

Parshas Korach

July 5, 2019

## A Taste of Torah

### No Such Thing As Too Much

by Rabbi Aharon Wilen

When Korach and his assembly came with their complaint against Moshe, claiming he had no business appointing his brother Aharon as High Priest, the verse tells us that Moshe responded "*Rav lachem Bnai Levi*," "It is too much for you, sons of Levi." (Korach 16:7)

The Medrash comments that later, when Moshe, despite his many prayers, was given the final word by Hashem that he would not be allowed to enter Eretz Yisrael, he was told off by Hashem in the same manner, "*rav lach*," "it is too much for you." (Devarim 3:26) This contained an implicit rebuke him for his response to Korach and his followers. What was wrong with Moshe's response, and why was the appropriate place for Hashem's rebuke at the time of Moshe's being denied entry into Eretz Yisrael?

The Shelah (Rabbi Yeshaya HaLevi Horowitz; 1555-1630) explains that many among Korach's followers had good intentions. They were not looking for honor or prestige. They wanted to enter the *Mishkan* (Tabernacle) and perform the service reserved for the *kohanim* (priests) and to thereby come closer to Hashem. Their intentions were simply misguided.

That is why the Torah describes them (Korach 17:3) as "*hachata'im ha'elah binafshosam*," which can be understood as "these sinners with their souls," meaning their drive for spirituality. Our Sages teach that the Divine fire that emerged to kill these people only consumed their souls,

leaving their bodies intact. Since it was their drive for greater spiritual heights that led them to this tragic error, it was their souls that were punished.

With this idea, Rabbi Leib Chasman (1869-1934) in *Ohr Yahel* (a collection of his talks and thoughts) explains the aforementioned Medrash. Moshe listened to the words of Korach and his followers and responded *rav lachem*, it's too much for you. This was an error on Moshe's part. You can never tell a Jew that, spiritually, it's too much. There is no such thing as enough for a Jew. We must always be growing and aspiring for higher levels.

Moshe should have rather explained to them that the manner through they chose to come closer was mistaken. He should have told them the Torah study is more precious than serving in the *Mishkan*. Through Torah study they could find the closeness they craved, and that is the best means to connect with Hashem.

Later, when Moshe was davening to be allowed into Eretz Yisrael, his sole desire was to be able achieve greater spiritual heights and serve Hashem on an even higher level, a level only possible in Eretz Yisrael. Hashem told him *rav lach*, the same words Moshe had used to discourage the assembly of Korach. In punishment for dampening the desire of Korach's assembly for spiritual growth, Moshe's own growth was limited, as well.

It should be our burning desire to serve Hashem to the best of our abilities, and never to be satisfied in

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## Stories for the Soul

### Pay for the Difference

The Satmar Rebbe, Rabbi Yoel Teitelbaum (1887-1979), was renowned for his scholarship, piety, and unflinching adherence to his principles in the face of controversy. The latter trait earned him the enmity of those who did not appreciate his positions on certain issues. One such person wrote negative articles about the Satmar Rebbe in a publication.

Sometime later, this writer's daughter was getting married, and the man was in need of funds to make the wedding. The Satmar Rebbe distributed enormous sums of money to the needy, and this man came to the Rebbe and asked for some financial assistance. Rabbi Teitelbaum provided him with a reasonable amount, and the man left.

After the man's departure, some of the Rebbe's followers who had witnessed the incident asked the Rebbe if he realized who this man was and that he had written terrible things about him.

"Of course I do," replied the Rebbe, "but one should not be angry with others, and it is a mitzvah to assist him."

It then occurred to the Rebbe that he had perhaps given the man less than he deserved due to some subconscious resentment toward him. He had the man called back, and he gave him an additional sum to ensure that he harbored no ill will!

