

Pardes Yehuda

← Weekly Torah Journal By Yehuda Z. Klitnick →

Parshas Korach 5778 year 8 #342

פרקי אבות פרק ד

פרשת קרח תשע"ח

The reason Rashi sends us straight to the Midrash?!

Korah the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi took himself to one side: Rashi states: "This portion is beautifully expounded on in the Midrash of R. Tanchuma", *פרשה זו יפה נדרשת במדרש רבי תנחומא*. Endless commentaries expound on this Rashi. What was the aim of Rashi to refer to the Midrash Tanchuma to understand this Parsha. Usually Rashi states his insight and then he adds the insight of the Midrash! Rav Shraga Yair the grandson of the Pashischa answers a most beautiful insight. Rashi when it came to explain the Parsha of Korach and Moshe had a painful dilemma. Were he to rectify the acts of Korach, that would be a dishonor to Moshe. Were he to deglorify Korah, would be a dishonor to Korach who was in reality a Tzaddik. Therefore Rashi decided on leaving the insight to the Midrash. (ארון עידות ח"ג דף לה, הגה"צ ר' שרגא יאיר)

The consequence of Machlokes

Rashi brings a Chazal (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 18:8) which refers to Korach as being a clever person, a פיקח, and therefore asks what his rationale was that caused him to stand up against Moshe Rabbeinu. The wording of Chazal here is very particular. They referred to Korach as a פיקח and not as a חכם – a person possessing wisdom. Why? Simply, because Korach wasn't a חכם! Had he been a חכם he would never have started this whole uprising.

There is a fundamental difference between a פיקח and a חכם: A פיקח is one who is clever, sharp-witted and skillful, but a חכם is on a different plateau altogether. Chazal state (*Tamid* 32a) – *אִישׁוֹ הַחֵכֵם הַרוֹאֶה אֶת הַנּוֹלֵד, a wise person is he who sees and understands what the outcome will be; he uses his wisdom to discern the outcome – the ramifications and consequences of his actions. But what information or knowledge was Korach missing?*

The answer is that Korach didn't internalize the fact that "Nothing good will ever come from a dispute!!" (*Shemos Rabbah* 30:13). From machloket one will gain absolutely nothing! And that is exactly what happened: not only did he gain nothing but he lost all that he had! This is the simple, straight forward results of machloket! A פיקח may be smart, but lacks that foresight, and this is why Korach stumbled. On the other hand, Chazal (*Sanhedrin* 110a) describe the wife of און בן פלתי, who saved her husband from being involved with Korach and his cohorts, with Shlomo Hamelech's delineation of חכמות נשים בנתה ביתה – the wisdom of the woman builds her home" (*Mishlei* 14:1). Her chachmah of seeing the outcome is what saved her husband. (HaRav Shlomo Bussu shlita, Grandson of the Baba Sali)

The Yismach Moshe gives a first-hand report about Korach's rebellion

קל אלקי הרוחות לכל-בשר האיש אהר יחטא ועל כל-העדה תקצף: (ט"ז) "O Hashem the Lord of all spirits of flesh, if one man sins, shall You be angry with the whole congregation?" (16:22) Moshe instructed the Yidden to distance themselves from the Korachites to escape their impending destruction. They questioned the correctness of collective punishment for one corrupt leader's sin. Rashi teaches that "G-d of the spirits of all flesh" means, לפניך, כליות כל המחשבות ויודע אתה מי החוטא. *All thoughts are revealed before You, [Hashem] and You know who the sinner is; Why is it important to Rashi that Hashem discerns the thoughts and the identity of the truly guilty one? The Yismach Moshe explains that there were three factions amidst the Korachite rebellion. One camp held that Korach was justified; a second camp held that Moshe was the ultimate Supreme Leader; and one camp was neutral. To our astonishment, the Yismach Moshe then reveals that he in a previous gilgul, the precursor to his then-current, reincarnated neshomo] stood at the time in the neutral camp who did not participate in the machlokes! Why did the neutral camp -- stand by the sidelines in the dispute? They were intimidated by Korach's lofty status and could not conceive of him telling lies and Lashon Hara. They applied the generally-applicable principle of שבו ואל תעשה "sit tight and don't do something you may regret". The "pro-Korach" camp may also have relied on this, convinced of Korach's greatness as being אהר דבוק in דבוק, "clinging fast to Hashem, Who is Echad", with such a person being incapable of sin. Such thoughts drove them to side with Korach. Moshe understood this mindset and turned to Hashem for the true meaning of אהר יחטא. Moshe thought that if the pro-Korach camp saw Korach as a tzaddik, then they should not be punished. But the full explication is as Rashi spells out for us: לפניך גלויות כל המחשבות ויודע אתה מי החוטא, Hashem discerns the innermost thoughts of men and who among them are genuine -- and culpable -- sinners. Only those whose intention was to conduct an illegitimate machlokes, and not a dispute leshem shomayim (the type enshrined in Pirkei Avos 5:17) should be liable to punishment. Hashem's statement, transmitted by Rashi, was exactly this: יפה אמרת ויודע אני מי יפה אמרת ויודע אני מי יפה אמרת: You have spoken well. I know and will make known who sinned and who did not sin. Fitting punishment was meted out accordingly based on this determination. (אבן שלמה הגאון ר' שלמה זלמן עהערנרייך אב"ד שימלאוי הי"ד)*

**Wishing all a freilichen Chodesh
Wednesday and Thursday**

STORY OF THE WEEK (By Yehuda Z. Klitnick)

*****The Chasid forged a long-distance connection to his Rebbe and saw a wondrous salvation*****

One's bond with a Rebbe or Tzaddik can be so deep that it can transcend limits of time and space. This true story demonstrates this point to an extraordinary degree.

