

THE SAITSKIY FAMILY EDITION



PARSHAS KORACH – VOLUME 15, ISSUE 20 – 2nd OF TAMMUZ, 5785/JUNE 28th, 2025

TORAH QUESTION OF THE WEEK BY RAV MOSHE KLEIN: KORACH – NEVER QUESTION TORAH AUTHORITY FIGURES

Last week's question: *After Hashem put down the entire rebellion of Korach and his people the next day the whole nation complained to Moshe and accused him of killing the nation of Hashem. Wait, they just witnessed the ground open up and swallow the rebels. How could they blame Moshe for this?*

Answer: The Torah indeed records (Bamidbar 17:6) that after Korach and his cronies were swallowed by the earth, *"The next day the whole Jewish community railed against Moshe and Aharon, saying, 'You two have brought death upon Hashem's people.'"* Let's begin to understand by citing the **Ramban** who writes, citing **Targum Onkeles**, that Moshe Rabbeinu came up with the idea of the Ketores, burning the incense as a sign of who is right in the dispute.

Why couldn't Moshe give a different sign? The **Seforno** similarly explains: "Why was the test done with the ketores? Only one person could bring it. Why not do the test of who is right with other *karbonos* (offerings) that many people are allowed to bring together?" They weren't upset about the fact that Korach and the people were swallowed up, since Hashem warned people to evacuate the area around Korach's tent (ibid. 16:24).

The **Sefer Bechor Shor** adds that the people told Moshe, *"You know how dangerous Ketores is because Nadav and Avihu (Aharon's two sons) perished because they brought it without any authorization from Hashem. So, why did you choose Ketores as the verification method?"* The **Ibn Ezra** writes that they were blamed because Moshe Rabbeinu davened that the rebels should die. He adds that they suspected that Moshe used a type of wisdom to get the rebels killed but doesn't go into specifics. According to these peshatim, the people accused Moshe of causing the death of the rebels.

The **Chida** explains that the people told Moshe and Aharon, *"The reason why the rebels died was because Hashem stood up for your Kavod (honor); if you didn't have such an ego, Hashem wouldn't have to defend you, and the people would have survived. It could also be that they were upset that the Karbonos were not brought by the firstborn (instead of the system wherein the Levi'im would bring it). Sure, Aharon was chosen but why were all the opportunities going to one tribe – they also wanted a chance to serve Hashem."*

THIS WEEK'S EDITION IS DEDICATED BY THE **LIPKIN FAMILY** AS A ZECHUS FOR A FULL VICTORY OF AM YISRAEL OVER ALL OUR ENEMIES

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What's clear is that this was a very sore subject that caused a plague, as the Torah records (ibid. 17:14), *"the number of dead in the plague was 14,700 besides those who died because of the matter of Korach."* As we can see, this all happened so fast. It must have been that there was nothing right about what they said, and Moshe needed to bring Ketores to neutralize the tremendous *Midas Hadin* (attribute of strict justice).

The amount of *Mesiras Nefesh* (self-sacrifice) Aharon had to exhibit to stop the plague is evident from **Rashi** who states (ibid. 17:13) that *"Aharon took hold of the angel and held him against his will. The angel said to him, 'Allow me to accomplish my mission.' Aharon said to him, 'Moshe commanded me to stop you.' He said to him, 'I am the messenger of Hashem, and you are the messenger of Moshe.' He said to him, 'Moshe does not say anything on his own volition, but only at the bidding of the Almighty. If you do not believe [me], the Holy One, blessed is He, and Moshe are at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting; come with me and ask.' This is the meaning of the statement, 'Aharon returned to Moshe'."*

This Pasuk contains hints to our answer. The **Aderes Eliyahu** writes that everything from beginning to end was from Hashem. Every word coming out of Moshe's mouth was Hashem's Will. Moshe didn't have an ego issue that led him to get the rebels killed to avenge his own honor. Moshe nullified himself to the point that he was simply a vessel through which Hashem was speaking. The only way to halt the plague was for Moshe and Aharon to make the statement that all this was Hashem's Will. →

