



CONGREGATION BETH ISRAEL OF THE PALISADES

קהילה קדושה בית ישראל של הפליסאדס

*An egalitarian Conservative community
where 'welcome' is not just a word!*

PARSHAT KORACH

JUNE 12, 2021 - TAMMUZ 2, 5781



Illustration from the 1890 Holman Bible

It happened, as he was done speaking these words, that the ground split apart that was under them; and the earth opened its mouth, and swallowed them up, and their households, and all the men who were of Korach and all their goods. Numbers 16:31-32

קרח

PARSHAT KORACH
TORAH – NUMBERS 16:1 – 18:32
HAFTARAH – SAMUEL 1 - 11:14-12:22

Korach (קָרַח) — Hebrew for the name "Korah," which in turn means *baldness, ice, hail, or frost*, the second word, and the first distinctive word, in the parashah) is the 38th weekly Torah portion (פָּרָשָׁה, *parashah*) in the annual Jewish cycle of Torah reading and the fifth in the Book of Numbers. It constitutes Numbers 16:1–18:32. The parashah is made up of 5,325 Hebrew letters, 1,409 Hebrew words, 95 verses, and 184 lines in a Torah Scroll.

PARSHAT KORACH

Thursday, June 10th, and Friday begins Rosh Chodesh Tammuz. May it bring to us the blessings of Hashem.

During the past several weeks we have learned how Moshe Rabbenu overcame many challenges as Hashem's chosen leader of B'nai Yisroel. Whether it was a Golden Calf, people constantly complaining, or spies returning with a negative report about the Land of Israel; Moshe prevailed each time. This time, in Parshat Korach, Moshe would face one of his worst ordeals. His leadership was threatened by a member of his own family.

Korach was Moshe's first cousin and believed that he was entitled to far greater honor than what he was given. Consumed by jealousy, Korach organized a rebellion and attempted to discredit Moshe personally as well as the divinity of the Torah. Pirkei Avot 5:20 mentions this incident as the classic conflict doomed to failure because Korach's motives were not for the sake of Heaven.

Our sages say this event illustrates the powerful influence a wife can have on her husband's behavior. Korach's wife encouraged his actions which ultimately led to his destruction. Another fellow, Ohn Ben Peles, was saved by his wife who tactfully, yet assertively talked him out of participating in the rebellion. Proverbs teaches about the wise woman who builds her house and the foolish one who tears it down with her own hands.

Our Parsha begins with the words "Vayekach Korach" and Korach took, Bamidbar 16:1. A careful reading of this verse doesn't reveal exactly what it was that Korach took. Our sages offer possibilities, including he took men with him, or he took himself out of the community (to gain power). Perhaps, it was just that he took.

A six-year-old was once at a birthday party when the hostess placed a bowl of candy on the table. Immediately, the older children grabbed all the candy before the child could even reach the bowl. Seeing his sad face, the hostess brought out more goodies and put them in his plate. "Thanks for being a gentleman and not grabbing," she said. Then she turned to the older children and said, "You may have been entitled to some of the candy, but you should have waited to be served. It's not proper to take."

Reb Aleph Bais says that perhaps the problem with Korach was that "he took." One does not take the leadership of Hashem's Chosen People. Moshe wasn't the leader and Aharon wasn't Kohain Gadol through political savvy or rebellion. Hashem gave them their honors. Korach, just wanted to take.

THOUGHT QUESTION OF THE WEEK

The story of Korach demonstrates how negative traits such as jealousy, anger, and hatred can be self-destructive . Can these emotions be used for good?

Korach Aliyah Summary

General Overview: Korach stages a rebellion against Moses, accusing him of a power grab. He and his entourage are swallowed up by the earth. The people protest, and a plague ensues. Of the staffs submitted by all the tribes, only Aaron's blossoms; proving that he is G-d's chosen. The Israelites are instructed the various presents due to the priests and Levites.

First Aliyah: Korach, Moses' first cousin, stages a rebellion against Moses and Aaron. Together with a few ringleaders, he gathers 250 men of renown and accuses Moses and Aaron of power hoarding. "The entire congregation is holy, and the L-rd is in their midst. So why do you raise yourselves above the L-rd's assembly?" They took specific issue with the appointment of Aaron as High Priest. Moses proposes that on the following day they all participate in a test which would determine who indeed was worthy of the mantle of High Priest. Everyone would bring an incense offering to the Tabernacle, and G-d would make known His choice for High Priest. Moses then tries to placate the rebellious group, unsuccessfully attempting to dissuade them from participating in this suicidal test.

Second Aliyah: Moses pleads with G-d not to accept the incense offering of the rebellious group. Korach spends the night inciting the Jews against Moses, and gathers them all to the entrance of the Tabernacle to witness the grand spectacle. G-d's glory appears.

Third Aliyah: G-d is angered by the Jews' association with Korach, and wishes to destroy them. Moses and Aaron pray on the Jews' behalf and the decree is averted. The earth opens up and swallows Korach and his family, and a heavenly fire consumes the rest of the 250 rebels. Moses instructs Aaron's son Elazar to retrieve the frying pans which were used for the incense offering, to flatten them and plate the altar with them—a visible deterrent for any individual who ever wishes to challenge Aaron's priesthood. The next day, the community complains that Moses and Aaron are to be blamed for the deaths of "G-d's people."

