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The Lubavitcher Rebbe

A RELUCTANT LEADER ANSWERING THE CALL

BY MENDEL KALMENSON

The Rebbe is one of the great figures of Jewish renaissance and revitalization after the horrors of the Holocaust, and his profound impact on Jewish life and history can be discerned from the subtitle of a New York Times best seller called *Rebbe*, authored by Joseph Telushkin.

Nearly three decades after his death, his legacy lives on, and his presence continues to be felt through the efforts of his task force of nearly 5,500 shlichim, or emissaries, who, inspired by his vision and calling, choose to dedicate their lives to strengthening Jewish unity, community and continuity around the world.

It has been noted that while, in general, one of the widely cited voids in Jewish life today is in the realm of leadership, in Chabad there are more young couples ready to devote their lives to leadership than there are available positions and postings.

As such, it would be appropriate to reflect on the origins of his unique model of leadership, one that led former chief rabbi of the Commonwealth, Lord Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, of righteous memory, to say: "The Rebbe created leaders, not followers."

INTERESTINGLY, AND perhaps ironically, one of the most basic qualities of a great leader is his or her decided lack of interest in becoming one.

A hallmark of some of the greatest leaders in history is that they did not begin life with grand visions of, or aspirations for, leadership but, rather, humbly responded to an urgent call of the hour.

Take, for example, the first and perhaps most influential Jewish leader of all times, Moses, a leader who has for thousands of years inspired not just Jewish leadership but universal leadership as well, as highlighted by Bruce Feiler's book *America's Prophet*.

Our sages teach that "G-d spent a full seven days persuading Moses at the thorn bush to undertake his mission."

It wasn't ambition but altruism that drove Moses to begrudgingly assume the mantle of Jewish leadership and speak truth to power when confronting the mighty Pharaoh on behalf of a small group of hurting slaves.

It wasn't a lofty and grand vision to transform a band of slaves into "a nation of priests" that drove Moses to become a mouthpiece for G-d and a spokesman for the Israelites, and it

wasn't a hunger to leave his mark on history that burned in Moses's belly when he entered the world of politics and became public servant No. 1.

What drew Moses to activism was a weighty sense of duty to ease the pain of a fellow human being enduring a beating.

It wasn't reward but a response to injustice that spurred Moses to greatness.

The Rebbe's legendary leadership began similarly, not as a career but as a calling.

After the death of his father-in-law, the previous Lubavitcher rebbe, on January 28, 1950, he incessantly refused the relentless requests of the hassidim that he become the new rebbe.

And like Moses, whose initial response to the prospect of leadership was: "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should take the Children of Israel out of Egypt?" the Rebbe, too, initially responded with expressions of inadequacy.

"I received your letter [proposing my candidacy as rebbe] and I was shocked to read it, demanding matters that are not part of me.... I do not blame you, because you do not know me personally, but at least you should have checked before writing to me."

When a certain Rabbi Dubov, a prominent Chabad hassid, urged the Rebbe to assume the mantle of leadership, the Rebbe questioned the very assumption that he was fit for leadership, by exclaiming, "What do you suppose? That Mendel Schneerson is a rebbe?!"

Indeed, so opposed was the Rebbe to assuming the mantle of Chabad leadership that, at one point, he even threatened to run away if the hassidim did not stop pressuring him to accept the role of leadership!

And as late as two weeks before he accepted the position of rebbe, he was still vehemently objecting to the nomination. On January 2, 1951, a group of hassidim came to see him with a coronation letter. After reading just the

first sentence, the future rebbe folded the letter up and put it on his table. With tears on his face, the Rebbe said, "Please leave, this letter has no relevance to me."

So what changed the Rebbe's resolve, and consequently the history of Judaism in post-war America?

A pointed comment from his wife is said to have made all the difference: "If you don't become rebbe, 30 years of my father's life will have gone to waste."

Only once put that way, it seems – as an urgent call of the hour rather than as an opportunity to be influential – did the Rebbe consider sacrificing his privacy and personal life for the public and all-consuming life of a hassidic rebbe.

Years later, the Rebbe would allude to his wife's urging, in conversation with Rabbi Herbert Wiener, author of *Nine-and-a-half Mystics*: "To begin with, it is always pleasant to run away from responsibility. But what if running might destroy the congregation, and suppose they put the key in your pocket and run away? What can you do then...?"

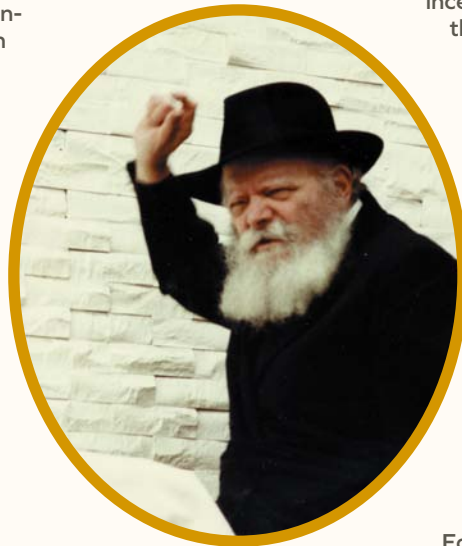
Clearly, the mantle of leadership had not grown on the Rebbe over the years, and as the following rare letter of the Rebbe demonstrates, the Rebbe's activism and public service did not derive from his natural disposition and personality:

"I must emphasize that despite the aforementioned [urging you to be active in communal affairs] it remains now, just as it was when we met in person, that I myself take no pleasure in being involved with communal affairs...."

Great leaders don't set out to change history, but respond to history's call for change when it comes knocking on their door.

In a world that is so desperately in need and search for leadership, it would pay well for aspiring leaders and influencers of any kind to reflect on the Rebbe's model and legacy of leadership, motivated and infused by a calling rather than careerism, which, if the past 28 years are anything to go by, will continue to be a gift that keeps on giving.

The writer is the rabbi of Beit Baruch and executive director of Chabad of Belgravia, London, where he lives with his wife, Chana, and children.





MIDDOS TREE

BY RABBI COREN

It's funny to think that I'm old enough to remember when there were no tissues on the tables in shul. If someone had a runny nose or just needed to blow his nose he would take out from his pocket a cloth called a handkerchief. Today the thought alone can gross people out. Imagine the same cloth used many times throughout the week until it reached its maximum use and then tossed in the washing machine for a fresh new start. Disposable tissues were a wonderful gift, but with all gifts come some challenges. For example, what should one do after using a tissue? No one would intentionally leave it around, so let's give the benefit of the doubt and imagine the righteous nose blower doesn't want to waist the shul money so he plans on using it a few times, hence he leaves the tissue on the table. This is a wonderful thought, but sometimes these tissues get left on the table. I find myself coming to shul many times and taking a clean tissue to gather all the old tissues that the righteous blowers left and somehow forgot to dispose in the garbage.