To emphasize this, Hashem tells everyone to take a stick and write the names of the tribes. The next day, after putting these sticks Moshe entered the Tent of the Testimony and saw that Aharon's staff, representing the house of Levi, had sprouted, put forth buds, blossomed, and produced almonds. (ibid. 17:23). **Rashi** explains that this is *"a fruit that blossoms more quickly than other fruits. Likewise, he who opposes the kehunah (priesthood); his punishment comes quickly."*

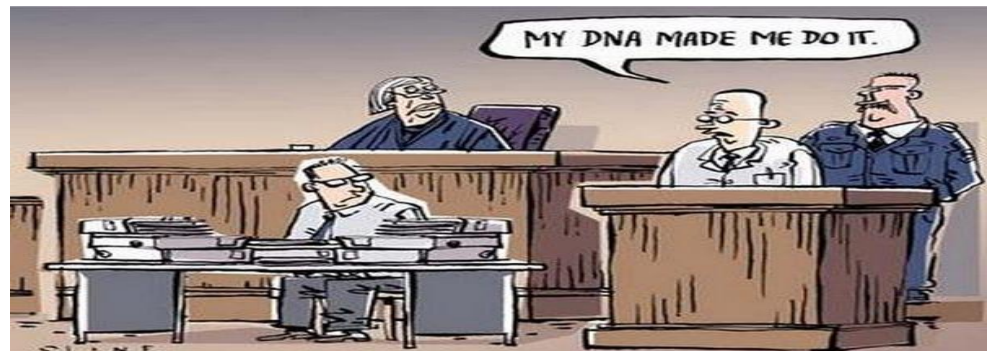
The lesson is screaming at us. Moshe's words are *emes* (true) and we can never doubt what he said. We see how much death and destruction came about from people who doubted Moshe and spoke against him. Even after the death of 250 rebels, they still managed to find fault with Moshe and his leadership!

We understand that in every generation Hashem gives us *tzaddikim* (righteous people). It's not wise to start up with these leaders. They may have disputes amongst themselves, but it's not our job or place to get involved or judge them as we are not on their level. We must learn how to be *machshiv gedolim* - to honor and respect our Sages.

Today, with social media serving as the platform for mass communication, people feel they can write whatever they want against whomever they think. People don't realize that they are playing with fire, as they are attempting to dismantle the hierarchy that Hashem created in the world. Hashem appoints Torah leaders and if you're not one, that's because you didn't merit. If we don't follow a Rebbe and espouse our own ideas against Gedolim, we are traversing a very dangerous road, the consequences of which we clearly see in this week's Parsha.

This week's question: What made Miriam worthy of the Zechus (merit) to have a well of water in the desert, which hydrated the entire nation on their travels, and why did it cease upon Miriam's passing? There must be a measure-for-measure consideration here.

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THIS ARTICLE IS DEDICATED BY THE HAMADA FAMILY IN MEMORY OF MIRIAM BAS R'SHOLOM AND HARAV SHOLOM CHAIM BEN R'MOSHE

There is an astounding **Rashi** in this week's Parsha that illustrates how powerful human beings are. After Korach and his followers were swallowed by the earth, Klal Yisroel came to Moshe and Aharon to complain about the deathly Ketores. Because they were complaining, Hashem sent a plague against the complainers. Moshe realized the gravity of the situation and he quickly sent Aharon to use the Ketores to stop the deaths.

The Pasuk (Bamidbar 16:47) tells us that Aharon took Ketores, just as Moshe had told him, and ran into the midst of the congregation. Behold, the plague had started among the nation, and he placed the incense and provided atonement for the people. The next Pasuk tells us he stood between the dead and the living, and the plague stopped. Rashi astonishingly explains what *"he stood between the dead and the living"*, means. Rashi says Aharon seized the Angel of Death and made him stand still against his will.

