

# LAMPLIGHTER

29 Sivan  
Korach  
**1090**  
7 June  
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## LIVING WITH THE TIMES

The controversy between Korach (the leader of the rebellion and the name of this week's Torah portion) and Moshe was coming to a head. On one side stood Moshe, leader of the Jewish people, on the other was Korach and his 250 followers.

G-d told Moshe to tell the Jews, "Get away from about the dwelling of Korach, Datan and Aviram." G-d had issued His warning; in a few minutes the earth would split open and swallow up Korach and his entire group.

The Torah describes Moshe's actions immediately upon hearing this command. "And Moshe rose up and went to Datan and Aviram, and after him went the elders of Israel."

The reaction of Moshe was curious. He had already spoken previously to Datan and Aviram and had exhausted every prior opportunity to make peace.

Why did he return? Wasn't it already too late? G-d had issued His decree; their fate was sealed. And if Moshe's intent was to bring Datan and Aviram to repentance, why doesn't the Torah say that he spoke to them? Why are we told only that Moshe "rose up and went"?

Rashi, the great commentator, explains that Moshe was sure that Datan and Aviram would receive him favourably. Though G-d had already rendered judgment, Moshe's great love for his fellow Jews, even evildoers like Datan and Aviram, prompted him to try once more to set things right.

Mere words may have failed, but Moshe tried one more approach to move Datan and Aviram to repentance - utilizing his status as leader of the Jewish people.

"Moshe rose up" - in full kingly splendour, Moshe returned to Datan and Aviram, hopeful that they would repent and avert their bitter fate when they beheld his glory. In this light, the rest of the verse - "and after him went the elders of Israel" - is also understood. The regal appearance of Moshe, resplendent in his full spiritual stature as king, was so powerful a sight that the elders were inspired to accompany him.

Unfortunately, however, Korach and his followers were not similarly affected, and their punishment was meted out as planned.

This episode serves to underscore the depth of Moshe's love for his fellow Jew and the great lengths to which he was willing to go to bring a Jew back from the brink.

Even after G-d had pronounced judgment and locked the very gates of repentance, Moshe, as leader and shepherd, would not give up.

If Moshe could feel this way toward such evil people, how much more so must we emulate his behaviour today!

In our time, if someone acts inappropriately, it is largely out of a lack of knowledge, not because he is an evil person. Thus, how much more so must we all do everything in our power to bring every Jew close and love him wholeheartedly.

*Adapted from Likutei Sichot of the Rebbe, Vol. 28*

## Do You Live Near Korach?

*By Levi Avtzon*

We are all influenced by society. One who lives in a place with a low moral standard will eventually start believing that this is what morality is all about. When all the people on the block act one way, a newcomer is likely to follow suit.

This is true with regards to cultural quirks, such as the fact that the average Moroccan citizen doesn't appreciate baseball, or the fact that you'll be hard-pressed to find an American who does a 25-hour workweek, or who closes his shop for three hours in the afternoon for a siesta.

How much more so in the world of right and wrong, where all too often objectivity is lost in the wind. That is how millions of Germans came to believe that exterminating Jews was their calling. Everyone else says so; they must be right.

Korach - the filthy rich, rabble-rousing, charismatic opposition leader - is the protagonist of the Torah reading in Numbers named after him. But instead of focusing on his motives, let us zero in on his co-conspirators. Were they simply a bunch of unemployed town criers?

No. Our sages teach that they were great leaders of the tribe of Reuvein.

How, then, did they fall into the pit (pun intended)?

They lived next to Korach. Korach was a Levite from the family of Kohat, who lived on the south side of the Tabernacle, and the tribe of Reuvein lived just to their south. That's why they, too, fell.

Rashi puts it this way: "Woe to the evil man; woe to his neighbour." Great men can fall because of a bad neighbour.

That is why, when searching for a place to live, a place to work, and a school for our children, we must ask ourselves: How do I want my children to grow up? What do I want their (and my) values to be?

Then we look for a community that lives those values today, so that our family can live them tomorrow.

If, however, due to circumstances beyond our control, we must live in a place where the popular definition of right and wrong is not compatible with Jewish morals, we should take these words from the Rebbe to heart: "You will either affect your environment, or the environment will affect you. There is no middle ground." We must try to raise our community to a higher plane; to teach, inspire, be a role model, be proud of who we are and what we stand for.

