

# Korach

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## 704

Weekly Bulletin on the Parshah

# Pachad David

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Under the auspices of **Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagaon Hatzaddik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto, shlitia**  
Son of the tzaddik and miracle-worker **Rabbi Moshe Ahron Pinto, zt"l**, and grandson of the holy tzaddik and miracle-worker **Rabbi Chaim Pinto, zy"ta**



Maskil L'David

Weekly talk on the Parshah given by **Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagaon Hatzaddik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto, shlitia**

## Do Not Trust Yourself Until the Day You Die

**“And Korach, son of Yitzhar, son of Kehat took”**

(Bamidbar 16:1)

What did Korach “take”? A bad deal (Sanhedrin 109b). Rashi says that Korach “took himself,” i.e., he separated himself from the nation in order to contest the Kehunah.

Aharon was clearly Hashem’s chosen one. From where did Korach have the audacity to fight against Hashem by challenging the Kehunah? Let us not for a moment believe that Korach was a simple man. On the contrary, he was an honored bearer of the Aron. He was even an ancestor of Shmuel, the righteous and beloved prophet.

Korach himself claimed that “the entire nation is holy and Hashem is among them” (ibid. 16:3). He understood that the Shechinah dwells within each and every Jew. How could such a person break all boundaries by acting so brazenly toward Moshe and Aharon? How did he not fear the presence of Hashem within himself to the extent that he went full-force into war with Hashem’s anointed ones, until he brought devastation upon himself and his cohorts?

“Do not trust yourself until the day you die” (Avot 1:5). The Yerushalmi (Avot 1:3) relates: Instead of reading, “Until the day you die,” a certain chassid would read, “Until your old age.” He was certain that in old age, a person’s yetzer hara no longer has control. One day, a spirit appeared to this chassid in the form of a woman. It seduced him to sin. The man immediately regretted his action. The spirit consoled him, “Do not grieve. I am merely a spirit and not a human. From now on, learn the Mishnah the way everyone else does: ‘Do not trust in yourself until the day you die.’”

I would like to compare Korach to that chassid. He was so smug in his righteousness that he believed he no longer had a yetzer hara. Certainly, the Satan wouldn’t

drag such an upright man, a bearer of the Aron who merited prophecy, into a feud that wasn’t l’shem Shamayim. Indeed, at first Korach had altruistic intentions. He intended to lead the nation in order to bring them to greater heights in Avodat Hashem. He had no thoughts of personal honor. However, in his flawed way of thinking, he did not consider the power of the yetzer hara, which was bigger than he. With all his merit and sanctity, he, too, was liable to fall into the trap of the yetzer hara.

The yetzer hara set a snare for him and dragged him into a terrible feud. All he cared about was personal interest. Hashem’s honor was the furthest thing from his mind. He even managed to convince a sizeable portion of the nation to join him in his unholy war, bringing calamity upon them all.

Korach teaches us that a person must constantly increase his level of Torah and yirat Shamayim. This will enable him to withstand the yetzer hara that waits in ambush. Without working on one’s spiritual level, he is certain to fall into the trap laid out for him. Even if one succeeded in reaching untold spiritual heights, he must know that the yetzer hara never gives up and is constantly on the lookout to trip him up.

Immersing oneself in Torah study is the only way to save oneself from the wiles of the yetzer hara. As Chazal (Sukkah 52b) teach in the name of Rabbi Yishmael: If this degenerate one (the yetzer hara) met you, drag him to the beit midrash. If he is made of stone, he will melt; if he is made of iron, he will shatter, as it says, “My word is like fire, says Hashem, and like a hammer smashing a boulder.” Only through delving in Torah and sifrei mussar and yirah can one merit filling himself with pure fear of Heaven. Only this way, can he expect to be spared the influence of the yetzer hara.

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### Hillulah of Tzaddikim

30 - Rabbi Yom Tov Yedid Halevi

1 - Yosef Hatzaddik

2 - Rabbi Yosef ben Walid

3 - Rabbi Yehoshua Newirth author of  
“Shemirat Shabbat KeHilchata”

4 - Rabbi Yaakov MiRomrog Rabbeinu  
Tam

5 - Rabbi Yechezkel Sarna Rosh  
Yeshivah of Chevron

6 - Rabbi Chaim Delarosa author of  
“Torat Chacham”



## Walking in their Ways

*Tidbits of faith and trust penned by Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagaon Hatzaddik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto, shlita*

### A Jew Reformed

I once participated in the wedding ceremony of the daughter of a prominent man from Argentina. This man had been a Reform Jew and, with Hashem's kindness, had found his way back to his heritage. The wedding strengthened my level of faith in Hashem. This is what happened:

This daughter, who now married according to Jewish law, originally had planned on marrying a gentile man from France. But her father, in spite of his Reform affiliations and lack of Torah observance, would not hear of it. That his only daughter would intermarry? Nothing doing! He made mighty attempts to have her break off all ties with this gentile, but did not meet with success.

The man did not give up. On the contrary, the more stubborn the girl was, the more prayers he offered heavenward for Hashem to save her from such a dreadful decision. Likewise, he increased his charity to various organizations and destitute individuals. He fasted and prayed that his daughter should cancel her upcoming marriage of her own accord, and return to her heritage.