The Angel of Death said to him "Let me go!" Aharon replied, "Moshe commanded me to stop you." The angel of death insisted that Hashem sent him, and only Moshe sent Aharon! Aharon replied that Moshe does not say anything from his own heart; rather, only by the word of Hashem. Aharon then told the Malach Hamaves that if he doesn't believe him, they can go right to the Ohel Moed where Moshe was with Hashem's Shechinah and ask!

The **Mabit** (in *Beis Elokim, Shaar Hayesodos*, Chapter 22) tells us that the power of a Tzaddik surpasses that of angels. He explains that because angels lack freedom of choice, they can never reach the level of a person who has used his power of free choice to serve Hashem. From this Rashi and the Mabit, we see the power of every person. This idea can empower us and boost our self-confidence, which can help us be *mevater* (give in) when things don't go our way. We can take to heart the idea that we can become more powerful than angels when we use our *bechira* (free will) to serve Hashem. This can motivate us to create an atmosphere of Shalom in our homes by connecting to our spouses no matter what. We can become determined to succeed at the main Avodah of marriage which, according to **Rabbi Chaim Friedlander**, ZT"L, is working on our *Middos* – character traits.

If we call our spouse and they don't pick up, if we ask our spouse to be on time and they come late, if we have been left with a mess or an unpaid bill we can focus on ourselves and working on our own Middos. Instead of getting into *machlokes* we can strive to let things go and bring all the blessings from under our chuppah into our marriages. This takes focus and effort, but the dividends are worth the effort. May our homes shine with the light of Shalom Bayis.

Rabbi Greenfield, MS MFT, is the author of the Torah marriage toolbox course. Create more Shalom Bayis in your home by visiting torahmarriage.com or email rabbigreenfield@gmail.com

KORACH – WE NEED YOU



Korach's is a very sad story. Korach was one of the greats of the Jewish people as it takes someone truly big to get the people to turn on Moshe Rabbeinu, the person who had light shining out of his face. As Kalev pointed out to the people, Moshe *"took us out of Egypt, split the Sea, and fed us the Mann."* Now, Korach didn't do any of that, and yet, he managed to get Jews to choose him in an uprising against Moshe. What drove Korach to do what he did?

To explain, the **Midrash Tanchuma** (Parshas Behalos'cha) relates that as part of their inauguration ceremony into the Temple service, all the Levi'im were shaven clean – head, beard, peyos. They looked like an egg. Then Aharon also had to pick the person up and wave him. This is one of the "events" that so angered Korach's wife that she used it to "intimidate" her husband into following through with his proposed rebellion.

She told Korach that Moshe Rabbeinu was afraid of him; that's why he had him look like a bowling bowl and be waved around by Moshe's brother like a baby. "He is threatened by your impact and wants to strip you of your ability" she pressed. The Midrash says that this was fertile ground, because when Korach came out and went amongst the people, he wasn't recognized anymore because of his new appearance.

Human nature is that people want to give and have an impact. Korach reasoned that if he felt stripped of his ability to impact others positively, he would then take that threat down, even if it was Moshe himself. The tragedy of Korach is that he felt bald (*kireach*) in terms of making an impact and that drove him crazy - to the point that he went to war against Moshe.

There are some kids who are not doing so well – not necessarily "off the Derech" – but they are not happy campers. The goal is to get them involved in some kind of worthwhile project, like a Chesed or volunteering initiative. This way, they can feel that there is some use for them, because otherwise, their low self-esteem will take them to very dark places and influence them to do things they will regret.

Back in the 1960's when Orthodoxy was in a vulnerable state, any Jewish kid who went to Yeshiva or Day School was hailed as a hero and praised mightily. Today, Baruch Hashem, there is an overflow of students, the drawback of which is that some kids don't feel needed and are told that if they step out of line, other kids will be waiting to take their spot. We need to make people feel that they have what to contribute. One is alive because Hashem believes they can do great things and the more we empower people to feel that way, the more good things will happen.

