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Son of the tzaddik Rabbi **Moshe Ahron Pinto** zt"l, and grandson of the holy tzaddik and miracle-worker Rabbi **Chaim Pinto** zy"ta

## maskil Le'David

### Fearsome is the Dispute Not for the Sake of Heaven

**"Korach son of Yitzhar son of Kehat son of Levi separated himself"** (*Bamidbar* 17:1).

Parshat Korach is one of the most difficult parshiot in the Torah. It is a parsha that describes discord, which is likened to fire. Every year when we study this parsha, we once again wonder: What motivated Korach to spearhead this brazen dispute? It is hard to understand Korach's motive, for he possessed Divine Inspiration and was one of those who carried the Aron. Only a select few of the generation could carry the Aron and remain alive, and he was one of them. The Kehot family was few in number due to the death penalty meted out to those who did not perform the service properly.

Rashi clarifies the words, "Korach...separated [lit. took] himself;" for the verse does not say what he took: "Korach took himself to the side, to be at odds with the rest of the assembly, to protest against Aharon's assumption of the priesthood." Unkelos translates "separated" as, "he separated himself" — he separated himself from the rest of the community to support dissension.

About this we are told, "Any dispute that is for the sake of Heaven will have a constructive outcome, but one that is not for the sake of Heaven will not have a constructive outcome. What sort of dispute was for the sake of Heaven? The dispute between Hillel and Shammai. And which was not for the sake of Heaven? The dispute of Korach and his followers" (*Avot* 5:17).

The above Mishna does not include Moshe Rabbeinu as a part of the dispute. It mentions the dispute "between Hillel and Shammai" while Korach is mentioned alone; it does not say "between Korach and Moshe." Why is this? The simple reason is because Korach did not find a partner for his debate. When Moshe Rabbeinu realized that Korach and his assembly wished to start a dispute, he became distressed and did his utmost to try and silence them. However, he was unsuccessful. One who becomes entangled in discord, loses all his rational judgement as a result of his anger or mockery. In this case it was due to Korach mocking Moshe Rabbeinu's words. Or perhaps it was his desire for honor that made Korach lose his mind and "argue" with Hashem. By separating himself and arguing about the priesthood,

he was separating himself from Am Yisrael. In such a situation there is nothing to do but punish the person so that he will not draw others after him.

The punishment was measure for measure. Just as they lit the fire of discord, so too a fire that consumes everything and does not differentiate between good and evil descended from Heaven and consumed the people. Korach himself was swallowed up by the ground and his burial place is unknown. Since he separated himself from Am Yisrael, this is the punishment he deserved.

We find the complete opposite with Hillel and Shammai. All their arguments were for the sake of Heaven and only took place inside the Beit Midrash. Our final ruling follows the opinion of Beit Hillel. This is because Beit Hillel were put to shame, yet they studied the words of Beit Shammai before offering their own opinion. After considering and investigating Beit Shammai's opinion they came to the conclusion that it was incorrect, and they then offered their differing opinion, with *derech erez*. When they left the Beit Midrash they reconciled with each other, and Chazal tell us (*Yevamot* 14b), "Even though Beit Hillel and Beit Shammai disagreed...this did not prevent Beit Shammai from taking wives from Beit Hillel and vice versa, to teach us that they treated each other with love and friendship, in fulfillment of the verse, "[Only] love, peace, and truth." This proves that their entire motive was only for the sake of Heaven, and this is why their dispute had a constructive outcome. However, Korach's entire intent was for his personal honor, therefore there was no constructive outcome to his argument and he is remembered with eternal disgrace.

The following story is told about Rabbi Chaim Pinto HaGadol *zy"ta*. When he reached the ripe old age of ninety-five, the Rabbanim of the Essaouira *kehilla* wished to check if his mind was still lucid, for this is the accepted ruling. However, they were afraid that their opinion might be biased, so they asked the *dayanim* of Marrakesh to perform this analysis. As soon as these *dayanim* entered Rabbi Chaim's home, he called out to them, "You forgot the Chazal, 'The older the talmidei chachamim become, the more their minds are settled.'" They immediately understood his intention, kissed his hand and left.

