



OD YOSEF HAI NEWSLETTER

ROSH YESHIVAH AND COMMUNITY RABBI
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Thoughts on Parashat KORACH Year 23

by Dayan Abraham David

The Mishna in Avot says 'Kol Machloket Le shem shamayim sofa lehitkiyem ve shelo le shem shamayim ein sofa lehitkiyem. Any argument which is for the sake of heaven will live on but one which is only for personal reasons not for the sake of heaven will be lost, and not remembered with any respect. The arguments of Bet Shamai and Beth Hillel are remembered to this day with respect and studied because they were Leshem shamayim. But those of Korach and his group were for personal honour and gain; their arguments are only remembered with disdain. When the argument – machloket is for pure purpose as we find the many discussions and arguments in the Talmud, it is said Elu devrei Elokim Chayim ve elu devrei Elokim Chayim – both opinions are respected as if from G-d. While the arguments can be most heated as the gemarah in Kedushin tells us to the extent of a father and son behaving like enemies in their discussions, but at the end they remain loving and in friendship. In fact this is a test of the le shem

shamayim if the content of the arguments are remembered and quoted with respect and the parties concerned live in peace and harmony with each other despite their differences of opinion then for sure it is le shem shamayim. But if a machloket is not Le shem shamayim the arguments are forgotten and all that remains is hate and recriminations. The original arguments are forgotten and change into personal attacks with lies and exaggerations as we see with the complaints of Datan ve Abiram against Moshe 'You have taken us out of the land of milk and honey, and you domineer over us and crave for power' which was quite ridiculous as Moshe was the humblest of men and Egypt was not Eden. Rashi notes that machloket – conflict is like fire it burns indiscriminately all those near by. The Beth Din cannot punish a minor, and even the heavenly courts only those of 20 years but in the machloket of Korach even the little children were swallowed into the earth with their elders.

In the machloket of Korach we find Moshe Rabenu being uncharacteristically severe praying to G-d to create an opening in the earth to

swallow Korach, Datan ve Abiram and all those who joined them. The same Moshe, who pleaded on behalf of the people when they sinned with Avodah Zarah of the egel, and even when they rebelled at the instigation of the meraglim, here calling for the spectacular destruction of Korach ve adato. The reason for this being that Moshe was being accused of making the appointments of Aaron and Alezafan Ben Uzziel of his own accord without instruction from G-d, doubting the command of the mitzvot of tzitzit and mezuzah. Here doubt was being thrown about the shlichot of Moshe as the messenger of G-d. If Korach was not punished with a spectacular death, people in the future might argue that the Torah Moshe gave us was not from G-d but his own, since even in Moshe's generation there were those who doubted him as the messenger of G-d. This was to ensure that no one would doubt Torat Moshe was Torat Hashem.

TORAH 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 Haze, 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 Tzadikim 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

A famous wealthy man drew up a will for the distribution of his fortune. He brought a copy of this will to the Chofetz Chaim to seek his opinion on it. "There are a couple of big mistakes here", pointed out the Chofetz Chaim. "Let's see now, who will receive your money and *sefarim* (books) after 120 years?" "Why my money will be inherited by my children of course, while my *sefarim* will go to the Yeshivah." "You should have done the opposite. Your children should be left some *sefarim* so that they will be able to study Torah once in a while. The money, on the other hand, should be left for the needy Torah Scholars of the Yeshivah. They have enough *sefarim* already" advised the Chofetz Chaim. "But the biggest mistake in this will is in forgetting to give yourself a part of the estate you worked so hard to make possible. You deserve an equal share of this estate and you should prepare for the long road ahead by distributing your share to charity causes. Do it yourself while you are still alive, because you can never know what will happen after you are gone. Some lawyer may try to break this will with some wild claim that your statements were made when you were not of sound mind. So make sure now with deeds that are doing the best for yourself.

Shabbat Shalom

HALACHOT – Cont/d

Business Dealings

5) It is fitting for a person to keep his word and even if no money was given for a '*Kenyan*' or any other act of transfer only the price agreed upon, then neither of the parties should retract even if the price has gone up or down. If any one of the parties retracted, the Rabbis frown upon it and he is called untrustworthy '*Mechasar amana*'.

6) A '*Yareh Shamayim*' is even expected to be true to his thoughts. If he agreed in his mind to sell it for a certain price to the buyer then even if the price goes up he keeps true to his thoughts, as it says: '*Ve dover emet belvavo*'. And so it would be for the buyer who has agreed in his thoughts to buy at a certain price from the seller.

7) But if a person has taken on to do something for himself, if there is no Mitzvah involved he can change his mind even if he has spoken words to the effect 'I will do so, and so'.

8) If a person has promised another, a gift of small value, so the other party would be relying on it, and he retracts, he is called '*Mechasar Ainana*', untrustworthy. But if the gift was of a large value it is reasonable to assume the other party was not relying on it, so he is not called untrustworthy.

Even so one should mean what they say at the time it is said so as not to be '*Echad Bapeh ve Echad Balev*', even though he can change his mind later.

9) If a person promised a poor man such a gift, even a larger sum he must keep his word, he cannot retract as it becomes like a '*neder*' for a Mitzvah. If it is only a thought to give the poor man, the Ramo holds that he should keep what he has undertaken in his mind. But '*Maran*' (Sephardim), hold there is no '*neder*' for thoughts without words. Others hold that if he only had thoughts to give '*Tzedakah*' but did not say it, then he is not obliged. However if he said I will give '*Tzedakah*' and did not mention the amount and only had thoughts in his mind of an amount, he must give it.

**Minis & Maxis childrens' services
from ages 3-11 at 10.45am in
school library & classroom**

*If you wish to sponsor a Kiddush
Please contact
Nathaniel Bendayan 07825 871749
For Seuda Shlishit
or to rent the
Nancy Reuben Hall
for a Simcha
Please contact
Yanky David 07725 408724*

**We have a regular Youth
Minyan organised by Jason
Ibrahim and Jordan Moses
followed by a kiddush**

SHABBAT TIMES

Shabbat commences	9:04 pm
Shabbat terminates	10:36pm
Mincha Erev Shabbat for the summer	7:15 pm
Followed by Kabbalat Shabbat	
Shacharit	8:30 am
Shiur Pirke Avot	7:40 pm
Mincha on Shabbat followed by Seuda Shlishit & Arbit	8:40 pm
Shacharit Sundays	7:00 am
Shacharit Weekdays	6:50 am
Mincha followed by Arbit	
Arbit for the summer	7:30 pm