Rashi puts it this way: "It is good for the *tzaddik* (righteous one) and good for his neighbour." Great people are formed by great neighbours.

In summary: If I live next to a Korach, I must either move away, or turn him into a Moshe. There is no third option.

# Slice of LIFE

## THE GURU THAT DID NOT FOLLOW TORAH

An adaptation by Rabbi Tuvia Bolton of the report by Rabbi Eli Riskin

Avigayil (fictitious name) wasn't like the other thousands of confused post-army Israelis searching the world for their 'real' selves. She had found what she was looking for.

After experiencing a variety of what India was famous for: drugs, gurus, yogis and other beckoning lifestyles, she was just about to give up, when she heard about a small secretive group that was different, deep in the forests of India.

It took her several weeks to find them but when she did she immediately sensed that this was for her. True, she had thought so tens of times before but this time it was real. Their guru was humble and calm, yet she sensed an inner fire burning; the same fire that was burning in her soul!

The group was very reluctant to admit new members, which made it all the more appealing. She made up her mind; she had to join no matter what. Finally her life would be worthwhile.

The initiation was difficult and demanding, but she passed and threw herself completely into a new life of purification and meditation. For months she rose higher and higher in devotion and spiritual purity until her instructor recommended to the head guru that, considering her amazing progress, she was ready to take the next big step: she had merited to be anointed as a priestess! Avigayil was headed for a life of bliss and total surrender to the eternal!

Interestingly, throughout this time she had managed to find a few minutes each week to call her parents in Holon, Israel. Although she usually kept the conversations short and vague, this time she couldn't contain her joy.

A priestess? Her parents, although they were not religious Jews, were aghast; they never dreamed it would come to this! But their protests only aggravated her. She had her own life to live and her own soul to save.

After all, what did they have to offer? Money? Television? Marriage? Feh! She had found the truth and nothing would stop her.

But as 'fate' would have it, exactly at this time her beloved grandmother passed away in Israel; one day before her next call home. The bad news shocked her and when her parents suggested that she return she agreed and asked them to delay the funeral until her arrival.

\* \* \*

She took the first plane out and made a point of buying a round trip ticket for two weeks; she would use the opportunity in Israel to say her last good-byes to everyone she knew before turning over her life to the guru.

But her parents thought otherwise; they were determined to do get this crazy idea out of her head. The day after the funeral they initiated a stream of rabbis, professors and even a psychologist or two. But they had underestimated her convictions. She remained untouched. Nothing they said or did had any effect whatsoever -- and the days passed like minutes.

On her second Shabbat, the day before her flight back, her father requested that she accompany him to the local Chabad synagogue and speak to the Rabbi; Rabbi Meir Halperin.

When they arrived the Rabbi was in the middle of giving a class on the commandment of retuning lost objects (*HaShevat Avaida*). He cited several essays of the Lubavitcher Rebbe to illustrate his point: although this commandment seems to be logical, it really isn't and must be done only because it is the will of G-d.

Avigayil exploded! "What!" She exclaimed. "What is wrong with doing good because it makes sense? Do you think people are so bad or stupid that they don't know to return things? And who says G-d gives commands anyway? Maybe your G-d does, but not my god! My god is nature! Spirit! When one is in harmony with nature, one will automatically do good!"

After the class she calmed down and they spoke for a while. Although the Rabbi said some interesting things, especially about how nature without the Torah can bring man to be an animal or worse, Avigayil was unimpressed. She longed for her guru and the forests of India. The next day she boarded the plane and flew back...for good.

\* \* \*

The ritual began early in the morning and was to reach its grand finale on the top of a high mountain at sunset. It was a clear,

beautiful day. The previous night she had purified herself through fasting and prayer and now, along with five other prospective priests, she was slowly ascending the mountain led by their holy guru and several of his assistants, leaving the mundane world far below.

About an hour before they reached the summit, something on the ground caught the guru's eye. It was a wallet. He gracefully and swiftly bent down, picked it up and put it in the small pouch he had strapped to his side.

But Avigayil happened to notice. She quickened her pace till she was next to him and softly suggested that he look in the wallet to see if there was identification.

"No" he answered calmly, looking at her with deep all-knowing eyes. "If god has caused it, then so it shall be. The ways of god are unfathomable."