There are two middos that come to mind. The first middah is Nekiyyos- just being clean- and keeping the table that you just merited to use clean for others. The second middah is sensitivity to others. I think this is the most important point. There is a simple principle that the whole Torah stands on "whatever you wouldn't like done to you don't do to your friend." Most people will not appreciate arriving to shul and cleaning up after your dirty tissues and coffee cups that you forgot to dispose. I would make a simple suggestion whether you are davening or learning: always deduct one minute of your time spent on yourself and think how can I make it better for others that will be using the same place later. This will hopefully be life changing and refine our middos

Good Shabbos

בס"ד



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18 Main Bais Medrash

שלח	10:15	10:45	11:15	11:45
קרח	10:15	10:45	11:15	11:45
חקת	10:10	10:40	11:10	11:40
בלק	10:10	10:40	11:10	11:40
פנחס	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
מטות-מסעי	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30



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**PARASHOT KORACH
HAFTARAH**

The Navi Shmuel was the great grandson of Korach and he was equal in greatness to Moshe Rabainu and Aaron Ha'kohain. This was part of the reason that Korach led his revolt because he knew that he would have an extra-ordinary descendant and therefore he was certain the truth was with him.

In this week's haftorah of we read about the transition from the era of Navi'im to the period of kings. The Jewish people asked to be led by a king and Shmuel complied. He asked everyone to go to a place called Gilgal and there they appointed and anointed King Shul over the nation. Shmuel, in front of Hashem, requests from the nation to make an accounting and clarify that he had never taken anything from anyone. He was totally clean from any wrong doing. Then Shmuel states that he is too old to lead the nation and gives them one final lesson. Shmuel reminded the nation of the disastrous results when they leave Hashem's ways and how only through teshuva they were saved.

It was the time of the harvest when the land needed to remain dry, for if it were to rain it would destroy the crops in the fields. Thunder and lightning started to explode in the sky and the nation went into a panic. They beseeched Shmuel to daven to Hashem to forgive them for

their request of a King. Shmuel prayed to Hashem on behalf of the nation and his tefillos were accepted. The people realized they were wrong and they did teshuva.

There is an incredible lesson to be learnt from Shmuel who behaved completely opposite from Korach. How does one deal with rejection? Korach wanted to be the leader and not just a bystander in the nation. But he was not chosen to be a leader. So he created discord with Moshe and Aaron, Shmuel also was rejected when the nation was not satisfied with Nevayim anymore and wanted a king instead. Though he may have felt bad to be rejected he does not lose his composure. Hashem tells him do not be saddened, it is not you that they are rejecting but me Hashem as they ask for a King and not the King of Kings. Shmuel accepts the will of the people and put himself second.

Menachot 109b Rav Yehoshua ben Perachyah is quoted saying "in the beginning (my youth) whomever will ask me to act in a powerful position I would tie him up and feed him to the lions. But now that I am in a power position, whoever will try to remove me from power I will tie him up and pour boiling water on him". We learn this lesson from King Shaul how at first he did not want royalty but when he started to lose it he was willing to kill David. He did not learn the first lesson that Shmuel taught him when it's time to step down don't fight it, instead do the will of the people and Hashem.

Why the change in punishment from lion feed to boiling water, feed them all to the lions? Or burn them all with boiling water, what is the difference in the message? It could be Rav Yehoshua is suggesting to us what the effect of politics and power are. At first it rips a person apart like a lion does to his prey because a person enters the political world with lofty ambitions only to discover that his hands are tied. This frustration of being unable to do what he hoped to accomplish rips him apart like the prey of a lion. In time he gets better at the game but it is like when someone pours hot water over someone it deforms their image but they are not dead. The advanced politician because of his tied hands predicament, his accomplishments are not like his original lofty agenda. Now he appears to be deformed like the person who was scalded with hot water.

Korach wanted to be in charge of Moshe and believed that Moshe should be his subject; anything less than that would not fulfill his emotional need. What made Shmuel so special was that he was willing to step down and give up his needs for the needs of the people. He was selfless and just wanted to help the nation without taking anything in return.

Shabbat Shalom

NEW MINYANIM ADDED:

EARLY MINYAN MINCHA FRIDAY
1:37, 2:00, 2:30 ,3:00 3:30, 4:00

SHABBOS ZMANIM

EARLIEST KABBALAS SHABBOS	6:58PM
CANDLE LIGHTING	8:14PM
MINCHA 18 TENT	7:00PM
MINCHA BAIS CHABAD	8:24PM
SHKIYA	8:32PM
SHACHRIS VASIKIN- DAF YOMI SHIUR	4:50AM
SHACHRIS ASHKENAZ 18 MAIN	8:00AM
SHACHRIS - YOUTH 18 UPSTAIRS	9:30AM
SHACHRIS MAIN MINYAN 18 TENT	9:15AM
SHACHRIS 20 FORSHAY BAIS CHABAD	10:00AM
NEW SHACHRIS 18 MAIN	NEW 10:15AM
MINCHA	1:45PM
PIRCHEI	2:00PM
MINCHA	6:00PM
PIRKEI AVOS SHIUR - PEREK GIMMEL	7:30PM
MINCHA SHALOSH SEUDOS	8:00PM
SHKIYA	8:32PM
MARRIV	9:12PM 18 TENT, 9:17PM

WEEKDAY ZMANIM

SHACHRIS

20 MINUTES BEFORE NEITZ 30 ON YOM TOV

S 5:09 M 5:09 T 5:10 W 5:10 T 5:11 F 5:12

MINCHA & MARIV

12 MINUTES BEFORE PLAG

S 6:45 M 6:45 T 6:45 W 6:45 T 6:44

MINCHA & MARIV

12 MINUTES BEFORE SHKIA

S 8:19 M 8:19 T 8:19 W 8:18 T 8:18

JULY 04 - JULY 08

NEITZ IS 5:29 - 5:32
PELAG IS 6:57 - 6:56
SHKIA IS 8:31 - 8:30

MAGEN AVRAHAM
8:39 AM -8:41
GRA- BAAL HATANYA
9:15 AM - 9:17

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כתיקין	20 Forshay ↑	Brochos 30 min/Neuda 20 min before Neitz
כתיקין	18 Main	Sefardi Minyan with Birchas Kohanim
6:15AM	Tent א	
6:30	Tent ג	
6:45	Tent ד	
7:00	Tent א	
7:15	Tent ב	
7:30	Tent ג	
7:45	Tent ד	
8:00	Tent א	
8:15	Tent ב	
8:30	Tent ג	
8:45	Tent ד	
9:00	Tent א	
9:15	Tent ב	
9:30	Tent ג	
9:45	Tent ד	
10:00	Tent א	
10:15	Tent ב	
10:30	Tent ג	
10:45	Tent ד	
11:00	Tent א	
11:15	Tent ב	
11:30	Tent ג	
11:45	Tent ד	
12:00PM	Tent א	

Tent א - 18 Tent
Tent ב - 20 Tent
Tent ג - 22 Tent
Tent ד - New Tent

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PARSHAS KORACH AND CHODESH TAMMUZ

I heard a heartwarming story quoted in Rav Zilberstien's Sefer Haarev Na. A young man beginning to embrace his Jewish roots came to the Rav with an agonizing tooth ache. The Rav shared with him a surprising statement found in Sefer Kaf Hachayim 11/17. The author writes that if one wears tzitzis it will watch over him from having tooth pains. Segulahs don't necessarily have any rhyme or reason but it's nice when it does. The connection between teeth and tzitzis is that a four cornered garment has to have 8 tzitzios on each corner (technically its 4 doubled over) which together gives us 32 fringes--the numerical value of lev – heart. It's also the number of teeth an average person has. The young man was inspired and began to wear tzitzis. His pain disappeared.