Fourth Aliyah: G-d instructs Moses and Aaron: "Separate yourselves from the community, and I will destroy them in an instant." And indeed, a plague struck the nation, and many thousands were dying. Moses tells Aaron to quickly take a firepan with incense and go into the midst of the congregation and atone for their sin. Aaron does so. He stands "between the living and the dead," and the plague is halted.

Fifth Aliyah: This section describes the "test of the staffs." G-d tells Moses to take a staff from each of the twelve tribes, with the name of each tribe's prince written upon their staff. Another staff was taken to represent the tribe of Levi, and Aaron's name was written on that staff. These staffs were placed overnight in the Holy of Holies chamber of the Tabernacle. Next morning they were removed, and miraculously Aaron's staff had budded with almond blossoms and almonds. This was further proof that Aaron was G-d's choice for High Priest.

Sixth Aliyah: G-d commands Moses to return "Aaron's staff" to the Holy of Holies, where it is to remain for perpetuity. The Jews express to Moses their fear of mistakenly entering a restricted area of the Tabernacle, and dying as a result. In response, G-d commands the priests and the Levites to carefully guard the Tabernacle, to prevent unauthorized entry by non-priests. The Torah then lists the various gifts to which the priests were entitled. These include the privilege of eating certain sacrifices, as well as select portions of other sacrifices; receiving the five shekels for the redemption of Israelite firstborn sons; a portion of all grain, oil, and wine crops; the "first fruit"; and more. Aaron is informed that his descendents will not receive a portion in the land of Israel—instead, G-d is their inheritance and portion.

Seventh Aliyah: The Levites, too, will not receive a share of the land of Israel. Instead they are entitled to a tenth of all the Israelites' crops—this in return for the Tabernacle and Temple services which they render. Upon receiving this tithe, the Levites must, in turn, separate a tenth of this tithe and give it to the priests.

LEARN!!!

DID YOU KNOW.....

Were you ever called for an Aliya? "YA-AMOD....." Everyone is familiar with the call. BUT did you ever listen carefully to the FIRST call – the one for the Kohein to be honored with the first Aliya? It is different, and goes like this:

וַיַּעֲזֹר וַיִּגַּן וַיּוֹשִׁיעַ לְכָל־הַחוֹסִים בּוֹ, וְנֹאמֵר אָמֵן. הַכֹּל הָבֹה
גָּדַל לְאֱלֹהֵינוּ, וַתִּנּוּ כְבוֹד לַתּוֹרָה. [בַּת פֹּהֵן, קָרַב. תַּעֲמֹד
בֵּת _____ הַבַּת פֹּהֵן.] בְּרוּךְ שְׁנַתֵּן תּוֹרָה לְעַמּוֹ
יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקִדְשָׁתוֹ.



LISTEN
FOR THIS!!

Now here is the point – after Gabbai 1 makes this call, **WE ALL SHOULD ANSWER:**

וְאַתֶּם הַדְּבָקִים בִּיהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם, חַיִּים בְּלַכֶּם הַיּוֹם.

V-atem had-vaykeem badonai Elohaychem chayeem kul-chem hayom.

You who cling to God have been sustained to this day.



ANSWER
WITH THIS!!

It will make Rabbi Stern *very* happy!!!!

Yahrzeits for: Friday 6/4/2021

* Mrs. Lena Kleinman	No Observers	
Mr. Aubrey Kosson	Father of	Mr. Leonard Kosson
	also	Mr. Steven Kosson
Mr. Harry Warner	Father of	Mr. David Warner

Yahrzeits for: Saturday 6/5/2021

Mrs. Maxine Harriet Cooperman	Mother of	Ms. Nancy Epstein
Mrs. Miriam Gottfried	Aunt of	Mr. David Warner
* Mr. Charles Halpern	No Observers	
Mrs. Bella Keller	Grandmother of	Mr. Peter Savitt
Mr. Ze'ev Wolf Klein	Grandfather of	Rabbi Shammai Engelmayer

Yahrzeits for: Sunday 6/6/2021

* Mrs. Sophie Megibow	No Observers
* Mrs. Minnie Perl	No Observers

Yahrzeits for: Monday 6/7/2021

* Mr. Abraham Cohen	No Observers
Mr. Charles Kaplan	
	Kohen
* Mrs. Celia Wolpert	No Observers

Yahrzeits for: Tuesday 6/8/2021

* Mrs. Sarah Crown	No Observers
Mr. Abraham Levin	
Mrs. Itta bat Malka Zamkovskaya	No Observers

Yahrzeits for: Wednesday 6/9/2021

Celia Bechefskey	No Observers
Bechefskey Celia	No Observers
* Mr. Harry S Heller	No Observers

Yahrzeits for: Thursday 6/10/2021

Mrs. Eva Dworkin	No Observers	
* Mr. Harry Tzvi ben Aaron Smoler	Father of	Mrs. Marian Silverstein
Tzvi ben Aaron	Israel	

Yahrzeits for: Friday 6/11/2021

Mrs. Stella Aboaf Abram	Grandmother of	Ms. Esther Chalom
	also	Mr. Marc Chalom
	also	Dr. Rene Chalom
	also	Ms. Lili Weitzen
Esther Amron	No Observers	
* Mr. Louis Laikin	Grandfather of	Mrs. Janis Kronenberg
	also	Mrs. Fern Galant
* Mrs. Florence Levine	No Observers	