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KORACH – THE SPEEDY ALMOND

The Jewish people were in a state of shock. Having witnessed the miraculous and terrifying way that Korach's challenge to Moshe's authority ended, they now had to endure a plague that claimed 14,000 lives. The Divine appointments of Moshe and Aharon had to be demonstrated one more time in a very decisive way. Moshe instructed each Nasi to present a staff to represent his entire Shevet and then placed all the staffs before Hashem in the Ohel HaEdus. The next day, everyone saw that only Aharon's staff had changed. It began to blossom and produce almonds.

Rashi (Bamidbar 17:23) asks: why specifically almonds? *"Because it's a fruit that blossoms earlier than all other fruits; so, too, the punishment of one who sets himself in opposition to the constituted Kehunah comes quickly"*. Now that the almonds have put that matter to rest, let's talk about what they can do for you. Provided that there are no nut allergies, almonds can be an amazing way to bring healthy and nutritious enjoyment to your day. 15-20 almonds provide a satisfying snack that is nutrient dense and promotes heart and brain health. The best benefits come when they are eaten raw, unsalted or dry roasted, so that you are not adding extra sodium or oils to your intake. They are a great source of protein and fiber along with a healthy dose of Vitamin E.

When ranking the healthiest nuts, almonds are at the top. Some other really good ones are walnuts, cashews, hazelnuts and pistachios. Adding nuts to a salad introduces some good healthy fat to help break down the nutrients in the vegetables. As a treat every now and then - or especially on Shabbos - you can have a bit of the glazed variety but keep in mind; the additives can make it easier to compulsively eat a lot of it which will mean a lot of extra sugar and more calories than you bargained for.

Takeaway: Almonds not only grow quickly and provide healthy satisfaction, but fast!

KORACH - DON'T INVOLVE OTHERS IN YOUR ARGUMENT

How often does it happen that an argument spills out into an entire war with many people taking sides? It's all too common to find that when two people don't get along suddenly their wives stop talking to each other and their children stop playing with each other. Then friends, neighbors, and co-workers get involved and it devolves into a huge rift in the community. We find that Korach engaged in a Machlokes against Moshe Rabbeinu, and in Pirkei Avos the teaching that "a dispute between Hillel and Shammai is considered one for the sake of Heaven."

The Chazaq Rosh Yeshivah, **Rabbi Aharon Walkin**, asks a simple, yet powerful question: in the Talmud, the argument is described as involving "Beit Hillel and Beit Shammai" but in Pirkei Avos, when it's discussing proper arguments, the Mishna only says Hillel and Shammai? The answer is that whenever there is an argument, the right thing is not to get the Bayis (others) involved. One can ask a Rav to get involved so he can help resolve it and usually get the two parties to compromise on their stances.

My brother, **Rav Ilan Meirov**, Shlita, always shares this beautiful point. The word for family in Hebrew is Mishpacha, and happiness is "Simcha". The only letter that's missing from Simcha to make it Mishpacha is the letter Peh, which stands for "the mouth." Sometimes, it's the talking that we do that can ruin the happiness in the family. Let's be careful not to get involved in arguments and if we do, at least not to get others involved and cause the destruction of our families.

SPLENDID QUOTE OF THE WEEK BY RABBI MENACHEM LOMNER

"Being careful in the details of a Mitzvah makes it so much more powerful".

Korach made fun of Moshe Rabbeinu that the Mitzvah of Tzitzis makes no sense: "How can it be that you just need to put one blue string on the corner, but if the whole garment is blue. you didn't do your Mitzvah?" he asked mockingly. There was once a bochur who went to sleep in a storage room that had many air conditioners. He related the next morning that it was too hot to sleep. "But a room full of AC's can't possibly be hot!" A Mitzvah must be "plugged in". It must be that the various details and components of a Mitzvah make all the difference.