This story connects to last week's Parsha, Parshas Shlach. Shlach ends with the command of tzitzis. In the middle of describing the Mitzva it tells us וראיתם אותו which means "you will see him." This is grammatically incorrect. If we're discussing the fringes than it should say "you will see them" in plural not in a singular masculine form. The explanation offered by the Rashbam is that it is referring to the garment itself. The sages in Maseches Menachos 43 share a powerful message about the importance of wearing tzitzis. They say that "seeing him" means "seeing Hashem." By keeping the mitzva of tzitzis we can reach a high level of clarity, a powerful vision that helps us and guides us to see Hashem and follow in his ways and directions.

The Gemara, Midrashim and poskim relate amazing spiritual and physical benefits to wearing tzitzis. Indeed, the investment is huge. Chazal teach us that for every second we don this garment we cash into amazing dividends. When multiplied by 613 by the end of the day we are spiritual millionaires. The Mishna Berura quotes Chazal who tell us that anyone who is careful with this mitzva will have 2800 slaves when Mashiach comes. That doesn't sound like a bad idea.

Although our custom is not to have women do this mitzva themselves, they can facilitate the mitzva by buying it as a gift for their kids and husbands or others and by doing so receive even more credit. Chazal teach us גדול המעשה יותר מן העושה יותר --greater is someone who gets others to do a mitzva than the one who does the

mitzva himself.

A whole different dimension on this topic that ties into this week's Parshais brought by the Sfas Emes, Kli Chemda, Shem Mishmuel and Ohr Hachaim who discuss the mistake the spies made. After all they were great people. How could such tremendous leaders lead us to years of tremendous devastation and tragedy? Chazal teach us that the effect the spies had on the rest of the nation (see Kli Chemdah with a beautiful explanation from the Avnai Nezer about the connection between the senders and the spies) was so powerful that it led to the destruction of the two Batai Hamikdash. What was the root of their mistake?

The Passuk says ונהי בעינינו כחגבים וכן היינו בעיניהם --the spies saw themselves like grasshoppers and they believed that they were regarded so by the giants. (See Kli Yakar, Otzar Ploas Hatorah and Gemara Sota 35 regarding the fact that they were viewed as ants too). The Sfas Emes, based on the Yalkut, explains that the spies should have seen themselves as angels, not perfect entities but, quoted by the Sfas Emes from his Zaiide the Chidushai Harim, as faithful messengers.

The greatest danger a person can have is a distorted view of himself. Hashem loves us and gave every one of us a special mission. Sometimes, our mission is clearer than other times but the best sign we can receive is facing a great challenge. When challenges are viewed as opportunities and when we are clear about our abilities than our mission has much more possibility for success.

A great example of a distorted view of one self was Korach. The Midrashim and the Zohar speak about Korach's great potential. However, Korach was blinded by his ego and eventually, it brought him down together with many other great people who were effected by Korach.

What is so interesting is that Korach uses tzitzis as a means to attack Moshe Rabbeinu's credibility. Korach was using a garment that had the potential to offer great clarity but he uses it to Mock the leader of the Jewish people. How ironic and sad.

Hopefully these words will inspire us to fulfill the mitzva of tzitzis and motivate us to remain good messengers for Hashem, each one of us in our unique way.



PARSHAS KORACH

THE ART OF MACHLOKES

HOW TO ARGUE AND HOW NOT TO ARGUE

There's an old Yiddish expression, loosely translated in a politically correct way as advice.

If we Jews want to know what our challenges are and what we need to work on - all we need to do is look at the world at large.

It would definitely be a fair statement to say that our world today has never been so divided. We are polarized both socially and politically in ways so extreme they are frightening.

If this tried and true expression is correct, we all must learn to deal with the divisions in our own communities.

Anti-Semitism has once more reared its ugly head. Could it be true that on a personal level we all have a bunch of Jews we simply do not like?

Into this powderkeg of a world, comes Parshas Korach, Hashem's mussar shmooze on the evils of machlokes.

How can we argue, when we need to?

The midrash tells us, just as everyone has a different face, we all have different opinions. Arguments are a natural outgrowth of this truth.

As we mentioned many times before. Even during an argument we must always take into consideration the other persons opinion.

Respect is the way to go..even in a machlokes.

This message may be hard for many of us to hear.

Rabbi Sneh illustrates this concept in a beautiful, original gematria.

One's opinion or side of an argument in hebrew is "Tzad."

If you take your side (tzad) and the others persons side into consideration, when involved in a discussion.. That is (tzad plus tzad= 188) the gematria of Pikayach - a smart person!

Now if in addition, your friend also takes his own side and your side into consideration, add another 188- totalling, 376. The Gematria of Shalom!

A guide to life backed up by gematrias.

In this weeks Parsha Moshe Rabbeinu asks for a punishment that is out of the ordinary for those challenging his leadership. The earth will split and they will go deep down into the crust - while they are still living!

Why keep them alive?

R' Yissocher Dov of Belz gives an interesting interpretation which teaches us another beautiful lesson in the same vein.

Moshe Rabbeinu was distraught that Korach and his camp needed to be punished. But he wished for them to remain alive, because only while they are alive could they still do Teshuvah!

Which in fact they did.

Moshe was so concerned with his adversaries that he kept their best interests always.

That's a leader.

As Rabbi Sneh so aptly concludes, we are all leaders of our own families, our own lives. It behooves us to always take the high road in any machlokes.

May we all appreciate the blessing that true Shalom brings!

Translated by Rabbi Reich

Good Shabbos!



Rabbi YY Jacobson

What Nobody Can Destroy

There's a very strange and fascinating Midrash. Our Sages teach that the Jewish people completed the building of the entire Mishkan on the 25th day of Kislev. With great anticipation, they waited for the sanctuary to be erected, to be inaugurated, and at last the divine presence would dwell in their midst. How disappointed they were when Moshe Rabbeinu gave them the message. It was postponed. For how long? For more than three months. They would have to wait until the first day of Nissim, when at last the tabernacle would be erected and inaugurated. G-d told the Jewish people, "I owe you one and I owe a debt to the 25th day of Kislev because its great potential celebration was snatched away from it, and delayed until the first day of Nissan. I will pay you back."

When did he pay them back? In the days of the Chashmonaim, during the Second Temple era on the 25th day of Kislev, when the holiday of Hanukkah commences. Chanukah means dedication, inauguration, because that's when the Jewish people rededicated the second temple after it was violently desecrated and violated by the Syrian Greeks.

But what is the significance of this teaching? Why would G-d want to delay the inauguration of the tabernacle in the desert? And how does the celebration of Chanukah substitute for that?

