



דרכים בפרשה

קרח

ולא יהיה כקרח וכעדתו

Not to be like Korach and his assembly (17:5)



Rashi asks: **וקרח שפקח היה, מה ראה לשטות זה**, Korach was such a wise man; what did he see in this foolishness? Korach was one of the greatest, holiest and wisest men of the generation, and yet he fell so low, waging a battle with Moshe, Aharon and ultimately Hakadosh Boruch Hu. How could this happen?

To understand this better, the Ksav Sofer (5:9) **אהב כסף לא ישבע כסף** - *one who loves money will never be satiated with money*. The successes alone will not satisfy this person because upon seeing the success of others, he will want even more for himself, constantly feeling a strong void and never being fully satisfied.

The last mishnah in Masechta Uktzin (3:12) states **לא מצא הקב"ה כלי מחזיק ברכה לישראל אלא השלום** - *Hakadosh Baruch Hu found no vessel which contains the blessings for Klal Yisroel other than peace*. The Ksav Sofer explains this as follows: there is no complete bracha without shalom/peace. Shalom is the greatest of all brachos because it allows us to experience contentment in all areas of our lives without succumbing to the curse of jealousy, which is the root of all *machlokes*. If I am truly happy with my lot and I believe without a doubt that all comes from Hashem and no one can change that without His express consent, then there is no reason that a *machlokes* can ever ensue.

If we can draw a contrast between Moshe and Aharon to Korach, the matter will become clearer. The midrash in Parshas Shemini relates how Moshe and Aharon rejoiced for one another; Moshe upon informing Aharon of his appointment to the role of Kohen Gadol, and Aharon upon hearing that his younger brother Moshe was chosen to lead Klal Yisroel out of Mitzrayim. When there is true shalom between people, there is no problem being genuinely happy for the other. If Korach would have felt this happiness for Moshe and Aharon in the same manner in which they felt for each other, he would not have felt such a strong desire to overtake them. As a result of not being satisfied with what he already had, he began a *machlokes*. By not being b'shalom with his own, he no longer was able to deal with others in peace.

Understanding this Mishna further, the *Bnei Yissaschar (Igrah D'Kallah)* writes that even if one is worthy, in all respects, of the greatest *brachos* in the world, if he engages in *machlokes*, he does not have a vessel in which to contain the *brachah*. His vessel is like a sieve, effectively pierced with many holes. One can pour the most wonderful things inside of that vessel, but it will remain empty because everything leaks right out.

The Shla"h Hakadosh writes in **מסכת יומא**, **פרק דרך היים תוכחת מוסר מ"ד** (quoting a Chazal) - **מחלוקת אחת דוחה מאה פרנסות** - *even*

one machlokes can drive away one hundred livelihoods. Isn't it ironic that at times people are busy waging wars on others to recoup some *parnassah* when that fight is precisely what will cause the *parnassah* to be driven away?

Each day in *davening* we say **השם גבולך שלום** - **הלב הטים ישיביעדך** - "He makes your borders peaceful, and [therefore] with the cream of wheat he satiates you." The Chasam Sofer beautifully explains this *passuk* by saying that every person has their border, i.e. limits; the red line that they will not cross. For one person the tipping point may be jealousy, which causes him to start acting irrational. For another, it may be money that causes a loss of *seichel*, and for others it is the constant pursuit of *kavod*.

For a *tzaddik* that is in control of his desires and impulses, his "border" is *shalom* and he doesn't allow anything to push him past it. Furthermore, he will even put aside his own *chachma* and look like a fool if it will stop a *machlokes* from happening. When one makes *shalom/machlokes* his "red line", he will be *zoche* to be satiated with the "cream of wheat," i.e. plentiful *parnassah*.

What happened to all the wisdom of Korach? Because he ignored this line in the sand, his own *seichel hayashar* became distorted as well. As an example of this, I heard Rav Eliyahu Boruch Finkel z"l explain the *possuk* (16:5) **לו את אשר לו** - **בקר וידע ה' את אשר לו** - *In the morning, HaShem will make known the one who is His own.* Why would the matter suddenly become clearer in the morning? The Maharam Shif tells us that the *man* was a great barometer proclaiming

how well a person served HaShem. When the *man* fell in the morning, for a *tzaddik*, it was right at his front door. But for someone that wasn't so *ay-ya-yai*; he needed to walk further. So Moshe Rabbeinu said, in the morning, i.e. when the *man* falls, we shall see who is the real *tzaddik* and who is not. Rav Eliyahu Boruch then said, *fahrstheitzach*, the *man* fell right by Moshe's front door and for Korach, he needed to walk very far. So *nu*, what was Korach thinking during his long trek to collect his *man*? Was this not the greatest indicator that he was wrong? Wouldn't any person with a little bit of *seichel* wave the proverbial white flag and give up the fight at this point? Rav Eliyahu Baruch answered that Korach was so far past that red line that his only conclusion was that HaShem had a complaint against him that he wasn't fighting against Moshe hard enough!

May we be *zoche* to do whatever possible to run away from *machlokes* thereby ensuring that we have the wherewithal to hold onto all the *brachos* that HaShem has for us.

Good Shabbos, מרדכי אפפּעל

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