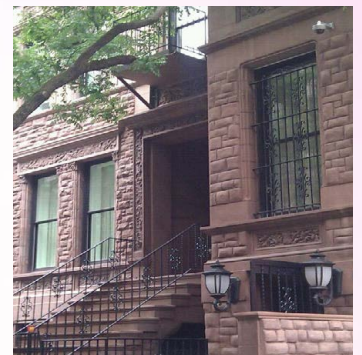
This incident teaches us how one must always conduct oneself for the sake of Heaven. On the one hand, one of the local *rabbanim* could have assessed the *tzaddik's* capabilities, but either they thought they may be prejudiced, or they were afraid to do so because "the fear of your teacher should be like the fear of Heaven."

cont. p. 2.>>>

2 Tammuz 5785  
28 June 2025

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Korach



## Hilula

2 Tammuz  
Rabbi Yosef Ben Valid

3 Tammuz  
Rabbi Yehoshua Neuwirth,  
author of *Shemirat  
Shabbat Kehilchata*

4 Tammuz  
Rabbi Yaakov of Romrog,  
the *Rabbeinu Tam*

5 Tammuz  
Rabbi Tzalach Cohen Zangi

6 Tammuz  
Rabbi Chaim Deliroza,  
author of *Torat Chaim*

7 Tammuz  
Rabbi Simcha Bunim Alter,  
the Admor of Gur

8 Tammuz  
Rabbi Chaim of Shash





## FROM THE TREASURY

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

### Korach's Claim was Flawed

I would like to expound upon the difference of opinion between Korach and Moshe Rabbeinu *a"h*. Moshe Rabbeinu *a"h*, claimed that anyone wishing to merit the crown of Torah and become a true Ben Torah, must invest all his strengths and desires in the Holy Torah alone, and must not concern himself with business matters, or pursuing money, possessions, and wealth. Rather, his time should be dedicated solely for Torah and the service of Hashem.

On the other hand, Korach's assertion was foolish. He claimed it was possible to become a Ben Torah and merit the crown of Torah while dedicating part of one's time to commerce. According to his opinion, dividing one's time between Torah study and acquiring wealth, greatness, and honor is no contradiction. Due to this, he disagreed with Moshe and asked to receive the priesthood, since the priesthood benefits a person with wealth.

This is why Korach wished to receive the scepter of leadership with which to guide the congregation. He desired the priesthood thinking it was possible to pursue both the Torah and wealth at the same time. His opinion was that a Ben Torah should not distance himself too much from worldly matters.

This was Korach's foolish mistake which clearly was based on a mistaken conception. Korach coveted wealth and chased after money and honor in equal measure to his love for Torah. In the end he lost all his Torah and fell to the lowest levels. What caused this? His burning desire for money that merged with his wish to merit Torah. Chazal have told us (*Pesachim* 119a), "Wealth is set aside for its owner to his detriment; this refers to Korach's wealth."

Korach descended from the tribe of Levi. The way of this tribe was not to occupy themselves with any worldly matters, and concern themselves with Torah and mitzvot alone. They are the teachers of the nation and this is their undivided goal in this world. They are the "army of Hashem" about whom it says, "Bless, O Hashem, His resources," and Hashem rewards them, as it says, "I am your share and your heritage."



## WALKING IN THEIR WAYS

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

### Taking Stock of Our Lives

A wealthy man taught me how we must dedicate ourselves wholeheartedly to Torah study and mitzvah observance. This man owns shares in many companies and has business branches throughout the world. He is a maven on the stock market.

I once met him and could not resist asking, "Tell me, please. Since you invest all your time in the stock market, when do you find time for eating and drinking?"

"I have very little time for such things as food and drink," was his pithy response.

"And how much do you sleep at night?" I continued.

"Also a very minimal amount."

He explained that as the night spreads its blanket of darkness upon his land, and all his countrymen turn in for a good night's sleep, the day is just beginning on the other side of the globe. A new business day is dawning. What a shame to waste precious hours on something as mundane and trivial as sleep. He therefore remains awake, following the proceedings of the stock market. He must know which stocks are worth investing in, and when. By the time he has made his decisions the light of a new day has appeared

*cont. from p. 1 >>>*

On the other hand, if they do not investigate the matter, G-d forbid he might rule inaccurately due to his old age. Therefore, they decided to bring different *rabbanim* to check whether his mind was still lucid. After receiving the *rabbanim*, Rabbi Chaim could have punished the local *rabbanim* with the power of his holiness, for disgracing him by sending *rabbanim* to evaluate his lucidity. However, the *tzaddik zy"á*, did not hold it against them and did not look at the act as one of disgrace or personal affront. For according to the law they were

in his homeland. Of course, that heralds an opportunity for more business and following the stock exchange there. All of this ultimately translates into increasing his assets. "What about prayer and tefillin?" I press. "How many hours of your day are set aside for Torah study, food for the soul?"

"Sorry, but I have no time for such activities."

I looked at him in sheer shock. "What will you do with all of your fortunes after you pass away? You surely know that you can't take them with you. Why, then, are you working so hard?!"

The man avoided my gaze. He said that he preferred not to think of the day of death, or afterwards...

