

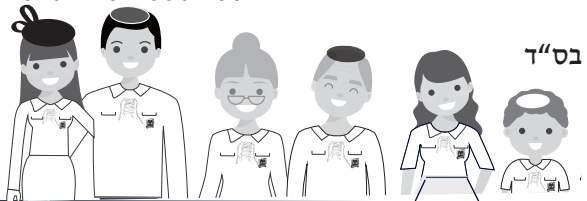
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SHABBAT LASHEM

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PARASHAT KORACH

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LET'S ALL BE HOLY

CHANA DICKSON
SHEVET MORASHA

In Parashat Korach, Korach and two hundred and fifty people gather together against Moshe, to question why he has been singled out as a leader. They ask Moshe, *'We are all holy, and Hashem is with each of us! Why do you raise yourselves above the rest of Bnei Yisrael?'* (Bamidbar 16:3)

To many people, Korach's claim sounds logical. We know that in Sefer Shemot (19:6), as Bnei Yisrael surround Har Sinai, Hashem tells Moshe that the people should be **גוי קדוש** - a 'holy nation,' meaning that each individual person is holy. We also know that Hashem was 'with' the Jewish people, as Hashem dwelt amongst them in the Mishkan, meaning that Korach was also correct in his claim that Hashem is with each of the Jewish people. So if Korach was telling the truth, why did he and his followers receive such a punishment, and why is what they did seen as so inconceivably wrong?

We are told in Sefer Bereishit that Hashem created everyone in His image. Rabbi Sacks zt'l writes that a King or someone of a higher status is no more G-d-like than anyone else - in fact, they should use the power they have not to stand above the people, but to serve the people, and simultaneously serve Hashem through them. He explains that being a leader is therefore the most humble job there is.

This leads us to another question - how was Moshe able to be so humble when he was chosen by G-d to lead, and when he had redeemed the millions of Jewish people from Egypt? Rav Bloch explains that humility is all relative. If someone who is six foot compares themselves to someone who is five foot, they can boast about their height. But if they compare themselves to the size of the sun, their height will seem insignificant. Likewise, Moshe remained extremely humble because he chose to compare himself to Hashem, recognizing Hashem's unbelievable power, and therefore understanding his insignificance compared to G-d. Moshe achieved such a closeness to Hashem that he was humbled more than anyone. It was because of this that Moshe was given the title of 'Eved Hashem,' Servant of G-d, eighteen times throughout the Torah.

This is where Moshe and Korach differed. Great leaders like Moshe respect others and inspire them to do better. Moshe told Bnei Yisrael, 'you shall be holy'. This parallels Korach's attack on Moshe and Aron, saying 'we are all holy'. These two approaches sound similar, but are actually fundamentally different. Moshe's approach did not flatter the people. He gave them the potential, saying *'you SHALL be holy'* - recognising the presence and potential of serving Hashem. By doing this, he challenged the people to pursue that status. When we received the Torah, it did not make us holy, but it gave us the opportunity to introduce it into our lives. We all have holiness within us, but we have to challenge ourselves to pursue it.

CHANA WAS A MADRICHAN ON MA'APILIM WINTER-NET MACHANE 5781.

London In: 21:02 Out: 22:32
Manchester In: 21:22 Out: 23:02
Cambridge In: 21:02 Out: 22:38

Oxford In: 21:05 Out: 22:39
Bristol In: 21:08 Out: 22:42
Birmingham In: 21:11 Out: 22:49

Leeds In: 21:18 Out: 23:03
Liverpool In: 21:15 Out: 23:04
Jerusalem In: 19:09 Out: 20:28

KORACH 5781: LEARNING FROM KORACH

RAV JOEL KENIGSBERG | RAV SHALIACH



Sometimes people make their mark on history in a way that eternalizes their name along with the achievements they reached. Many inventions, scientific discoveries and natural phenomena are named after the people who discovered them. So too, human characteristics come to be associated with the historical figures who most greatly embodied them.

The name of Korach will forever be associated with machloket – conflict. The Mishna in Avot brings the rebellion of Korach as the quintessential example of a conflict which came about due to impure and self-serving reasons, and the Torah's command not to be like Korach and his followers serves as the prohibition for creating unnecessary strife.

Yet Korach's name is eternalized in another way – in the name of the parasha. The Lubavitcher Rebbe asks how this could be so. The names of the parshiyot are not coincidental, and if Korach merited that a parasha of the Torah was named after him, there must be some attribute of greatness manifest within him, alongside his negative actions.

It is explained that Korach's rebellion against the leadership of Moshe and Aharon stemmed from the fact that he wanted the position of leadership for himself. Korach felt that he, not Aharon, should have been appointed the Kohen Gadol, and it was this aspiration that led him to instigate his disastrous rebellion.

Ironically, therein lies Korach's greatness. The desire to reach higher spiritual peaks is a healthy and necessary one. The method in which Korach went about it, by subverting the authority of Moshe and Aharon, was a sin for which he was duly punished. Yet his intention, not to be content with his place and to yearn for spiritual growth, is one for which he is to be praised.

Moshe Rabbenu ended his reply to Korach's claims with the words "רִב לָכֶם בְּנֵי לֵוִי" – it is too much for you. Chazal tell us that because he used those words, Moshe too was told "רִב לָךְ" – it is too much for you. He was told these words by Hashem in response to his

prayer to enter Eretz Yisrael. Rav Neventzal expands on this idea, explaining that Moshe Rabbenu wanted to enter Eretz Yisrael only to fulfill the mitzvot which are dependent on the land. He wanted to achieve that last bit of spiritual growth he had been unable to

achieve until now. Yet just as he had stifled other's desire for spiritual growth, so he was answered, measure for measure, in the very same words.