***MAY THE LEARNING IN THIS MAGAZINE BE A ZECHUS
FOR THE SAFETY AND PROTECTION OF OUR FAMILY
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“Put the fire in them and place incense upon them before Hashem tomorrow. Then the man whom Hashem will choose; he is the holy one. It is too much for you, offspring of Levi” (Bamidbar 16:7)

Why did Moshe delay the resolution of the matter until the next day? **Rashi** explains that Moshe felt that by sleeping on it, Korach's group might come to their senses and change their mind about arguing. Rashi writes later that Korach was awake all night trying to rile people up for his cause. Perhaps this idea worked for the others, but Korach only saw the extra time as an opportunity to lobby for his cause. Sometimes, the best course of action in a disagreement is to pause for a bit before continuing.

When a person is in the heat of an argument, he can become irrational. A short break can help a person calm down, take a step back, and rationally approach the disagreement. They can then return to their discussion, but they will both be able to see the issue at hand clearly. Similarly, Chazal advise us not to appease a person when he is still angry. This will only make him angrier because his emotions are running high. It is best to allow the person some time to calm down on his own.

“The earth opened its mouth and swallowed them and their households, and all the people who were with Korach, and the entire wealth” (ibid. 16:32)

Later on, the Torah informs us that Korach's sons did not die along with the rest of their family because they repented. What made them see the light and repent before the punishment was meted out? Moshe tried his best to reach a peaceful settlement with those who were fighting against him. He failed in winning Korach over. However, his words had an impact on his sons, and they abandoned their father's rebellion. Sometimes, the target of a person's rebuke may not be influenced right away but some others will be. No action ever goes for naught.

Everything has ramifications even though we don't always see it. **R' Tzadok Hakohen** writes that if someone has fear of Hashem, his words never go unheard. Even though his words may not be listened to right now, it might have an impact on the person later. The results may not be apparent immediately, but the seeds are planted for a future turnaround.

Meaningful words penetrate the soul and stay there until they surface later. You can never know how far your words can go. At times, one may try to inspire other people but is unsuccessful. He should not be depressed because he did not bring about any change. The effect is there, and it could manifest itself later in life or in his children. One should not be afraid to try to influence other people because he will not be able to accomplish anything. The results of one's efforts are not always tangible.

“If these die like the death of men, and the destiny of all men is visited upon them, then it is not Hashem Who has sent me” (ibid. 16:29)

The Gemara in Nedarim cites this posuk as the source of the Mitzvah to visit the sick. The root "ד פ ק" also means "to visit."

Moshe was saying that if Korach and his cohorts would become ill before dying naturally and would be visited by people, it would be proof that Moshe's mission was not Divine. Thus, we see that when someone is ill, it is an obligation to go visit him. Why was it necessary for Moshe to mention the fact that they would be visited by others? How would this prove the veracity of their words?

The **Kli Yakar** explains that visiting the sick serves two purposes, one for the sick person and one for the visitor. The visitor should inquire of the needs of the ill person and make sure that he is comfortable. (The **Aruch Hashulchan** says that this is the primary purpose of the mitzvah.) The second purpose of visiting a sick person is that it makes the visitor aware of the frailty of human life and leads him to reassess his ways and to strive to make the most of the years granted to him.

When the visitor has these thoughts, it is a merit for the sick person whose condition led the visitor to rethink his ways. Now we can understand the Pasuk, translating "ד פ ק" to mean, "to remember," another meaning of this root. Moshe announced, "If these men die a natural death like all men, and the remembering of all people (their reassessment of life) is remembered for them (in their merit), Hashem has not sent me."

When other people would improve their ways on account of these evildoers, this merit would allow them to be spared from punishment. Therefore, it was important that they die unnaturally and that they should not be able to accrue additional merits through having visitors who change their ways. Why were they punished by being swallowed alive? The **Kli Yakar** explains this based on the Mishnah in Pirkei Avos: "Pray for the welfare of the government, for without the fear of it, each man would swallow his fellow alive." Leadership is important in a society because it keeps people together and in line.