Here's a moving insight by one of the great rabbis who lived in Poland before the Second World War, Rabbi Aryeh Tzvi Frumer, also known as the Kozhiglover Rav. He was murdered in Majdanek in April 1943 with his six children. When the Jewish people completed the tabernacle and yet were not allowed to erect it, what was born in them at that moment was a yearning, a thirst. They did not have the home. They did not have the Mishkan. They didn't have the sanctuary. All they had was a thirst for it. A desire for it. A thirst that continued for more than three months until they actually got it. Well, what is the difference between having something and wanting something? When I have something, I can lose it. When I want something, I can't lose it. When I have something, it can also be taken away from me. But when I have a thirst, a desire for something, a yearning for something, that could never be taken away from me.

What did God give the Jewish people on the 25th day of Kislev in the desert? He could have given them a home and a sanctuary, but that could be taken away from them and destroyed. Instead, he gave them something else. He gave them a different

gift. He gave them the ability to dream, to yearn, to pine. And that is the reason why that day became immortalized as the holiday of Chanukah. When the temple was destroyed in the year 70, all of its services were interrupted. No part of the temple remained in Jewish life afterwards. Only memories. Besides one thing, and that is the kindling of the Menorah, which accompanied the Jewish people throughout their entire history in the Holy Land and in the Diaspora. Every year on Chanukah, the Jewish people, once again, wherever they were living during dark times, in great times, always lit the menorah.

Why is this the only service, the only aspect of the holy temple that was never seized and never obliterated? Because what the kindling of the menorah represents is the fact that our passion, our fire, our yearning could never, ever be taken away from us. Each year on the 25th day of Kislev, that fire, that thirst, that yearning for a better life, a truer life, a more meaningful life, a more wholesome, divine life is triggered and aroused. That is the holiday of Chanukah.

And that's why God delayed the inauguration of the sanctuary. That's why he told the Jewish people to wait for more than three months. He wanted to give them the gift of desire, of yearning, because it's only that which will remain eternally with them. And no exile and no subjugation and no expulsion could ever take that away from them.

Sometimes you find yourself in a situation where you don't have what you want. Sometimes you look at yourself and you feel that you're in so much darkness. You may even be in an abyss. You're facing adversity. You're in shackles. Maybe you have surrendered to addiction or you're filled with blockages of so many different types and forms. But no matter your circumstances, nobody can ever rob you from your desire, from your thirst, from your yearning. As King David says, "My soul thirsts to you." Nobody can ever take that away from you. I may be in a difficult situation. I may be facing quite a few challenges. But I have a desire. I have a thirst. I have a fire.

Rav Simcha Bunim of Peshischa once remarked that if you lose your money, you lost nothing. Money comes and money goes. If you lose your health, you may have lost part of your body's functionality, even if not your mind and soul. But if you lose your courage, your passion, your desire, your ability to dream for a better world and a better life, then you have lost everything.

Your thirst, your yearning, your dreams that, never dies.



Rabbi Reisman

Is there anything new that anyone can say about Parshas Korach? In the very first Posuk of the Parsha 16:1 the Posuk mentions that not only Korach started this fight but also Dasan and Avirom and On Ben Peles (וַיִּקַּח קֹרַח, בֶּן-יִצְהָר בֶּן-קֹהֵת בֶּן-לֵוִי; וְדָתָן וְאַבִּירָם בְּנֵי אֶלְיָאֵב, וְאֹהֵן בֶּן-פִּלֵּת--בְּנֵי רְאוּבֵן because there are 250 men most of whom are unnamed that accompany Korach. So why does the Posuk single out these three individuals? That is something that needs explanation. Perhaps On Ben Peles to tell the story of his wife who rescued him, but certainly why are Dasan and Avirom mentioned?

The Chiddushai Harim says something very important to understand. He says that Dasan and Avirom were not from Sheivet Levi. As you see later in Parshas Pinchas in 26:9 (וּבְנֵי אֶלְיָאֵב, גְּמוּאֵל וְדָתָן וְאַבִּירָם). Oliyav is not from Sheivet Levi. The 250 men for the most part were from Sheivet Levi so they were as Rashi tells us afterwards, they were Darshuning Kavod Atzmon. They said why is Moshe Rabbeinu taking all honor from Sheivet Levi for his family, maybe it should go to us. So it was a complaint. But Dasan and Avirom were not from Sheivet Levi.

Says the Chiddushai Harim that that is the point. A person has a Yeitzer Hora for his own Kavod. It is a certain level of Rishus that you want honor, you want your own Kavod, you have Gaiva and you want to do things to benefit yourself. There is another level and that is the level of Dasan and Avirom. They connected themselves just L'shaim Machlokes. Dasan and Avirom are singled out, they are (בְּנֵי אֶלְיָאֵב). They are not even Leviim. Look how they connected themselves to the Machlokes of Korach, for what reason, for what purpose? They gained nothing for this tumult. It was only because of the Sin'a that they had for Moshe Rabbeinu. This is what the Chiddushai Harim says.

The deeper message of the Chiddushai Harim is this. How do you know, when you are involved in Machlokes Chalila, how do you know that you are doing things properly, you think that you are doing things L'sheim Shamayim. Korach thought that he was right. How do you know if you are doing things L'sheim Shamayim or not L'sheim Shamayim?

The answer typically is that if you have something personal to gain from it then you are probably not doing it L'sheim Shamayim. If you have nothing to gain from it then you

are. If you find yourself in a dispute, if you have any benefit from the dispute, step aside because you are blinded by the Shochad of your own benefit.

What about Dasan and Avirom? They could have said to themselves we have no benefit and we are involved in this so we must be right. Says the Chiddushai Harim that when a person gets involved in a Machlokes because of his Sin'a, Dasan and Avirom had a hatred for Moshe Rabbeinu that dated back still to Mitzrayim. When you don't like someone, that itself is a form of Shochad, it makes you see things improperly. If you ever see a Machlokes, either you have a benefit like the 250 men or you have Tainos of Sin'a for the person involved, in either of these cases know that you are not seeing things clearly.

There is a Halacha in this. The Chofetz Chaim in his rule of saying Lashon Hora L'toeles, gives a list of conditions. The hardest of these conditions is that if you have Sin'a for the person that you want to say Lashon Hora L'toeles about, you have no right to say it. If you have your own hatred for the person you have no right to speak up even though it is clear that you should speak up. You should speak up L'toeles but not if you have Sin'a. According to the Chiddushai Harim the message is this, when you dislike someone you don't see things right. You are like someone who takes a bribe. You see things in a crooked way. Parshas Korach is the lesson of staying away from Machlokes. It is rare that someone gets involved in a Machlokes unless he has something to benefit or he has a chip on his shoulder, he has complaints against the person or the people that the Machlokes is about. Be careful.

These shiurim have been transcribed from an actual drasha. As speed is of the essence, spelling and grammar may be compromised

The Special Shoes

RABBI PAYSACH KROHN

My Aunt Faige who over ninety years old when she passed away. When I was a little kid in Williamsburg, she was my favorite babysitter. I loved her. We were very, very close. And eventually when she moved to Detroit, I always stayed there whenever I spoke there.

One day, she shared with me a story that I had only known partly, but never fully. It touched me to the core.

Most of you remember that terrible, terrible bombing in Israel in the Sbarro pizzeria on August 9, 2001. My Aunt Faige was there with her daughter that day. Now, all I remembered from the story until she told me the second part was that she lost part of her hearing from the explosion.