Avigayil continued in the procession but she was shocked. The words of Rabbi Halperin kept ringing in her mind: 'Man without Torah can be like an animal.' The response of the guru just didn't ring true.

Finally they reached the top. A large bonfire was burning, it's light was flickering off their faces and white robes with the darkening sky in the background.

The guru broke the silence. "Are you all willing to take the most important step in your lives?" he said majestically looking at all of them with compassionate eyes.

"Yes!" they all answered stoically, almost in unison -- except for Avigayil.

The Guru turned his gaze to her. "And what about...?"

"NO!" She yelled out. "NO NO!!!"

The guru calmly answered. "Very well, we cannot accept one who is not certain. Let you return to the city and when you are sure, we will return here."

\* \* \*

Avigayil descended the mountain with one of the guru's assistants and early next morning took the first plane out, which happened to be to Australia. Her outlook had changed completely. She just wanted to get away; she didn't really care where to, just so long as it was as far away as possible from the idolatry, impurity and lies of India.

She stayed a while with friends and it was there she met another Chabad representative, Rabbi Eli Riskin. This time she really found what she was looking for; Judaism. And it stuck.

The guru was right about one thing: the ways of G-d are indeed unfathomable.

## MOSHIACH MATTERS

The final and concluding blessing of the Seven blessings recited at the wedding ceremony quotes a prophetic passage regarding the Era of Redemption - "...there shall speedily be heard in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem, the sound of joy and the sound of happiness, the sound of a *chossan* and the sound of a *kallah*." This shall take place in the course of the true and complete Redemption, through Moshiach.

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ISSUE 1090



# INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

By the Grace of G-d  
22 Iyar, 5711 [1951]  
Brooklyn

Greetings and Blessings!

In response to the *pidyon nefesh* that you sent me: When I visited the holy resting-place of my revered father-in-law [the Rebbe Rayatz] I mentioned your name in connection with your needs. He no doubt intercedes and arouses Divine compassion upon yourself and your wife - that you enjoy robust health, with peace of mind and body - particularly since, as you write, you have a letter from him with his holy blessing that you settle into a good life.

You *write* that you suffer from an ailment, though without saying what it is, and that at any moment you are likely to undergo a serious heart attack, etc., G-d forbid. (It appears to me that this is not the case, and that - begging your pardon - this is an extreme exaggeration.) You write further that a partition of iron is separating [you from your Father in Heaven] and that your prayers and charitable contributions have had no effect, and so on.

Without a doubt, you yourself also understand that all this is no more than fantasies. For even if there were a partition of iron, the Sages assure us in plain words that "even a partition of iron cannot separate the Children of Israel from their Father in Heaven."

The same applies to what you write about how your prayers and especially the *tzedakah* you distribute have had no effect. I saw in a little book - it's called the *Tanach* - where it is written (*Malachi 3:10*) that the Holy One, blessed be He, says: "Test Me, please, in this," in the *mitzvah* of *tzedakah* - that if only people will give *tzedakah*, "I will pour down blessings upon you," and so on. The same applies to prayer, as is explained in many sources in the teachings of the Sages.

Above all, as is clarified in the works of *Chassidus*, this is one of the counsels by means of which the Evil Inclination topples a man into melancholy. And if melancholy stemming from spiritual reasons gives good cause for vigilance, how much more wary must one be of melancholy that comes from some other source, for there is nothing worse than that.

You should insistently fortify your trust in what even the most light minded of Jews believe - that the Holy One, blessed be He, is not only the Creator of the world but that He also conducts it, and not only long ago, but also presently, every day and at every hour. Moreover, He conducts not only the big world but also all the affairs of the microcosm, man, and He is the ultimate good. Without a doubt, you will then finally see, even with fleshly eyes, that everything will be for the best, even in the kind of good that is manifest. For this, however, one must strengthen one's bonds of *hiskashrus* with the G-d of Life - by setting aside fixed times to study the Torah of Life; by serving Him through the *avodah* of prayer, through which you are benevolent toward your Soul of Life; and by fortifying your observance of the *mitzvos*, and of the comprehensive *mitzvah* of *tzedakah*, for "the truth of *tzedakah* is for life."

I hope that in the near future you will let me know of an improvement in your material situation and likewise of an improvement of your spiritual situation - namely, the disappearance of thoughts about a separating partition etc. etc. - and that you will make strenuous endeavours to fulfill the command of the Holy One, blessed be He: "Serve G-d with joy."