After some time, it was noticeable that the man's heartfelt request was actualized.

The girl's gentile fiancée began to beat her for no reason. She was filled with hatred toward him and escaped his clutches. She had finally come home to her family and Father in Heaven. Within a relatively short time, she met a fine Jewish boy, whom she was now marrying.

In an amazing twist of fate, her father made sure that there was complete separation between the men and women at the wedding, thus ensuring perfect modesty. Women who arrived immodestly dressed were offered scarves to cover themselves.

At the festive meal, the father opened his words with praise to Hashem for bringing his daughter back to the bosom of Judaism and allowing her to marry a kosher Jew. He added that his entire extended family had become spiritually strengthened by this episode.

I was truly impressed by this man, who had always been a Reform Jew. When he perceived the tremendous responsibility he had toward his daughter, as well as toward his own neshamah, he returned to Hashem with perfect faith, thus averting a case of intermarriage.



## Words of Our Sages

**"Korah assembled all the congregation against them"**

(Bamidbar 16:19)

Mockery. That's the name of the game.

Chazal teach us that one act of mockery repels hundreds of rebukes. Mockery is an extremely potent force. With one sentence, and entire edifice of mussar and inspiration can come tumbling down.

All night long, Korach circulated among the people with his convincing words of mockery. All night long, he ridiculed Moshe and Aharon. His words fell on willing ears. He achieved his goal.

Rabbi Yosef Chaim of Bagdad zt"l relates the following story:

A young Torah student enthusiastically went to the Talmud Torah every day. One day, on his way home, he met a talmid chacham, followed by two scoffers who kept mocking him.

The next day, the child refused to go to the Talmud Torah. His rebbi sent for him, but he wouldn't budge. His father pleaded with him, cajoling him by saying that he'd grow up to be a great talmid chacham if he kept at his studies.

"Why do you curse me?" the child cried. "I heard how a talmid chacham was being derided."

The Ben Ish Chai concludes his sad tale with the words of Chazal (Shabbat 119b), "Do not touch My anointed ones" – these are the young children who come to learn Torah. "And do not harm My prophets" – these are talmidei chachamim. Why is one enjoined not to "touch" the young children, while the talmidei chachamim are not to be "harmed"?

Scoffers pay no heed to young children. It is only the talmidei chachamim who are in danger of being "harmed." When people are careful not to mock the talmidei chachamim, the children will indirectly be spared spiritual harm.

## The Haftarah

The haftarah of the week:

**"So says Hashem, 'The heavens are My seat'"**

(Yeshayahu 66)

(Some have the custom to add two pesukim from the haftarah "Machar Chodesh")

The connection to the parashah: Rosh Chodesh Tammuz falls on this Shabbat and the following Sunday. The haftarah alludes to Rosh Chodesh and Shabbat in the pasuk, "And it shall be from Rosh Chodesh to Rosh Chodesh and from Shabbat to Shabbat that all flesh shall come to prostrate themselves before Me." This is most fitting to be read on Shabbat Rosh Chodesh.



## Guard Your Tongue

*The Power of Speech*

### Peddling Along

Who is called a gossip-monger?

A gossip-monger is one who peddles his wares from one to another. He goes around saying, "This is what so-and-so said about you, this is what so-and-so did against you, this is what I heard that so-and-so did or wishes to do to you."

Even if his words are not derogatory, they are nonetheless forbidden. And even if they are completely true, they are called rechilut and are categorically forbidden.



## Chazak U'Baruch

### Strengthening Fellowship and Meriting Blessing

A wonderful gem is cited in the sefer Aruch Hashulchan (215:1): One who responds, “Amen” after hearing the prayer “Mi shebeirach” or any other berachah in which one blesses another, fulfills the mitzvah of, “Love your neighbor as yourself.”

Those close to Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, zt”l, relate that he constantly encouraged his disciples to be careful in this area (Halichot Shlomo). Additionally, Rabbi Shlomo Zalman always told the congregation to recite “Mi shebeirach” loudly after reciting Tehillim for a sick man and then to wait until it was finished before answering “Amen.”

### Listening and Answering

The following account illustrates the significance of responding “Amen”:

When the gaon Rabbi Shmuel Engel of Radomishla spent a Shabbat in Sanz as a guest of the Divrei Chaim, the Divrei Chaim noticed that Rabbi Shmuel would peruse a sefer in between aliyot on Shabbat morning.

After prayers, the Divrei Chaim told him, “I know you are well-versed in halachah and are aware that one may learn in between aliyot. However, I must chasten you for one thing. It is likely that ‘Mi shebeirach’ is recited then and you are remiss in answering ‘Amen’ as you are involved in your learning. It is your ‘Amen’ that could bring about a sick man’s recovery. I therefore ask that you desist from this habit. Instead, pay careful attention for any ‘Mi shebeirach’ and reply, ‘Amen’ accordingly” (Gishmei Berachah, quoted by Rabbi David Moshkovitch).