Moshe Rabbenu was right to rebuke Korach and his followers. The outcome of the story proves this point. The important message is that even when his actions are wrong and need correction, there is no place to lower the spiritual aspirations of a fellow Jew.

Let us learn from Korach the desire to achieve greatness. And let us learn from Moshe the method to achieving that greatness, by following the authority of the Torah and it's Sages.

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KORACH'S IDEOLOGY AND WHY HE WAS WRONG

DANIEL ROSS | CHINUCH WORKER 5781



Every movement, conspiracy or rebellion needs an ideology in order to succeed. Rav Soloveitchik zt"l in his seminal 1973 Korach derasha suggests that the foundation of Korach's conspiracy was a dual ideology.

Firstly, Korach wanted equality. He believed that there was no need for Moshe as a leader or Aharon as a Kohen Gadol. Secondly, he wanted to unseat Moshe from his position of Halachic authority, to impugn upon his Halachic authority, instead seeking a "common-sense Halacha".

The former, the ideal of equality is evident from the passukim: at the beginning of our Parasha, Korach and his followers *"gathered themselves against Moses and Aaron and said to them, 'You have gone too far! For all the community are holy, all of them, and Hashem is in their midst. Why then do you raise yourselves above Hashem's congregation?"* (Bamidbar 16:3)

Rav Soloveitchik explains that in this regard, Korach is "half-right." In Judaism there is a "two-fold character of Kedushat Yisrael" and this is evident, as Rashi explains in Parashat Re'eh (Devarim 12:2): *"For you are a holy nation"* is a result of *"inherent kedushah from your forefathers, and additionally 'and Hashem has chosen you.'"* This element of choice implies difference or uniqueness, and it is this which Korach failed to understand.

Indeed this is evident from Moshe's answer to Korach: *"In the morning [בקר] Hashem will make known who is His own and who is holy, and he will bring close to Him, and whom He will choose, He will bring close to Him."* (Bamidbar 16:5) Not only is the idea of choice and separation explicit, but Radak elsewhere explains the word בקר to mean both morning but also the differentiation that it symbolises - for with the onset of light, clarity in distinguishing between things is achieved. Furthermore, if we were to just have this first element of holiness, the

complete equality, Rav Soloveitchik suggests that we would lose our creativeness, we would be deprived of our ability to initiate. We would have no originality and no uniqueness.

Thus, there is the second character of kedusha, the personal, specific holiness. This can be explained as individualistic; it is meritocratic. It is this which separates Moshe from the other prophets (as we see in Rambam's 13 Principles of Faith). It is this which separates Eretz Yisrael from Eretz Mitzrayim - something that Korach's followers failed to see, as they claim *"We shall not go up [to Eretz Yisrael]! Is it not enough that you have brought us up from a land flowing with milk and honey?"* (Bamidbar 16:12-13)

**KORACH WANTED EQUALITY,
AND HE WANTED TO IMPUGN
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SENSE HALACHA".**

Additionally, there is the second tenant of Korach's ideology: the desire for "common-sense Halacha" without Moshe as the halachic authority. This can be seen from the Midrash that Rashi quotes, whereby Korach asks Moshe if a garment made entirely of techelet needs tzitzit. Surely if only one string (or half

a string!) of techelet is required than an entire garment is even better! Moshe rejects this, maintaining the superiority of the objective requirement of Halacha at the expense of the subjective, common-sense answer. That is not to say that subjective religious experience is irrelevant - on the contrary! Rather it must follow the religious objective, since one is the will of man and the other the will of G-d. This manifests itself throughout Halacha, a primary example being the acceptance of the yoke of Heavenly Kingship whereby the ma'ase mitzvah, the action, is reciting Shema, but the kiyum mitzvah, the realisation of G-d's commandment, is subjective and experiential, accepting the yoke of Heavenly Kingship.

Let's strive to combine and unite both the religious objective and subjective, and thereby best fulfil G-d's will.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

- **Lishmah**, our brand-new **Women's Bet Midrash** is continuing! Join this exciting and **dynamic Makom Torah** for the young women of our community! Join us on **Tuesday (15th June) for Night Seder**, and the **22nd** for a **guest shiur** by **Rebbetzen Emma Taylor**! Sign up at [tinyurl.com/lishmah-bet-midrash!](https://tinyurl.com/lishmah-bet-midrash)

- The first session of the **Hadracha Training programme** took place last Shabbat in the **Manchester Bayit** and was a resounding success!

- **SBM is continuing!** Join us at the **Bayit on Thursdays** from 19:00-19:45 for Chaburot followed by davening, **dinner** and a **guest speaker!**

- We will be making a **Siyum Tanach** on **pre-camp** in memory of **Marc Weinberg zt'l**. Please sign up for as much or as little as you'd like at [https://tinyurl.com/tanach-siyum!](https://tinyurl.com/tanach-siyum)

- Keep an eye out for **exciting Bnei Akiva events** for all ages! **Stay Safe > Stay Inspired > Stay BA**

- Be sure to like our **Facebook page (Bnei Akiva UK)** and follow our **Instagram (bneiakivauk)** to get regular updates with what is going on in the Tnuva.

- Visit bauk.org/feedback for contact details for all Mazkirut members and to leave any general feedback!

SHABBAT SHALOM!!!



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LISHMAH שיה

Lishmah 22nd June

Join us for Night Seder from 8-9:15pm followed by a shiur from Guest Speaker Rebbetzen Emma Taylor on Tuesday 22nd at a NW London location!

Come and be part of this dynamic Makom Torah!

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Join us in completing our

Siyum Tanach

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