Enclosed is a copy of the *sichah* of Lag BaOmer that was recently published. You should ponder over it deeply.

In anticipation of glad tidings,

## CUSTOMS CORNER

The verse, "And one shall not be like Korach and his group (Numbers 17:5)" is understood by our Sages to be a biblical injunction against involvement in a dispute.

In fact, leading commentators of the Talmud say: "Do not remain in a state of dispute with your friend for even one day. And (rather) humble yourself before him and be the first to ask for forgiveness."

It is even permissible to distort the truth in order to preserve peace.

Based on the case of a woman who is a *sotah* (suspected adulteress) our sages say: "The power of peace is so great . . . that G-d's holy name, written in holiness, is erased in water in order to bring peace between the *sotah* and her husband."

Ensuring that we, personally, are at peace with our fellows does not suffice. Rather, we must actively promote peace between others. As Hillel would say: "Be of the disciples of Aaron - a lover of peace, a pursuer of peace, one who loves the creatures and draws them close to Torah." Our sages teach us that Aaron the high priest would employ various methods to bring peace to couples and friends who were not getting along. According to our sages, the *mitzvah* of initiating peace is one whose divine reward is enjoyed both in this world and in the next.

## A WORD

*from the Director*

*The names of the portions of the Torah are significant. If so, the question arises: Why was this week's portion named Korach? Korach was not a righteous man and although our Sages relate that his sons repented, no such statement is made about Korach himself. On the surface, since our Sages state that "the name of the wicked should be wiped out," surely, it is problematic why the Torah chose it as one of the names of the parshiyos, thus perpetuating it forever.*

*On the surface, it can be explained that ultimately, Korach brought about a positive result, strengthening the position of the priesthood, but perhaps we can find even deeper insight.*

*Korach was "a clever person." Furthermore, in a deeper level his desire - to be a High Priest -- is essentially positive. Indeed, Moshe told Korach that he, himself, shared that basic desire. Every Jew should continually seek to rise higher in holiness, attaining the peaks of service of G-d, "holy of holies." Indeed, in this context, Korach's claim, "that the entire nation is holy and G-d is among them," interpreted by Rashi to mean: "All heard the words of the Almighty at Sinai," reflects a positive point. Indeed, G-d told the entire Jewish people, "You shall be a kingdom of priests," interpreted by the Baal HaTurim to refer to the High Priesthood.*

*On one hand, Korach's inner desire teaches us that a Jew must always strive for the level of "holy of holies." Nevertheless, Korach's mistake -- and his quality which should not be emulated -- was the manner in which he expressed this desire. Rather than creating a rivalry with the High Priest, one should nullify oneself to the High Priest (who is granted his position through G-d's choice) and in this manner, draw from his holiness.*

*For this reason, the name Korach is appropriate to use as the name for the Torah portion. Korach as he exists within the context of Torah represents an extremely high level, the striving of the Jew to reach the highest spiritual peaks. Thus, the lesson we learn from Korach is not only a negative one, the rejection of his approach of strife, but also a positive concept, the importance of seeking spiritual peaks.*

J. I. Gutnick

IT HAPPENED

Once...

**Why G-d Do You Allow People To Suffer?**

Once, it so happened that Rabbi Mottel of Chernobyl fell sick. He became so critically ill that he went into a coma for four days and was literally hovering between life and death.

His Chassidim and followers were in distress. They gathered together, prayed and said Tehillim (Psalms) non-stop for the entire time until finally it worked and G-d heard their prayers! Their Rebbe regained consciousness and several weeks later held a great thanksgiving meal for the kindness G-d showed him.

The meal was unusually joyous; replete with song and dance until one of the older Chassidim, who had taken a few L'chiams, mustered up his courage approached the Rebbe and asked him if he would please grace the crowd with a description of what he'd seen in the four days he was "out."

After a few minutes of pregnant silence the Rebbe cleared his throat, closed his eyes and began to speak.

"I left my body and felt my soul rising, rising to heaven. I was sure that my time on earth had terminated. But I resisted. I didn't want to die. I cried and asked for mercy but it didn't help.

"I was brought before the heavenly court and they were about to decide my fate. So in desperation I screamed that I wanted to see my holy, departed father, Rabbi Nachum. I knew that if he could intercede for me I might have a chance.

