



# OD YOSEF HAI NEWSLETTER

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## ***Thoughts on Korach Year 25***

***by Dayan Abraham David***

We are given many wonderful insights of Moshe's greatness in his behaviour with Korach and his group of rebels. Moshe is personally insulted by Korach and his followers, who accuse him of bossing over them and grabbing power for himself and his brother. He bows his head in deference and does not answer back on his own account. But on the accusation of appointing Aaron of his own accord not on the instructions of Hashem, he challenges them to a test with the 'ketoret' incense. Even so he tries to calm the situation by postponing it till the next day '*mahar veyoda'ah*' so that the rebels should have a chance to cool off. If one can walk away from confrontation at times of angry argument he might save the situation.

He speaks to the Levites and persuades them not to join Korach against the Kehunah

being given to Aaron, for they had been chosen for other services in the Mishkan, making an effort so the '*machloket*' should not spread.

He sends messengers to Datan and Aberam to make peace having identified that, in fact, they did not seem to have any particular axe to grind. They had not joined the two hundred and fifty leaders from their tribe who were *bechorim* claiming the *Kehuna* and accepting Moshe's challenge to bring the ketoret. He tried but was rebuffed by them. Even at the height of the '*machloket*' when Korach manages to gather the whole congregation through words of '*letzanut*' making fun and stirring up the people all night with stories of people having suffered through the Laws Moshe had given them to the benefit of Aaron, and bringing them to the tent of meeting to confront Moshe. The '*Schechina*' takes up for Moshe and is ready to destroy them. Moshe does not lose his feelings for his people and pleads with G-d on their behalf

not to destroy the Jewish People who have been manipulated but only to punish the manipulators. G-d then tells Moshe to warn the people to keep away and to separate from the dwellings of the instigators, Korach, Datan and Aberam. But Moshe goes even further he gets up and goes himself towards their tents followed by the Elders to give this warning in person *'Vayakum Moshe vayelech il Datan Ve'Aberam vayelechu acharav zekene Yisrael'*, and the people moved away from around their tents. But this action of Moshe is noted by the Midrash in the Yalkut. *'Velefe she halach Moshe Lepitcho shel Datan Ve'Aberam (and their neighbours) zacha lehatzil arba tzadikim medinah shel gehinom'*. Because Moshe went personally to their Tents he was merited to save four people from the din of Gehinom: the three sons of Korach and On ben Pelet. For when the sons of Korach saw their teacher Moshe, they were in a dilemma whether to stand up for their teacher against their father's will or to honour their father by ignoring their teacher. They stood up for Moshe and had thoughts of teshuvah and that is why they were saved and did not fall into Gehinom but were able to escape. Seeing Moshe personally probably had a positive influence on On ben

Pelet not to join Korach in the last minute, the Yalkut also attributes his salvation to the actions of his wife. *'Machloket'* is a fire and spreads, destroying all those around it. Those who dampen and put out the flames have the merit and those who fan it, can learn from the end of Korach and his followers.

### GEMS

Moshe in his warning to Korach and the Leviim not to join those who claim the Kehunah, the Service of the Kohanim, for you have no reason to be jealous having been chosen for the Service as Leviim in the Temple. He adds *Rav lachem Bnei Levi*, you have much already, why do you want more. The Talmud in Sotah says *Berab Bisere Berav Bisrehu* Moshe was repaid for these words he used here against the Levites, not to ask for more. For when he prayed to enter the Land in Parashah *Veetchanan*, Hashem told him *Rav lecha*, al Tosef *Ledaber od Badavar Hazeh*, you have a lot, why do you want more.

Why was this expression of Moshe which was said against people who were claiming the Kehunah wrongly, considered out of place and with which he was admonished later on, when

pleading to enter the Holy Land, which was a commendable request in itself?

It would seem that even though their claim to become Cohanim, to serve directly in the Temple with the Offerings was wrong since G-d had chosen Aaron and his sons, Moshe should not have spoken out against the yearning of their heart to come closer and serve on a higher level. For it is not a fault but a virtue for every Jew to raise his aspirations and levels of Service to G-d, here it was out of place but the motivation was not to be criticised in fact they were so sincere their machtot incense burners became Holy and was used to cover the Copper Altar of the Korbanot. When Moshe asked to enter Eretz Israel and begged G-d to annul his decree against this, Hashem used that same language as reproach. What do you need more, for you have fulfilled your life's purpose in the best way, why yearn for more; these are words you had used against the aspirations of those who claimed the Kehunah. The Tzadikkim are scrutinised minutely in their words and behaviour. A Jew must never be satisfied with his spiritual level, always strive for more as long as we do not take away from another.

## **STORIES OF TZADDIKIM**

The Chofetz Chaim warns us about avoiding machloket – conflict – for once one does get into it, there is no rational. He tells the story of a Jewish butcher who got into a quarrel with a clerk working in the Ministry of Defence in Russia. The quarrel became very serious. One day the enraged butcher threatened to report the clerk for accepting bribes to free prospective conscripts from the long military service in the Czar's army. His wife reminded him that their only beloved son had also been freed in this way by the same clerk and this would endanger him to exile in Siberia. Her outraged husband screamed 'it does not matter whether I go to Siberia or my son into the army the important thing is that this man will go to prison'.

### ***Shabbat Shalom*** **HALACHOT**

1. David Hamelech made a decree that we should make 100 berachot everyday to avert any tragedies.
2. We are able to make up these berachot on a weekday since we have 3 Tefillot of 19 berachot each and other fixed berachot.
3. On Shabbat, since the Tefillot are only 7 berachot, we need to

add on more berachot through food and drink and besamim.

4. A person who makes a beracha should say it loud enough to hear it himself, say it with deliberation, give thought to what he is saying, and pronounce the words clearly.

5. A beracha without the Shem vu Malchut is not considered a beracha; hence if the word melech or Haolam is missed out, the beracha has to be made again.

6. One should not await more than it takes to say 3 words Shalom Alecha Rebi between the beracha and the eating or drinking. Hence, one should not make a beracha on a very hot drink and then wait for it to cool down or blow on it to cool it before drinking. One should peel the orange before making the beracha and have the food ready before making the beracha. But if he did await, as long as he has not taken away his mind from eating the fruit or spoken words not connected with the beracha, he does not need to make another beracha.

### **SHABBAT TIMES**

Shabbat commences 9:06 pm

**We should not light candles before**

**7:38 pm**

Shabbat terminates 10:37 pm

Shabbat :Latest Shema

Magen Avraham 8:18 am

Shabbat Latest Shema Gra 8:54 am

**PLEASE FOLLOW ALL THE**  
**GUIDELINES AND WARNINGS**  
**CONCERNING COVID-19 PANDEMIC**  
**VUSHMARTEM MEOD**  
**LE'NAFSHOTEHEM**

**VEHAVTA L'REACHA KAMOCHA**