Every society needs strong leadership. Korach and his followers argued against having Moshe as their sole leader. Instead, they advocated an oligarchy because they felt that everyone was holy and had heard Hashem speak at Har Sinai. When punishing them, Hashem gave them a taste of their own medicine. When there is no leadership, there is chaos and people are swallowed alive. Since Korach wanted to do away with the leadership of the Jewish people, the ground opened and swallowed him and his followers.

SUGAR RUSH ON THE 613 MITZVOS BY R'ELI REIT **MITZVAH # 169 – TAKING A LULAV**

We are required to take a lulav on the first day of Sukkos, as the Pasuk (Vayikra 23:40) states, "You shall take on the first day." In the Beis Hamikdash, there is a requirement to take the lulav all seven days of Sukkos. Rabbinically, we are required to take a lulav all seven days of Succos even outside the Beis Hamikdash. The lulav is a branch from a palm tree. The middle leaves must be attached (mostly). The lulav is taken together with three other species and a brocha (blessing) is recited "Al Netilas Lulav...on taking a lulav".



Summary: We have discussed the idea of Chassidus in action, which means doing Mitzvos with a fear and love for Hashem. Love of Hashem is defined as an insatiable desire to be close to Him and a feeling of delight in serving Him. This love must not be dependent on any good that one receives from Hashem, but should be completely natural, like the love of a son for his father. The Ramchal will now unpack this idea further by telling us about different aspects of love.

The Ramchal writes: ***“Let us now explain the branches of love. They are the three I mentioned earlier: clinging, joy, and zeal. The matter of clinging is when a person's heart clings so much to the blessed G-d that he ceases to turn or take interest in anything else but Him. This is what Shlomo said via a Mashal: ‘a lovely hind and a graceful doe will satiate you at all times; you shall always be infatuated with her love’ (Mishlei 5:19).”*** (Mesilas Yesharim, Chapter 19)

One who clings to Hashem is so attached to His Creator that he no longer has a personal awareness of himself. To see this play out interpersonally, just look at a couple who just got engaged or married. This couple is so obsessed with each other that it's utterly nauseating to be around them. They are so consumed with each other (clingy is the best word) that they could step on a nail going through their foot and be bleeding profusely, but they have no idea because they are so deeply in love with each other.

This, teaches **Rabbi Efrem Goldberg**, is what we are meant to feel for Hashem. He is always there with us and inspiring our every moment. We are meant to feel His loving embrace and His arm around our shoulder. There is therefore no self-interest, but how can we serve Him and advance Hashem's Will in this World.

There are sports fanatics who are extremely consumed with a player or a team – they can actually lose out on business deals, work opportunities, and close relationships in favor of following their favorite franchise. Such people are so consumed and so connected that this is all they read, talk, and think about – they have no personal awareness for their own benefit.

We should strive for that with Hashem, but one of the challenges of our generation is the competing entities found in technology. It's hard enough to focus on developing a lasting connection with an Infinite Being without being constantly distracted by the constant dinging and status updates.

On a different note, one should not mistake the Ramchal's advocacy of cleaving, defined as an all-absorbing striving for closeness to Hashem which should eliminate all other concerns, to mean that one should isolate oneself from society and from all normal activities in a monastic manner. On the contrary, we have seen that he is critical of such withdrawal from life. Rather, we should engage in normal activities, but these should all be goal-directed toward the Divine service.

Rabbi Abraham Twerski, ZT”L, (in Lights Along the Way) relates: A tzaddik once lodged at an inn, and in the morning, when the innkeeper was wearing his tallis and tefillin, a customer came in to purchase a quart of beer. The innkeeper proceeded to measure out the beer, and when the customer began to haggle about the price, he poured the beer back into the keg and continued his praying. The tzaddik later asked him to explain his behavior, and the innkeeper said, “When the man asked me for a quart of beer, I had the opportunity of fulfilling the Mitzvah of giving an honest measure. Then he began haggling about the price, and that is business. Well, I don't do business when I'm wearing a tallis and tefillin.”