"My request was granted! My father was lowered from the high level of heaven he was but, when we were finally face to face and I was bursting from joy to see him again after all these years ... he didn't recognize me!

"I pleaded and tried to make him remember... but to no avail. He admitted that he had a son but he didn't believe that I was him! He simply didn't recognize me at all.

"Finally he asked if perhaps I had done some sin after he left this world and that is the reason he didn't know me. And he disappeared.

"So for three days, I tried to remember if possibly I had done something wrong but with no success. I again began weeping and praying and, behold, my father re-appeared. He told me that he also had been searching but he came up with nothing. All he could conclude was perhaps it was something I had done very recently; say in the last day or two before my illness that was inaccessible to him. He asked me if I remembered anything unusual.

"Suddenly something came to my mind, but it certainly wasn't a sin. I told him that I remembered that just before my illness a wealthy Jew who had recently become a pauper, came to ask me for a loan of several hundred rubles to get back on his feet.

"But I had to turn him down because I simply didn't have that type of money. Still, I gave him what I could and tried to comfort him as best as possible.

"'Comfort him?' My father asked, 'What did you say?'

"I said a proverb from the wisest of men... King Solomon. I said, 'Who is beloved, G-d reproves' (Proverbs 3:12).

"'And what did you mean by that?' My father asked as though he was on to something.

"'What did I mean?' I replied, not really understanding what he was getting at. 'Why, I meant the simple meaning. That he shouldn't worry because sometimes G-d makes people suffer because He loves them. For instance sinners; suffering can sometimes clean them of their sins. 'Who is beloved, G-d reproves'"

"'Aha!' My father replied. 'Now I know why I didn't recognize you! I never would have said such a thing! And, indeed, here in Heaven we learn that sentence completely differently!

"'Up here we learn it like this: 'Whoever is beloved' namely if you see someone that you love (and we are supposed to love every creature) who is suffering... then.... 'G-d reprove!'

"'Namely you should reprove G-d!! Like Moses did; when he challenged G-d saying 'Why do you make Your people suffer?' (Ex. 5:22). And G-d listened!!!

"'My son' my father concluded, 'when it comes to the suffering of others we have to protest! We must try to change G-d's mind and not justify Him!'

"And I came back to life."

Thoughts THAT COUNT

**And Moses rose up and went to Dathan and Aviram (16:25)**

Resh Lakish said: This teaches that one must not be obdurate in a dispute. (*Talmud, Sanhedrin 110a*)

**Out of all that is given to you, you shall set aside all that is due as a gift to G-d; of the choicest thereof, the hallowed part of it (18:29)**

Everything that is for the sake of G-d should be of the best and most beautiful. When one builds a house of prayer, it should be more beautiful than his own dwelling. When one feeds the hungry, he should feed him of the best and sweetest of his table. When one clothes the naked, he should clothe him with the finest of his clothes. Whenever one designates something for a holy purpose, he should sanctify the finest of his possessions; as it is written, "All the fat is to G-d." (*Maimonides*)

**CANDLE LIGHTING: 7 JUNE 2013**

BEGINS		ENDS
4:49	.....MELBOURNE .....	5:51
4:53	.....ADELAIDE .....	5:52
4:42	.....BRISBANE .....	5:38
6:10	.....DARWIN .....	7:02
4:40	.....GOLD COAST .....	5:36
5:01	.....PERTH .....	5:59
4:35	.....SYDNEY .....	5:34
4:40	.....CANBERRA .....	5:39
4:31	.....LAUNCESTON .....	5:34
4:53	.....AUCKLAND .....	5:53
4:41	.....WELLINGTON .....	5:44
4:25	.....HOBART .....	5:30
4:38	.....BYRON BAY .....	5:34
6:51	.....SINGAPORE .....	7:43



**CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH**

439 INKERMANN STREET, CAULFIELD

**PARSHAS KORACH  
29 SIVAN • 7 JUNE**

<b>FRIDAY NIGHT:</b>	CANDLE LIGHTING:	4:49 PM
	MINCHA:	5:00 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	5:35 PM
<b>SHABBOS MORNING:</b>	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	9:54 AM
	MINCHA:	4:55 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	5:51 PM
<b>WEEKDAYS:</b>	SHACHARIS SUN-FRI:	9:15 AM
	MINCHA:	5:00 PM
	MAARIV:	5:45 PM