I could not help but think about this wealthy pauper. He sacrificed everything on the altar of earning more wealth. Not only did his life lack spiritual content, he even forewent basic physical pleasures, all in order to make money.

**I personally took a *mussar* lesson from this man. Just as he literally devoted his entire life to amassing greater fortunes, we must sacrifice ourselves for the sake of Torah study and mitzvah observance.**

correct since it was quite possible that his old age had affected his body and mind. On the contrary, the *tzaddik zy"á*, accepted their actions without holding it against them. This is a beautiful example of a dispute without dissension. Since it was for the sake of Heaven it had a constructive outcome.

May Hashem save us from dissension that is not for the sake of Heaven, and may we try with all our strength to increase love and brotherhood, peace and friendship among us. Amen.



## WORDS OF THE SAGES

### A Parking Space in the Middle of Geulah

**“This distressed Moshe greatly, and he said to Hashem, ‘Do not turn to their gift-offering!’”** (*Bamidbar* 16:15).

The Alter of Slabodka derived a compelling lesson from this verse concerning the enormous power of prayer.

Moshe Rabbeinu had to ask Hashem not to accept their incense offering, meaning their prayers. If, G-d forbid, their prayers had been accepted, this would have appeared to validate their heretic outlook against Moshe and the Torah and negated the entire Torah. Nevertheless, Moshe still had reason to fear that their prayers might be accepted – so great is the power of prayer.

The magnitude of the power of prayer is demonstrated by the following impressive story:

A young child of only eight years old asked his father to take him to the Beit Knesset on Shavuot night so he could say the *tikkun*. His father considered the idea but replied that he should rather go to sleep; he is still young. As his father made his way to the Beit Knesset, he suddenly felt bad. Why indeed had he not agreed to take him? Here is a child wishing to learn Torah the entire night, why should he turn him down?

The father decided to return home, fetch his young son and bring him to the Beit Knesset. He opened the door and beheld his young son standing by the doorway, as if he was waiting for his father to come and bring him. “Why are you waiting for me?” his father asked him. “Did we not decide that you must go to sleep? How did you know that I would come for you?”

The child innocently replied, “I prayed to Hashem that you should come back home to take me to the Beit Knesset. I knew Hashem would listen to my prayer; I was sure you would come!”

This child grew up and was very successful in his Torah learning, eventually becoming the well-known *gaon* and *tzaddik* Rabbi Shimshon Pincus *zt”l*, famous for his greatness in Torah and fear of G-d.

The introduction to the *sefer Nefesh Shimshon* quotes Harav Pincus testifying about himself, “If I ever merited something, it was because I talked to Hashem as one talks to a friend, concerning every single matter.”

Similarly, Harav Aharon HaKohen *shlita*, relates a story that he personally experienced (*Dirshu* magazine):

“I once travelled with someone in the middle of the day to the Geulah neighborhood in Yerushalayim. As everyone knows, parking spaces are hard to come by in this side of town. Seeing that the driver found a spot quite easily, I asked him how this happened; sometimes people drive around unsuccessfully for half an hour!

“The driver answered, ‘I will tell you the truth. Every time I come to this neighborhood, I recite a chapter of *Tehillim* and ask Hashem to help me find a parking space. Today too, this is what I did – so why is it surprising that I found a spot so easily?’”



## PARSHAH PEARLS

### Inspiring Reflections

### The Reckoning of Two Hundred and Fifty Men

**“With two hundred and fifty men from the Children of Israel”** (*Bamidbar* 16:2).

How did Korach arrive at this number of two hundred and fifty men who were prepared to follow him?

The Chizkuni explains that Korach took twenty-three men from each tribe, the number required for a small Sanhedrin. Since he did not take men from the tribe of Levi, the calculation of eleven (tribes) times twenty-three amounts to two hundred and fifty-three. Besides Korach, Datan, and Aviram, they totaled two hundred and fifty men.

### They Made Peace Above

**“That he not be like Korach and his assembly”** (*Bamidbar* 17:5).

Chazal have told us, “What sort of dispute was for the sake of Heaven? The dispute between Hillel and Shammai. And which was not for the sake of Heaven? The dispute of Korach and his entire company” (*Avot* 5:17).

It is related that the Chatam Sofer *zy”a*, was particular not to place the *sefarim* of Rabbi Yaakov Emden and Rabbeinu Yehonatan Eibershitz next to each other, because of the controversy that existed between them during their lifetime.

He writes in his *sefer Reshumim Bishmecha* that towards the end of his lifetime he no longer held onto this custom, explaining, “The Rabbis made peace between them in the Heavenly Yeshiva” – in Heaven there is no longer controversy between them.