One can transact with merchandise, and by dealing honestly, be performing a Mitzvah which constitutes *Deveikus*, and this is equally true of virtually all our actions. Nothing needs to be exempted from the Divine service, and one can be cleaving to Hashem while engaging in normal behavior.

The Ramchal continues: ***“And in the Gemara, our sages, of blessed memory stated (Eruvin 54b): ‘It was said of Rabbi Eliezer ben Pedas that he sat and studied Torah in the lower market of Tzipori while his cloak lay in the upper market of the town’. The goal of this trait is for a person to cling thus to His Creator at all times, and at every moment. But at the least, if he loves his Creator, certainly he will cling to Him in this manner during the times of his [divine] service.”*** (ibid. Chapter 19)

He was so engrossed in the study of Torah that he forgot to bring his cloak with him from one marketplace to another. Interestingly, **Rav Yosef Soloveitchik**, ZT”L, got his license, but he never really drove. He thought it was simply too dangerous for him. His mind was always on a **Rambam** or a **Tosafos** that he lacked the focus and awareness needed to operate a machine that may be a weapon of mass destruction. Some people are so connected to Hashem that it's dangerous for them to do something else that requires concentration.

The Ramchal concludes: ***“The Gemara (Yerushalmi, Berachos 5:1) reports: ‘While Rabbi Chanina ben Dosa was standing in prayer a poisonous lizard came and bit him but he did not interrupt his prayer... His disciples asked him: ‘Rabbeinu! Did you not feel anything?!’ He replied to them: ‘I swear that due to my heart being intent on the prayer, I felt nothing’”*** (ibid. Chapter 19)

The pinnacle of *Deveikus* – the constant, uninterrupted cleaving to Hashem in every possible situation – is an integral component of the trait of Kedusha (holiness), discussed in Chapter 26. *Deveikus* in *Chassidus* is experienced while praying or performing Mitzvos. This means doing one's best to avoid foreign thoughts during prayer (see the **Matnas Chelko**).

As we mentioned, one way to do so is to avoid the distractions of technology. Also, one should have a consistent shul/spot that he prays from (in Halachah it's called a Makom Kavua). Finally, one should try to come to Davening a few minutes early to collect one's thoughts and not play catch-up with the one leading the Minyan. *More to come next week, B'eH.*

SHORT STORY OF THE WEEK

BY YONI SCHWARTZ

There was a young boy, Moshe, who had lost his father. His mother struggled to put bread on the table each week. In their neighborhood, most children received new suits for Yom Tov, and on the first night at shul, they would gather and compliment one another. Moshe, also wanting a new suit, gently approached his mother a few weeks before Yom Tov. She turned around, eyes glassy from stress and exhaustion, bent down, and looked at him.

With love, she rubbed his soft cheek. In his high-pitched voice, he gently asked if he could get a new suit. It broke her heart that she couldn't afford one. Nevertheless, she decided to start saving up for a new shirt. His mother cut back on some expenses and, each week saved a little money wherever she could. Slowly but surely, she scraped together just barely enough for Moshe's new Yom Tov shirt.

The first night of Yom Tov arrived, and little Moshe skipped to shul with a big smile, excited to show off his new shirt. However, when he got there, that smile quickly turned into a frown. Nobody noticed his new shirt! All the other boys had new suits, new hats, and new shoes, and they were all receiving so many compliments - but not one person noticed little Moshe.

After shul, pouty and glum, Moshe began walking back home. The **Gerrer Rebbe**, ZT"L, surrounded by his entourage of followers, caught a glimpse of little Moshe and noticed his frown. Quickly, he ran to him, gently placed his hand on Moshe's collar, and said, "Moshe! Psshh! *Chultza chadasha!* What a nice new shirt! It's so beautiful!" Seeing that somebody had noticed him, Moshe's frown flipped into a huge smile - and that's how he stayed: cheerful, for the rest of Yom Tov.

