "Mitzvah Bo Yoser mib'Shelucho" -- it is considered a greater Mitzvah to do the act oneself than to do it via a Shali'ach.

The Gemara records another version of the question on the Mishnah. The Gemara says that it is *prohibited* to be Mekadesh a woman via a Shali'ach without first seeing her (and thus it is understood why the Reisha of the Mishnah adds that a man should be Mekadesh a woman by himself). Rav Yosef derives his teaching from the Seifa of the Mishnah that says that a woman's Shali'ach may accept Kidushin for her. If a woman's Shali'ach may accept Kidushin for her, then why does the Mishnah have to teach that the woman herself may accept Kidushin? The answer is that the Mishnah is teaching the principle that "Mitzvah Bo Yosef mib'Shelucho."

The Rishonim explain that the Mitzvah which is being performed in our Mishnah is that of "Peru u'Revu." Since it is through the act of Kidushin that the Mitzvah of "Peru u'Revu" can be fulfilled, the Kidushin is also regarded as a Mitzvah.

However, the Gemara in Yevamos (65b) states clearly that a woman is exempt from the Mitzvah of Peru u'Revu! How, then, can our Gemara say that the reason why the Mishnah adds that a woman can accept Kidushin for herself is to teach that "Mitzvah Bo Yoser mib'Shelucho"? She is not performing any Mitzvah by accepting the Kidushin, since she is not at all obligated to fulfilled "Peru u'Revu!"

ANSWERS: (a) The RAN explains that even though the woman herself is exempt from "Peru u'Revu" and is therefore not performing her own Mitzvah, she nevertheless is assisting her husband in performing his Mitzvah. This assistance ("Mesa'ye'a l'Devor Mitzvah") is in itself considered a Mitzvah, and we can therefore apply the rule of "Mitzvah Bo Yoser mib'Shelucho."

(b) The SHITAH LO NODA L'MI compares the Mitzvah of "Peru u'Revu" to any other Mitzvah from which a woman is exempt. The Halachah is that even though she is not obligated to fulfill the Mitzvah (such as the Mitzvos of Shofar and Sukah), she may still perform them if she wants and she may even recite a Berachah upon performing them. That is, the fact that she is exempt from those Mitzvos make them *voluntary* and not mandatory for her, and when she does perform them, she is considered to be fulfilling a Mitzvah.

(c) The SEFER HAMIKNAH suggests that since a woman who lives with a man out of wedlock is considered to be a sin ("Lo Siheyeh Kedeshah"), the act of marriage -- which saves her from transgression -- is considered a Mitzvah.

PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT IN PREPARATIONS FOR SHABBOS QUESTION: The Gemara derives from the Mishnah that "Mitzvah Bo Yoser mib'Shelucho," it is considered a greater Mitzvah to do the act oneself than to do it via a Shali'ach. The Gemara proves this principle from the fact that Rava and Rav Safra personally involved themselves in the preparations for Shabbos, rather than letting their helpers do it for them.

The RAMBAM (Hilchos Shabbos 30:8), when writing this Halachah, adds an interesting point. "Even though he was an Adam Chashuv b'Yoser (an extremely important person) and it is not the manner for such a person to buy things in the marketplace nor to be involved in the labors of the house, he is obligated to personally perform things that are for the sake of Shabbos because *this is his honor*." The reasoning the Rambam gives -- "for this is his honor" -- seems to be superfluous. Our Sugya states that the reason one should involve himself personally ("b'Gufo") in the Mitzvah of honoring Shabbos is because "Mitzvah Bo Yoser mib'Shelucho." Why, then, does the Rambam need to give an additional reason, that "this is his honor?"

ANSWER: The BI'UR HALACHAH (OC 250) explains that the Rambam is attempting to reconcile our Gemara with a seemingly contradictory concept. The Gemara in Berachos (20a) states that a Talmid Chacham is not required to do certain Mitzvos when doing them would cause him disgrace (such as carrying a lost sheep to fulfill Hashavas Avedah). When, then, does our Gemara say that a Talmid Chacham is required to take part in the kitchen work himself, even though, normally, such work is considered below his honor? The Rambam therefore adds "for this is his honor" -- that, on the contrary, there is no greater honor to a Talmid Chacham than to be involved in a Mitzvah.

The PRI MEGADIM (see Bi'ur Halachah there) adds that only when the fulfillment of the Mitzvah is not evident, such as when one carries a sheep when no one knows why he is carrying the sheep, do we say that the honor of the Talmid Chacham (Kavod ha'Bri'os) overrides a Mitzvas Aseh. In contrast, when it is obvious to all that the Talmid Chacham is involved in an act of a Mitzvah (such as preparing for Shabbos), then certainly "this is his honor."

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