### For the Sake of Heaven’s Honor

**“You have killed the people of Hashem!”** (*Bamidbar* 17:6).

Bnei Yisrael saw, with their own eyes, Korach and his assembly being swallowed up by the ground. This was a punishment from Heaven for affronting the honor of Moshe and Aharon. If so, how did they dare say to Moshe and Aharon, “You have killed the people of Hashem?”

Rabbi Yaakov Mutzefi *zt”l*, asks this question and adds another: What does the fact that the cloud had covered the Tent of Meeting come to teach us?

He clarifies this difficulty according to the Gemara (*Shabbat* 149b), “One whose friend is punished on his account is not allowed in Hashem’s presence.” The reason for this is he should have pardoned his honor but he did not forgive.

Therefore, all Bnei Yisrael came to Moshe and Aharon and complained, “You have killed the people of Hashem.” You did not forgo your honor, so because of you Korach and his assembly were killed. This is why the following verse (*ibid* 7) says, “And behold! The cloud had covered it, and the glory of Hashem appeared.” Hashem was hinting to the people that Korach and his assembly were not punished for insulting the honor of Moshe and Aharon, they were punished only because of Hashem’s honor.

# A NOVEL LOOK AT THE PARSHA



## Holy People, Holy Prayers

**“You shall safeguard the charge of the holy...and there shall be no more wrath against the Children of Israel”** (*Bamidbar* 18:5).

The *Kol Beramah* magazine published by Harav Moshe Michael Tzoren *shlit”a* printed a most moving and encouraging letter praising Am Yisrael who honorably faced the challenging coronavirus crisis, may we be spared in the future. The writer describes the overwhelming feelings regarding a specific point – something which every kehilla can identify with.

Below is a quotation of the original letter, which speaks for itself:

“I pray in one of the *minyanim* which was organized when the authorities permitted outdoor *minyanim*. A *minyan* taking place outside of the *Beit Knesset* naturally leads to temporary permissiveness concerning the regular rituals of prayer. We would have expected that the regular procedures, which under normal circumstances are fully accepted by the community, would now be treated with laxity or even dropped completely; this is the nature of the world.

“Of course, when we say ‘nature of the world’, we refer to the ‘world’ that does not invest in self-perfection. Those who care about their *avodat Hashem* and are particular to fulfill every section and clause in the *Shulchan Aruch* will continue observing these rulings despite their regular routine being turned upside down.

“Even while praying in, for example, a

*vatikin* minyan in Brooklyn Park (in Bnei Brak), and the chickens are running between their legs and crowing their cock-a-doodle-do at this early hour of the morning, these *talmidei chachamim* will continue praying as if nothing is going on; as if right now they are inside the *Beit Knesset*.

“What I am trying to say is how heartwarming it is to come across *talmidei chachamim* who continue serving their Creator in every situation. Even when they are not sitting in their permanent seat in the *Beit Knesset*, and although they are lacking peace of mind, they will not lose their constancy and will not deflect from their regular practices, despite it all being so temporary. **Right there in Brooklyn Park, the Kohanim raise their hands and offer the Priestly Blessing. Reading from the Torah is also performed in the park, and the chickens join in by crowing in the middle of the prayer, for they too are trying to preserve their regular prayer routine. The *talmid chacham* carries his holy duty wherever he finds himself.**

“We are talking about a sight that if not beheld with one’s own eyes, is impossible to believe.

“We also came across a certain *talmid chacham* (if only we could publicize his name) who prays in a corner of Ramat Elchanan together with a particular group from that neighborhood. During the prayers he noticed the place was a mess and not really suitable for prayers.

**“We happened to pass by that area late at night; we saw him going over to that corner where the group prayed, and...he began sweeping the pavement and the paths that lead to this area. He did not leave the place until the area was completely clean.** Spotless. This displays the proper approach to prayer. Even when Hashem has decreed that we leave our *Batei Knesset*, we can do our best to create some form of propriety. We cannot surrender to the *yetzer hara*, who tries to worsen the situation.

“The truth is, if Hashem *Yitbarach* put us in this situation and instructed us to pray outside the *Batei Knesset*, this becomes our place of prayer, and one must invest fully to turn it into a “permanent place.”

“As we know, a permanent place has its specific laws and ways. But what happens? The structure of the current place does not lend to the feeling of permanence. However, to create permanence in spirituality, there is no need for visual aids. All we need is the knowledge that this has become the place of our prayers. If we internalize this, it will be fixed in our hearts as well.

**“Those who came to pray in that *minyan* the next day were duly impressed by the spotlessly clean sight evident in every corner. They had no idea who had taken care of this.**

“But Hashem knows, and He will repay him from Above.”



**“Contemplate and see that Hashem is good”**

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