My aunt had just bought the pizza and she was going up the stairs to set the pizza on the table. And suddenly, there was this deafening explosion. My cousin Gitty ran upstairs and said, "Mom, we got to get out of here!" But my Aunt Faige had just fallen and she couldn't find her shoes. Faige had been knocked against a wall, her shoes had flown off and she was hesitant to walk around, as glass was spread all over. So Gitty carried her out.

Hauling her mother across the street, Gitty walked into a huge bookshop across the street, where she was welcomed in. "You can stay here for a little while, but the police are going to come," said the storeowner. "They're going to evacuate everybody, so we got to get out." But my Aunt Faige still had no shoes. "I can't get any place," she said.

But then, out of nowhere, a short, little man came with a kippah and brought her a pair of shoes. "Where did you get these shoes?" she said. "I have a shoe store down the block," he said. The bookstore owner just called me and said that there is a lady here who needs shoes. So take these shoes, and remember, never, ever think you have to give them back. Go wherever you're going to be safe. Keep these shoes; they're yours as a gift." "Aunt Faige," I asked, "do you still have those shoes?" She did.

Sure enough, she brought them out, and you could see the Hebrew letters of the shoe store. And listen to what she told me. "Ever since I came back to Detroit with those shoes, anytime I feel that Hashem has done something to me that I want to complain, I take off my shoes, go to my bedroom, and put on the shoes that I received from that shoe owner. I look down and say, "Thank you, Hashem. Thank you."

Imagine a woman putting on those shoes from that day looking down, and saying, "Thank you I'm alive."

Tears at the Chuppah

RABBI PINCHAS LANDIS

At one Jerusalem Fellowship's program, I met a girl who was very outspoken about living with her non-Jewish boyfriend and how she was going to marry him. To her, there was no problem whatsoever with that. She would mention this and speak out about this at every opportunity she had.

A few years went by, and Dr. David Lukens and Eric Coopersmith, who were two of the educators and staff of the program, get a wedding invitation in the mail. It was from this girl who was so adamant that she was going to marry a non-Jew. But when they looked at it, it was clear from the invitation this it was not an intermarriage, but that she had decided to marry a Jew. The invitation was a very traditional-looking invitation to a wedding. So sure enough, Dr. Lukens and Rabbi Coopersmith go to the wedding. The wedding was a traditional Orthodox wedding with the chuppa and the two witnesses and the reading of the Ketuba. The crowd was very mixed because there was people from all over this girl's life, spanning the different time periods that she had been through and her evolution. But both Dr. Lukens and Rabbi Coopersmith noticed an older couple who were bawling throughout the whole ceremony, crying their eyes out.

After the chuppa, Dr. Lukens went up to the man and said, "Excuse me, sir. why are you crying so much? Are you related to the you related to the bride, to the groom?" The man took a seat and began.

"I'm a survivor of Auschwitz, and I was the only one of my family who survived. When I came over to this country, I only had one relative. Now, this relative had been on the soils of America for a long time, but had assimilated into the culture of America and had given up a lot of the connection that the family once had to Judaism. Yet, she was always as nice as could be to me, and she took care of me. Even though as a young man, I told her that I wanted to get a Jewish education and go to Yeshiva, and that wasn't her value system, she supported me in my yeshiva education. But, unfortunately, today that lady has 14 grandchildren. 13 have all married out of the faith and have completely abandoned Judaism. But the girl standing under the chuppa today, she's number 14.

When Rav Noach Weinberg heard this story, he said, "Because of that alone, the whole Jerusalem Fellowship's program was worth it." Even though the other 13 members of her generation had not seen any value in Judaism and had broken their connection, their link in the chain, she said, "This is important." She had left the man she thought she loved, and went on to find a Jewish man and raise a Jewish family. And now, they have all gone on to Jewish schools and are living meaningful Jewish lives, understanding that the purpose and the point of being a Jew is all about enjoying this world and enjoying the connection that G-d shares with us.



SELF DEFENSE

PARSHAS KORACH

DID KORACH HAVE GOOD QUESTIONS?

16:3 "ויקהלו על משה ועל אהרן ויאמרו אלהם רב לכם כי כל העדה כלם קדשים ובתוכם ד', ומדוע תנשאו על קהל ד"

"They gathered against Moshe and against Aharon and said to them, 'It is too much for you! For the entire assembly, all of them, are holy and Hashem is among them; why do you exalt yourselves over the congregation of Hashem.'" Korach and his men came to complain that Moshe and Aharon took all of the coveted positions of honor for themselves. Additionally, Rashi says that Korach and his men came before Moshe in Talisos that were completely made of Techeiles, and they asked Moshe if it requires Tzitzis. Moshe responded yes, and they laughed at his response. If Tzitzis with one string of Techeiles is good enough to allow an article of clothing to be worn, then certainly clothing that is made completely of Techeiles is exempt from having Tzitzis. We don't see that Moshe responded to the question, rather the Torah tells us that he fell on his face, and then told them that in the morning Hakodosh Boruch Hu would make it known to all who was correct. The Torah then goes on to tell us that all who were associated with Korach, and their entire households, were swallowed alive by the ground beneath them. It was a fantastic miracle that occurred, and Moshe was proven to be correct in the Machlokes. While Moshe was in fact proven to be correct, why didn't he answer Korach regarding the Begeid of Techeiles when Korach was mocking him? The following Divrei Torah will expound on this topic, and perhaps support the P'shat offered in the closing paragraph.

Avos 2:14 "ודע" הוי שקוד ללמוד תורה, ודע" – "מה שתשיב לאפיקורוס know how to debate with the wicked, and to refute their words of heresy. One must be proficient in the Torah, and the ways of the Apikores, to accurately refute him, and in a convincing manner. It is better for one not to approach the Apikores, though one must always be prepared if the situation presents itself where he must debate an Apikores. The B'nei Yissoschor discusses the topic of debating an Apikores and speaks in very sharp terms regarding arguing with a Jewish Apikores. One who knows the truth yet seeks to

turn away from it, he comes with questions just so that he could justify his actions and his new way of life. Even if one will answer him with conclusive arguments that cannot be refuted, he will still not listen nor change. He will strengthen himself in his heresy, and will continue to think that he is right. Chas V'sholom one should respond and debate such a person. (דברי יואל)

It is a Mitzvah to respond to the words of the Apikores if there is hope that by doing so, it will return the Apikores to good. However, if the Apikores will not listen at all, and there is no hope of him returning to good, then it is not proper for one to argue and refute the words of the Apikores. This will cause much Bitul Torah, and will not accomplish anything. Just as one receives reward for refuting the words of the Apikores, so too one will receive reward for "not responding" to the Apikores, when nothing will be gained by arguing. Perhaps by being quiet and not responding at all to the Apikores, people will think that he is not arguing for he agrees with the Apikores. Therefore, it is appropriate to make it be known that you disagree with the Apikores, and then be quiet, and return to learn Torah. The Torah says that Yaakov came from Eisav and Lavan, Shaleim, complete. Lavan and Eisav were certainly heretics and would have liked to embroil Yaakov in a dispute. Yaakov knew that they would never return to good, and, therefore, there was no point in arguing with them. He let it be known that he did not agree, and went to toil in the study of Torah. (מהר"ם שיק)

Now we can understand why Moshe Rabbeinu did not respond to Korach, but told him that all would know in the morning who was right. Korach was a Jewish Apikores. He was not seeking answers, rather he was using his questions as ways to justify his evil actions. He was outside the doors of Gehinom, yet would not repent. Moshe knew that to attempt to refute his words would be futile, and therefore improper. Moshe Rabbeinu did what was necessary. He told Korach in no uncertain terms that he did not agree with him, and that he would be proven correct beyond a doubt. Moshe did not want anyone to Chas V'sholom think that he agreed with Korach even though he was not going to debate him. One must toil in Torah, and be prepared to respond and rebut the words of the Apikores. The main reason is to instill within the person an unwavering Emunah in Hakodosh Boruch Hu, one that can never be changed. May we be Zoche to have a true Emunas Hashem, one that is rock solid, and remains with us at all times.