Comment: In this week's parsha, Korach, we learn about the power of words - their uses and abuses. Korach, history's first populist, attacked Moshe, insulted him, and publicly shamed him. The ground opened its "mouth" and swallowed him up. Afterward, the people surrounded Moshe, complaining, "You have killed the L-rd's people!" Instead of force-ending the rebellion, it had the opposite effect. An argument has no winners.

The first self-defense mechanism many of us learned in middle school is: if somebody insults you, insult them back. Whoever says the best "diss" is the cool kid. Unfortunately, as we grow up, this childhood habit tends to stick with us. When someone insults us, how often is our first instinct to fire back? The Torah teaches us otherwise: the one who is respected is the person who is publicly humiliated and doesn't respond. When we swallow our words, Hashem speaks for us.

HALACHA IDEAS BY RABBI DOVID OSTROFF: SHABBOS QUESTIONS

If a baby's crib is outside and the sun is disturbing him/her; am I permitted to cover the crib with a blanket?

Covering a crib with a blanket/shade involves the prohibition of tent-erecting, a part of the melacha of Boneh - Construction. Even if one were to erect the shade temporarily it would involve a rabbinical prohibition. The same applies to covering a pram or stroller to block out the sun and one must be aware of the halachos involved.

What is the correct method for covering a crib?

There are quite a few ways with which to correctly shield a crib etc. 1) If it was covered a tefach before Shabbos. 2) The halacha says that if an area was covered at least a tefach before Shabbos one may complete the covering on Shabbos. So, the first suggestion is to place a sheet/blanket/canopy on the crib before Shabbos in a way that it covers a tefach and on Shabbos continue and cover according to one's need. The same applies to a baby carriage or stroller.

Two items, which are within tefachim of each other and the gap between the two cover an area of at least a tefach, constitute a tent and permit covering the remainder of the area. The **Mechaber** presents this halacha in the form of beams covering a boat deck where, for this reason one is permitted to cover the entire deck. This option is more presentable in the case of a crib than a carriage, where one may position two beams or poles above the crib before Shabbos in the required manner mentioned, and cover the entire crib on Shabbos. This case applies itself to a porch covered with a pergola where there is less than three tefachim between each beam. Often, these beams may already be a tefach wide which would sanction covering the porch even if the beams were more than three tefachim apart from each other. A canopy was attached to the crib or carriage before Shabbos.

The Rema in Hilchos Sukkah says that one is permitted to open and shut hinged flaps that are used for covering the succah when raining. The **Chazon Ish** learned from here that this would likewise apply to a canopy connected to a baby carriage. Since the canopy is attached to the baby carriage before Shabbos, it has the same status of being open a tefach before Shabbos and one is permitted to fully open the canopy on Shabbos. The same would apply to a canopy covering a porch or balcony and accordingly, one is permitted to extend such an awning on Shabbos. There are poskim however who do not agree to this analogy and to permit the extending of a carriage's canopy on Shabbos they require the canopy be open a tefach before Shabbos. As usual one should therefore ask one's rav as to how to conduct oneself on Shabbos. **Rav Moshe Sternbuch**, Shlita, said that the custom is to be lenient.

I want to prepare a tarpaulin (heavy tarp) to cover my sukkah to prevent rain from entering, how is it done?

One is permitted to cover an already existing "tent" even though the new covering will protect against things the first covering did not. For example, a sunshade, as its name suggests, protects against the sun but does little to protect against rain. Nevertheless, since the area is already covered by a "tent" one may cover the sunshade with a tarpaulin protection against the rain.

Therefore, one may spread a tarpaulin over the schach of the sukkah even though it will now prevent rain from entering the sukkah, which the schach did not prevent. However, precaution must be taken that the tarpaulin lies within a tefach of the schach and not above that, because if a tefach is formed between the tarpaulin and the schach it constitutes a new "tent" and is forbidden.

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