R' Yehoshua was a Chasid of Reb Mordechai Shraga of Husiyatin, the youngest son of the Heilige Rebbe of Ruzhin, Rav Yisrael Freidman.

He lived in Braliv which was very far from Husiyatin and only traveled to Husiyatin for Shavuos and the 3rd day of Cheshvan for the Yahrzeit of the Ruzhiner Rebbe. However he attained an intimate spiritual bond with the Rebbe. He was blessed with good children and he owned a large flour mill and was a very successful grain merchant. One day he sent his gentile worker to fetch a couple of sacks of flour for a customer from the storage room, which was very high up and could only be reached by a rickety ladder. From his office, R' Yehoshua heard a loud thump. He rushed to the work area and saw his worker lying on the floor, lifeless. R' Yehoshua tried to revive the man but to no avail. R' Yehoshua trembled; he knew full well what would follow; the local goyim would find out what had happened: a pogrom aimed at the Jews, and a long prison stay for the hapless Yehoshua. If there ever was a time to draw on his special relationship with the Rebbe, anchored in the strongest of emunas chachomim, even at long distance, surely it was now. He was confident that his Rebbe would definitely be able to help him out of his dire predicament.

But time was of the essence, if events were not to take a turn for the worse. R' Yehoshua locked up the mill and told his family not to allow anyone inside. Meanwhile, R' Yehoshua lost no time to prepare himself to connect spiritually to the Rebbe. *He immersed in the mikva and donned his Shabbos clothing. He began writing a kvitel to the Rebbe, but instead of the norm of writing his name as he would in a regular kvitel, he only wrote the name of the goyishe worker and all that had taken place. R' Yehoshua held the kvitel and a sum of money to give to the Rebbe as a pidyon nefesh; he placed his hand on the Mezuzah and closed his eyes. He entered into a different world, and fell into trance-like state of exalted consciousness. R' Yehoshua envisioned that he was now in his Rebbe's presence. The Rebbe asked R' Yehoshua why he was so worried. He delivered the kvitel. The Rebbe became very serious and started asking questions about all aspects of the case: the mill, the Goy involved and about*

goings-on in his city of Braliv. The Rebbe started to focus deeply. The Rebbe then gave a smile and said "Everything will be fine. In fact, it is already good; you have a Yeshua waiting for you at home. The Rebbe extended his hand and gave a Bracha "Go home L'chayim U'lshalom with a complete Yeshua". R' Yehoshua thanked the Rebbe profusely and kissed his hand...

Now back to reality! Yehoshua snapped out of his reverie/daydream and realized that it had all been "only" a dream. Still, he sensed that things were changing, and driven by his emunah in the Rebbe, he decided to go check on the goy. When R. Yehoshua entered the mill, the goy's face looked different to him. This was astounding: from ashen grey, it now had some ruddy color. R' Yehoshua put his hand on the Mezuzah in his room and again had a vision of being by the Rebbe. He told the Rebbe that there had been a change for the better. The Rebbe reassured him that everything would be fine. He sprang back again from his trance and went back to the mill and this time found the goy asking for water. After drinking some water, the goy clambered to his feet as if nothing had happened. When he asked what had happened, R' Yehoshua answered "Nothing! You've had a hard day. Go home and get some rest." The following Shavuos R' Yehoshua traveled to Husiyatin to the Rebbe, but this time in the flesh. He waited in line with other Chasidim to give Shalom. When he reached the front of the line, the Rebbe told him flat out: "You see, a true Chosid can be helped even when he is far, far away from the Rebbe."

R' Yehoshua understood exactly what the Rebbe meant and he was stunned when he realized that the Rebbe knew every twist and turn of his tumultuous incident. The Chasidim were curious to understand the Rebbe's meaning. R' Yehoshua shared the story with them, and it spread like wildfire. Years later, R' Yehoshua related his story to Harav Yaakov, the Rebbe of Husiyatin, the son in law of Harav Yisrael of Husiyatin, the grandson of the Ruzhiner Rebbe. Harav Yaakov used to repeat his wondrous story at many different occasions.

Emunah in Hashem as well as in tzaddikim is the connection to Hashem. אמונה היא המשכה. The Tiferes Shlome of Radomsk refers to Emunah as the cup which will contain the Yeshua. Without the cup, the Yeshua has no where to enter.

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