The Supreme Court came out with a few rulings regarding guns and Roe V. Wade. We will discuss items similar to these rulings. In Shmos 22:1 it says that if a robber is caught burrowing in to your house and you kill the robber you are exempt. It teaches us that self defense is allowed as we have the concept that if one comes to kill you, one should kill the killer first to defend oneself. There was a person who used to get drunk all the time and while he was drunk, he would hit other people to the brink of death. People would run away from him in fear. The question was asked if at the time he starts to drink is he considered a "Rodef" that would allow people to protect themselves even at the extent of breaking the Rodef's limb? If one can't save himself with a limb, would he be allowed to kill the person to save himself? Or since at this time he is not yet a Rodef one would not be allowed to treat him as a Rodef? If one is a safek Rodef, Reb Chaim Ozer in Shailos Utshuvos Achiezer vol 3, 72:3 says one would not be allowed to kill a safek Rodef. The Igros Moshe Choshen Mishpat vol 2,69:2 says that only a safek that is close to a vadai one would be allowed to kill. Reb Shlomo Zalman Auerbach in Nishmas Avraham Choshen Mishpat 225 says that even a safek Rodef one could kill as the passuk is referring to a safek Rodef.

Reb Chaim Ozer in Shailos utshuvos Achiezer vol 3, 72:3 was asked about a lady who was sick and pregnant and was told if she goes full term she would die. Could they end the pregnancy to save her life? The fetus is not considered a Rodef at this time only at a later time. If the mother's life is in danger at this time there is no question that she would be allowed to end the pregnancy as the fetus is considered a Rodef. Reb Chaim Ozer responded that since the fetus will be a Rodef therefore one would be allowed to end the pregnancy. Reb Chaim Ozer says that killing a fetus is still more lenient than killing a human as a fetus does not have a Nefesh. From this Reb Chaim Ozer it would seem that a future Rodef is considered a Rodef and one would be allowed to take action in self-defense. One could argue that the fetus is becoming a Rodef from day one and it would be comparable to a man with a knife who is a few blocks away and on his way to you one would of course be allowed to shoot the guy even though he is far away. But in the case of the drunk where until he is not fully drunk, he is not a Rodef.

The Gemara in Avoda Zora 10b describes how Antuninus the king of Rome would come to Rabbeinu Yehuda Hanasi in an underground tunnel to learn Torah. One entrance to the tunnel was in the king's palace and the other entrance was to Rabbeinu Hakadosh's house. Every day the king would take two guards and post them at both entrances. The king was worried that the ministers in his palace should not find out of this secret tunnel he would kill these two guards. Everyday he would get two new guards and kill them at the end of the day. Tosfos asks how could Antuninus do that even a Ben Noach is not allowed to murder? Tosfos answers that he was worried that the ministers will find out and the ministers will kill him so therefore he said this is self-defense. The question is that at the time these guards were at the entrance they are not considered a Rodef, how was he able to kill them. We see from this Gemara that one could consider a future Rodef a Rodef now. The zSefer Chassidim 1017 says that if Jews were traveling and they encountered robbers and killed them in self-defense and there are goyim there who promise they will not tell anybody. We do not trust them and we are allowed to kill them as we know the passuk in Tehillim 144:8 that their mouths speak lies etc. This is all despite the fact that these goyim are not Rodfim at the moment. We will continue with this article next week. May we all be zocheh to live and let live!

PARSHAS KORACH

Can you figure out what each picture has to do with the parsha?



Rabbi Dani Staum

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Parshas Korach Parshas Pix Key

Tzitzis with techeiles – To bolster support for his challenge against Moshe, Korach used *leitzanus* (mockery) to undermine Moshe’s authority. He did so by mocking Moshe’s response to certain halachic questions. One of the questions was whether an article of clothing made completely out of techeiles still needs a string of techeiles – Rashi, 15:1

Room full of seforim – Korach’s second question was whether a house full of seforim needs a mezuzah - (Bamidbar Rabbah 18:3)

Bad Neighbor – Rashi quotes Chazal: “Woe to the wicked and woe to his neighbor”. Dasan and Aviram (of Shevet Reuven) camped near Korach (of Kehas) and they were negative influences on each other – Rashi 15:1

Massive hole in earth – Korach, Dasan and Aviram and their families were swallowed up. (*Malbim says it wasn't one big hole, but it was as if the hole had a mind of its own. It would travel through the camp and open beneath Korach and his followers and their belongings wherever they were. It was as if it had a list and knew exactly where to go and who/what to swallow.*)

Copper cover – There were 250 elders who were instructed to offer ketores as part of the test to see whose Hashem would accept – theirs or Aharon's. They offered their ketores on copper firepans and they immediately died as punishment for challenging Aharon. Their firepans were then combined to create a copper cover for the Mizbeich.

Almonds growing on tree –The nesi'im submitted their staffs to the Mishkan overnight. In the morning only Aharon's had almonds budding and growing on it, a symbol that he was the one chosen by Hashem – 17:23

One tenth – The Torah commands that every farmer must give ma'aser, one tenth of his produce, to a Levi – 18:24

Baby on platter – The mitzvah of *pidyon haben* is to redeem a firstborn son – 18:15

Stopping the plague – After Korach and his family were swallowed up, and the 250 elders died when offering ketores, the nation complained, and Hashem caused a plague to sweep through the camp. Moshe instructed Aharon to grab a firepan of ketores and run through the camp as atonement. Aharon did so and the plague abated – 17:11

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“THE WISDOM OF A WIFE CAN SAVE A HOUSEHOLD”

The Brilliance of Common Sense

Rabbi Yissocher Frand

“Korach, son of Yitzhar, son of Kahas, son of Levi, separated himself with Dasan and Aviram, sons of Eliav, and O’ne son of Peles, the offspring of Reuvain” [Bamidbar 16:1]. On many occasions, we have quoted the Me-drashic elaboration on Parshas Korach that contrasts two types of wives – the wife of Korach and the wife of O’ne ben Peles [Sanhedrin 109b]. Although O’ne ben Peles is listed prominently in the opening pasuk of the Parsha among the co- conspirators of Korach’s rebellion, he did not die. Korach died. Dasan and Aviram died. But our Sages teach us that O’ne ben Peles’s wife saved him.