A similar story:

The Divrei Yoel of Satmar zt”l was once approached by a chassid who requested his berachah in honor of his son’s upcoming wedding. This son had been born after eighteen years of waiting. At this opportunity, the chassid asked the Rebbe, “What should I occupy myself with on this holy day of my son’s chuppah?”

The man was sure the Rav would instruct him to fast, visit the graves of tzaddikim, or perhaps complete the entire Sefer Tehillim. How surprised, then, he was to hear that he should sleep at least three hours.

The Rebbi explained, “I’m sure that many guests will attend your wedding and offer you blessings. In order that these blessings come to fruition, you will have to answer “Amen” with full concentration. This requires tremendous effort. In order to do it right, you must be focused and alert. Therefore, it’s a good idea to take a nap.”

## Treasures

Based on the teachings of  
Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagaon Hatzaddik,  
Rabbi David Chananya Pinto, shlitá



### Wealth with a purpose

**“And Korach, son of Yitzhar, son of Kehat took”** (Bamidbar 16:1)

Reish Lakish says that Korach took a bad deal for himself (Sanhedrin 109b). Rashi says he took himself to the side to contest the Kehunah. Onkelus says that Korach separated himself from the rest of the nation in order to maintain his argument.

Rabbi Chama bar Chanina says that Yosef hid three treasures in Egypt. One of them was revealed to Korach (Pesachim 119a).

If Korach was so wicked, why did Hashem allow him to become so fantastically wealthy?

Let’s discover the source of Korach’s vast wealth.

Korach had the terrible trait of jealousy. In order to uproot this trait, Hashem gave him riches from the treasures that Yosef had amassed. By analyzing this wealth, Korach was meant to learn from Yosef’s righteousness and good character. Despite his brothers’ deep-seated envy (Bereishit 37:11) and how they treated him, Yosef never took revenge. On the contrary, he treated his brothers with kindness and compassion.

For example: Yosef never envied Yehudah’s royalty, even though he himself was the most special of the Tribes. Yosef was Yaakov’s beloved son, from whom he had learned Torah (ibid. 3). He was the firstborn of Rachel, Yaakov’s main wife. Nevertheless, Yosef conducted himself with humility, never seeking honor or prestige. He treated his brothers like peers and even the sons of the maidservants as equals, speaking to them with love and understanding.

Hashem’s objective in allowing Korach to inherit Yosef’s wealth was to drive home this lesson.

Unfortunately, Korach did not get the message. His jealousy completely consumed him and led him to purgatory. As Chazal state, “Envy, lust, and the quest for honor drive a person out of the world.”

# FOOD FOR THOUGHT



The secret of our success  
“When one looks at a skyscraper,” Rav Shach zt”l once explained to one of the government leaders, “he must realize that

the foundations are strong, deep underground. Without a solid foundation, a tall building cannot exist.

“When you see the edifice of faith that characterizes our nation, the oldest in the world, it is clear proof that our foundation is rock-solid!

“What is this basis of our belief? The four walls of the yeshiva. Bnei Torah are the underpinning of our entire nation. The only way to guarantee the continuity of Am Yisrael and the State of Israel is by strengthening the foundation.



## Men of Faith

Excerpts from the book *Men of Faith on the lives and deeds of the House of Pinto*

### The Healing Waters

A woman who was completely blind came to Mogador in order to pray at the grave of the tzaddik Rabbi Chaim Hagadol, begging that her eyes be healed and that she should see once more.

The blind woman’s son told Moreinu v’Rabbeinu that when his mother arrived at the tzaddik’s grave, she asked him to bring her some water so that she could wash the grave of the tzaddik and also wet her eyes.

He went to fulfill his mother’s request; he searched, but could not find any water. “Mother,” he called from afar, “there is no water here in the cemetery.”

The woman placed her hand on the tombstone and suddenly she felt the stone getting wet. It had not been so beforehand. With each passing moment, the stone became increasingly wet, until it was full of water. She called

“We are certain that as long as Mashiach has not arrived, there will be wars, even if 10,000,000 Jews live here. What will be if the world powers enter into a bloody war? Of what significance will our little State be? Russia was a power to be reckoned with; Poland was a country of 30,000,000 citizens that was wiped off the map in one night. Many other countries met similar fates. How are we any different? We’re surrounded by millions of Arabs on all sides. What’s our secret weapon?

“Our only power rests here, in the holy Torah institutions. Whoever truly desires the welfare of our nation will do his best to strengthen these institutions, and not only through money, although that is essential. The main thing to intensify is the spirit, that understanding that herein lies our true power against our enemies.”

to her son, exclaiming in wonder, “There is a lot of water here.”

Suddenly, the non-Jewish caretaker of the cemetery came over to the woman and her son, carrying water. They asked him why he was bringing them water when they had not asked him for it.

“I thought that you might need water,” the caretaker answered. When he noticed the streaming water on the grave, he asked them, “From where did this water come?”

They could not explain it, since it was an absolute mystery. They realized that a miracle had been performed for them in the merit of the tzaddik.

Then, they all drew from the miraculous waters, which gushed from the stone. Immediately after wetting her eyes with the water, an extraordinary miracle occurred: the woman was cured and began to see once again.