In this week's parsha, Moshe goes out of his way in attempting to make

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## Kollel Happenings

### SUMMER NIGHT SEDER FOR BACHURIM

Attention bachurim in Denver over the summer! The Kollel is once again holding its Summer Night Seder for Bachurim at the Kollel West Denver Bais Medrash. Sunday-Thursday. Night seder begins at 8 pm, with ma'ariv at 9:10 pm. Stipends available for boys who maintain the sederim. For further details, info or sponsorship opportunities, please contact [rmf@denverkollel.org](mailto:rmf@denverkollel.org).

### HELP BUILD THE FUTURE OF TORAH IN DENVER

Claim your part in building the future of Torah in Denver! The Kollel is in the midst of a capital campaign to build a three-story, state-of-the-art Torah Center that will serve the entire Denver Jewish community. To contribute, or for dedication opportunities and details on the building, visit [denverkollel.org](http://denverkollel.org) or email [info@denverkollel.org](mailto:info@denverkollel.org).

### TORAH BY THE MOON

A night out for couples to engage in Torah learning! Men join Rabbi Shmuel Halpern for Tractate Brachos in Halacha and Aggada. Women attend Chassidus in Real Life with Rabbi Moshe Heyman. Mondays, 8-9 pm at the Southeast Kollel Torah Center, 4902 S. Xenia St. For more info visit [denverkollel.org](http://denverkollel.org) or email Rabbi Heyman, [rmh@denverkollel.org](mailto:rmh@denverkollel.org).

## Increase Your Jewish IQ

By Rabbi Yaakov Zions

**Last week we asked:** Some of the *brachos* (blessings) we recite have alternative versions for special occasions (e.g., when Rosh Chodesh or Yom Tov coincide with Shabbos). There are two *brachos* which have a singular and plural form; can you name them?

**A:** 1) Our Sages enacted the concept of *eruv* (lit., mixing) to allow certain actions which would otherwise be rabbinically forbidden on Shabbos and/or Yom Tov. The three forms of *eruv* are *eruv chatzeiros*, *eruv tavshilin* and *eruv techumin*. The details of these halachos are complex, but all are essentially made by designating food as the *eruv*. One who designates

two *eruvin* (which is the plural of *eruv*) at once, recites *al mitzvas eruvin* instead of *al mitzvas eruv*. 2) When one immerses new vessels in a mikva, a blessing is recited. The usual *al tevillas keli* is replaced with *al tevillas keilim* (the plural of *kli*, or vessel) when more than one item is immersed.

Sources: Mishna Berurah 366:79, Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh De'ah 120:3. Some do not change the blessing of *Tevillas Keilim*; see Chochmas Adam 73:1.

**This week's question:** When does the text of a *bracha* (blessing) change slightly due to the situation, not the calendar date?

## Lives of Our Torah Leaders Rabbi Eliezer Silver Part IX

"But rabbi," said the president, "aren't you against Zionism?" (The secular Zionist movement created a great deal of debate and controversy, and many prominent figures of the Orthodox world were not in favor of what was largely a secular, often anti-religious movement.)

"That," replied Rabbi Silver, "is an internal matter. But you be a Zionist!"

By the 1920s, Rabbi Silver's reputation had spread, and in 1925, the

Jewish community of Springfield, Massachusetts invited him to become their rabbi. The Springfield community was much larger than that of Harrisburg, and Rabbi Silver accepted, feeling he'd be able to have a greater impact there. After taking the position, he fought to raise the levels of Torah observance in the area. Included in this was a two-year battle to validate a state court ruling that gave local rabbanim the right to set standards of kashrus for businesses claiming to be kosher.

## A Taste of Torah

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our level of observance and connection to Hashem. For a Jew, there is always more to achieve. More focus on prayer, more Torah study, more kindness,

more meticulous performance of mitzvos. Let us take the lesson of this Medrash and raise our aspirations and, by doing so, unlock our true potential.

## Stories for the Soul

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peace with Korach, Dasan and Aviram and others who began a dispute with him. It is a valuable trait to rise above

pettiness and attempt to maintain cordial relationships with everyone, even those who have wronged us.