According to the Talmud, Korach’s wife goaded him on and encouraged him to stand up against Moshe and his family’s nepotism. O’ne ben Peles’ wife, on the other hand, counseled her husband to avoid the dispute. “Listen, O’ne, what are you going to get out of this? Whichever way things play out, you will still emerge as just a ‘bit player’. Either Moshe will emerge as the unchallenged leader or Korach will emerge as the leader. In either case you will be nothing more than a ‘second fiddle’! You stand to gain nothing by getting involved in this fight!”

The Talmud quotes the pasuk “Chochmas Nashim bansa baysah” [The wisdom of a wife can save a household] [Mishlei 14:1]. The Gemara explains that this refers to the wife of O’ne ben Peles. She exhibited tremendous wisdom by convincing her husband that there was nothing to be gained by getting involved in Korach’s rebellion. Shlomo was alluding to this wisdom in the above quoted pasuk.

The question can be asked, however, where was the great wisdom here? It was a rather elementary conclusion that her husband would not be the leader either way. Where was the great brilliance? She did nothing more than point out an obvious fact to her husband.

Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz raises this question and explains that when most people are involved in disputes (machlokes), they ‘lose their cool’ and lose their common sense. The fire of machlokes – picking sides, getting involved, becoming part of it – is all-powerful. There is an over-riding tendency and evil inclination to throw away one’s common sense and jump into the blinding dynamics of machlokes. It requires brilliance to overcome that tendency and instead use such a simple and down to earth approach. Maintaining common sense in moments of tension requires great wisdom.

This is the lesson of the Gemara. “The wisdom of a wife can save a household.” Merely telling her husband a simple truth demonstrated great sagacity because most people would have ‘gotten involved’ and ‘lost their cool’.

People argue constantly. They become involved in machlokes regarding institutions. They become involved in arguments regarding questions of politics. Most of the time, the people involved in the argument are not the principals. Nevertheless the tendency is to ‘become involved’. One of the confessions we recite on Yom Kippur is for having “gotten involved in disputes that did not involve us. Such is the nature of people.

Maintaining common sense in the fire of machlokes is a great gift which the wife of O’ne ben Peles possessed and which was praised by Shlomo using the words “Chochmas Nashim bansa baysah”.



Rabbi Efrem Goldberg

LIVING LIFE ONE STEP AT A TIME

K2, at 8,611 meters above sea level (28,251 feet), is the second-highest mountain on Earth, after Mount Everest. The mountain has a fatality rate of 29 percent. K2 had never been summited in the winter, and for good reason. Its dangers include pillars of ice that can turn into avalanches, and a notoriously deadly bottleneck just hundreds of feet below the summit. Considering the hurricane-speed winds the mountain is far more dangerous than Mount Everest. Summiting K2 in winter was considered the last great unattained achievement in mountaineering. That was before January 2021.

Among the greatest vilians in our Torah tradition are the Meraglim, the spies that investigated the Land and gave a negative report. But if we look closer at their exact words, we may wonder where exactly they went wrong. The Alexander Rebbe, the Yismach Yisroel, notes that the Meraglim first conceded that if Bnei Yisroel were worthy, it will be tovah ha’aretz m’od, a land of kedusha and tahara. However, if they were not, then Efes, ki az ha’am, there is also tumah, there are temptations, challenges. The Meraglim’s presentation essentially went like this: What if we are unworthy, what if we come up short, what if we aren’t up to the test and don’t have what it takes? There is possible reward if we go to the land, but there is also great risk. Maybe we should just stay here.

Wonders the Yismach Yisroel, why was that a miscalculation? What was wrong in that thinking? Didn’t Yaakov, the one whom Hakadosh Baruch Hu promised He would protect, also grow concerned and say he was afraid he wasn’t up to the challenge despite the promise? Did Yaakov then live in infamy for doubting Hashem? On the contrary, we consider him the bechir ha’avos, the choicest of our Patriarchs. So why do we vilify the Meraglim? When the Jewish people left Egypt, did they not express concern, resistance and doubt as they faced the sea despite Hashem’s promises? Why are they the dor dei’ah and the Meraglim’s report is considered scandalous?

Says the Alexander Rebbe, there is a fundamental difference. Yaakov was scared, he was nervous, he had doubts and despite that he plowed forward, he planned for his reunion with Esav, and he followed through, as much as he had fears. Part of him said I can’t, but he then became determined, and said to himself nevertheless, I will. When we stood at the Yam Suf, we panicked, we considered turning around, we doubted why we were ever taken out, but then we pushed ourselves and we jumped in the water anyway. Every year, on our Holiest days we invoke how Hashem remembers that reaction. We were nervous, insecure, had doubts and nevertheless Lechteich acharai, we followed Hashem anyway.

The problem with the Meraglim was not having doubts, being concerned, or having insecurities. Those are natural and normal. We all experience them; no matter how tough an exterior we portray, we all panic or feel filled with self-doubt. That was not only forgivable, it was completely understandable. What wasn’t forgivable and what we continue to suffer from until today, was that they leaned into their doubts, their voice of self-defeat of self-sabotage and instead of pushing through nonetheless, they said, that’s why we should stop here and not go forward. They gave up, they gave in, and they quit.

Calev jumps in, he hears them and interrupts as if he can’t take it anymore. Calev blurts out, let’s go up, who is in! Calev wasn’t fundamentally disagreeing with anything they said, he simply had a different conclusion. He heard them out and couldn’t contain himself, he burst out and said, “You think I am not scared, you think I have such confidence, you think I am not afraid of failure. Of course I am, but aloh na’aleh, let’s go up anyway, let’s put one foot in front of the other and push forward nonetheless.”



Last January, six climbers led by Purja, a former Nepalese soldier and British special forces operator achieved the unthinkable. They fought the winds, the conditions, the bottleneck, and countless other adversities and they reached the Summit of K2. When asked how they did it, Purja, while warming his frostbitten fingertips simply answered, by taking one step at a time.

We all have dreams and aspirations, we have a picture of who we could be, what we could accomplish, differences we could make. We envision the life we could be living and a better version of ourselves. But then the voice of Yaakov, those who stood at Yam Suf and the Meraglim kicks in and says, don't bother starting to exercise or diet, you will never keep it up. Don't take on the Daf, you will never finish. Who do you think you are going for the job or setting that goal, it isn't going to happen or can't be sustained.

The Meraglim said Lo nuchal, they looked up at that mountain, at the mission and they said, we can't. Calev looked at the same picture, he felt the same apprehension, but he said Aloh na'aleh, we've got this, let's climb, we don't need to look any further than taking one step at a time.

UFARATZTA

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.... A Tzadik that passes on, is present and is active in our world even more than in his lifetime. Especially a Rebbe to his Chassidim and Mekusharim and their family members. He stays connected with them and continues to endow them with Brochos for all their needs, to each and everyone.

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JOKES

TWIN SISTERS

The twin girls walk into a store. After selecting a few items they go to the cashier.

The cashier looks at them and says, "Are you two girls sisters?"

The twins both laugh and then one says, "Sisters? We aren't even religious."

WHAT IS JUNK?

What exactly is junk?

Junk is something you throw away three weeks before you need it.

ISIS WINE CRITICS

ISIS wine critics are always shouting "Curse the Zinfandels!"

THE STRONG MAN

The strong young man at the construction site was bragging that he could outdo anyone in a feat of strength. He made a special case of making fun of one of the older workmen. After several minutes, the older worker had had enough. "Why don't you put your money where your mouth is," he said. "I will bet a week's wages that I can haul something in a wheelbarrow over to that building that you won't be able to wheel back." "You're on, old man," the braggart replied. "Let's see what you got." The old man reached out and grabbed the wheelbarrow by the handles. Then, nodding to the young man, he said, "All right. Get in."

TOOTHBRUSH

Where was the toothbrush invented?

Mississippi.

If it would've been invented anywhere else, it would have been called a teeth brush.

TRUSTING A LAWYER

An American lawyer invited a Czech friend to stay with him in his mountain cabin. Early in the morning, the lawyer and his Czech friend went out to pick berries for their morning breakfast. As they were picking blueberries, along came two big Bears - a male and a female. The lawyer, seeing the two bears, climbed a tree.

His friend wasn't so lucky and the male bear caught him and swallowed him whole.

The lawyer drove his car to town as fast as he could to get a policeman. The policeman took his gun and ran to the berry patch with the lawyer.

Sure enough, the two bears were still there. "He's in that one!" said the lawyer, pointing to the male.

The policeman looked at the bears, took careful aim with his gun, and shot the FEMALE.

"What did you do that for!" shouted the lawyer, "I said he was in the other bear!"

"Exactly," answered the policeman. "Would you believe a lawyer who told you that the Czech was in the Male?"

GRANDMOTHER....IS THAT YOU?

A woman goes to the local psychic in hopes of contacting her dearly departed grandmother. The psychic's eyelids begin fluttering, her voice begins warbling, her hands float up above the table, and she begins moaning. Eventually, a coherent voice emanates, saying, "Granddaughter? Are you there?"

The customer, wide-eyed and on the edge of her seat, responds, "Grandmother? Is that you?"

"Yes granddaughter, it's me."

"It's really, really you, grandmother?", the woman repeats.

"Yes, it's really me, granddaughter."

The woman looks puzzled, "You're sure it's you, grandmother?"

"Yes, granddaughter, I'm sure it's me."

The woman pauses a moment, "Grandmother, I have just one question for you."

"Anything, my child."

"Grandmother, when did you learn to speak English?"

DOCTOR'S HANDWRITING

I went to see my doctor this morning. "Someone decided to graffiti my house last night!" I raged.

"So why are you telling me?" the doctor asked.

"I can't understand the writing," I replied. "Was it you?"

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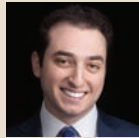
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RABBI NACHUM SCHEINER

ROSH KOLLEL

Accepting Shabbos Verbally, Mentally, or Automatically

We previously discussed the mitzvah of Tosfos Shabbos. According to most Rishonim the mitzvah of Tosfos Shabbos is a bona fide requirement and many hold it is even a Scriptural Commandment and one must add a few minutes both before and after Shabbos.

What exactly does a person need to do to add on to Shabbos, does he need to be “mekabeil Shabbos,” accept the Shabbos, or is something that goes automatically and the person’s input is unnecessary, just as Shabbos itself comes automatically?

The sefer Chelkas Yoav (O”C 30) writes that, in order to perform the mitzvah, one must accept upon himself the Shabbos verbally. He proves this from the text of the Ritva, who writes that the mitzvah must be done via an active kabbala. The Ritva also adds that one must actually recite the Shabbos davening or the text of Kiddush in order to add on to Shabbos. At first glance, this would seem to be the opinion of the Mishna Berura (261:21), that one has to be mekabel.

There is another possibility that one must be “mekabeil Shabbos,” but it will suffice to do so mentally. This is the opinion of the Panim Yafos, among others, who allow the kabala to be in one’s mind.

However, many poskim, including the Derech Hachaim, the Shulchan Aruch Harav, and the Chayei Adam, write clearly that no kabala is necessary and it is something automatic; as soon as it is a few minutes before Shabbos, the mitzvah of tosfos Shabbos begins. The Chofetz Chaim also writes this in his sefer Machnei Yisroel, written for the soldiers.

That seems to contradict the aforementioned ruling of the Mishna Berura that one has to be mekabel. However, the poskim explain that what he writes in the Mishna Berura is only in the scenario he is discussing there, when one wishes to add on more than the minimum; in that case, the Mishna Berura rules that a clear kabala is necessary.

However, even according to the poskim that do not require an explicit acceptance of Shabbos, there is an advantage in doing so. This is because, even if one is not required to be mekabel, it is worthwhile to do so, because

if one stops doing melacha before shkia, according to Rabeinu Tam, his automatic starting of Shabbos will not begin until much later. However, if one explicitly accepts upon himself Shabbos earlier, his mitzvah will begin earlier and his mitzvah will be so much greater.

In Conclusion

One must add a few minutes both before and after Shabbos. Simply speaking, one is not required to make explicitly accept the Shabbos, rather it comes automatically. However, if one explicitly accepts upon himself Shabbos earlier, his mitzvah will begin earlier and his mitzvah will be so much greater.

It is therefore important to realize that it is not sufficient for one to ask: “what time is shkia?” since one must stop doing melacha at least a few minutes before Shabbos.

The same is true for the end of Shabbos. Although it can be considered night for all other halachos, such as reciting the shma and reading the megillah, the end of Shabbos is different and one must refrain from melacha after nightfall, for at least a few minutes. Therefore, it is not sufficient for one to ask: “when is Shabbos over?” because one is still not allowed to start doing melacha, for at least a few minutes. For example, if one holds the 50 minute zman or the 72 minute zman for when the halachic night begins – one must add a few minutes to that time, before doing melacha.

Some more questions to ponder: Can a person daven mincha on Friday evening right before Shkiah, or even after sunset? Is that a contradiction to turning Friday afternoon into Shabbos?

To be continued...

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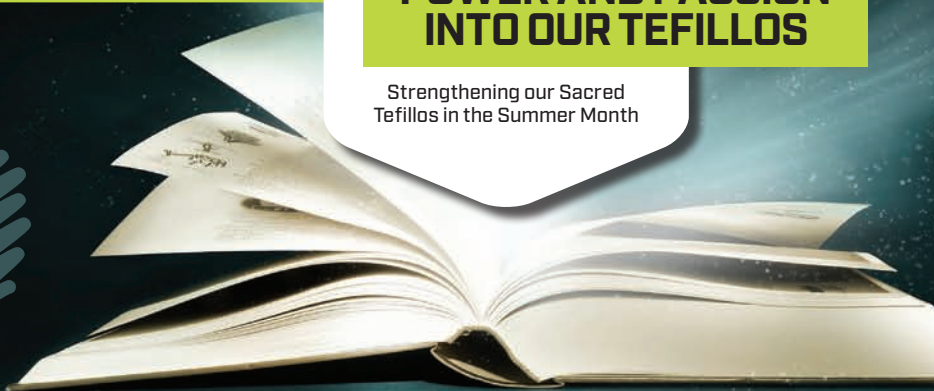
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