



THANK YOU HASHEM

For Shabbos Kodesh!

Parshas Korach

HaMeor Shebah

A Short Burst of Relevance

IN THIS WEEK'S parsha, Korach and his followers are swallowed up by the ground after challenging the authority of Moshe and Ahron. When a protest erupts, a plague begins to spread throughout the encampment. It is only when Ahron offers up ketores by the word of Moshe that the plague is halted – but not before claiming the lives of fourteen thousand. Immediately following this plague, Hashem commands Moshe to take a stick from each shevet. When Ahron's stick blossoms, the complaints finally cease. The Bas Ayin reveals a deeper reason for the collection of sticks at this time. The tzaddik explains that although the plague had been halted by the offering of ketores, it hadn't been entirely obliterated. Rather, the trait of Harsh-Judgement was still active and roving the camp seeking to claim further retribution. In addition to dissolving the complaints, the collection of sticks accomplished the complete calming of the divine

wrath. The Zohar HaKadosh teaches that Hashem created the world so He could reveal the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy. These traits are drawn down and revealed by the avodas Hashem of the Jewish nation. Indeed, the numerical value (in mispar katan) of the word "Bereishis" which teaches that the world was created "b'shvil Yisrael shenikreu 'reishis" is thirteen, hinting to these thirteen traits which the Jewish nation was to reveal. The Avos HaKedoshim revealed the trait of "Kel," the collective name of Kindness which represents the root of the other twelve Attributes of Mercy. Akin to the primary light of the sun, this trait of "Kel" is reflected by the other traits like the moon - embodied in the twelve months of the lunar calendar. As carriers of the collective torch of divine kindness kindled by the avos ("Kel"), the twelve shevatim allowed the other twelve Attributes of Mercy to come to expression through their avodah. Thus, the tzaddik writes that on a very deep level, Hashem told Moshe to collect sticks from the shevatim so that the twelve middos harachamim would be activated through their fulfillment of this command. This would ensure that the plague stopped for good. 🤴

Parsha Roundup

A 60-second Review

- 🤴 Joined by Dasan and Aviram, Korach challenges Moshe's leadership and the granting of the kehunah to Ahron. They are accompanied by 250 distinguished members of the community who offer the ketores to prove their worthiness for the kehuna. The ground opens and swallows the challengers. A fire consumes those who offered ketores.
- 🤴 A subsequent plague is stopped by Ahron's offering of ketores. Ahron's staff miraculously blossoms and brings forth almonds, to prove that his designation as kohen gadol is divinely ordained.
- 🤴 Hashem commands that terumah from each crop of grain, wine and oil, as well as all firstborn sheep and cattle and other specified gifts, be given to the kohanim.

A Quick Mayseh

A Story to Warm the Heart

WHEN THE HOLY Sadigurer Rebbe was preparing to leave Yerushalayim after his first visit, the Chassidim requested some money from the tzaddik to purchase mashke for the purpose of making a l'chayim. The Rebbe inquired whether it was their way to gather regularly for tischen, gatherings where the chassidim would sing, share Torah, and strengthen each other in avodas Hashem.

In order to encourage the chassidim to maintain this practice, the tzaddik told them the following story.

One time, my zeide, the holy Rizhiner, suddenly entered the beis midrash where the Chassidim were sitting and asked them, "Which is more important, traveling to see the Rebbe or traveling to be with other Chassidim?" After a period of silence, one of those present spoke up and answered, to the great surprise of his peers, "Traveling to be with other Chassidim is more important!" The Rizhiner asked that he explain himself, and he did.

"Once, the yetzer hara tempted me to sin and I faced a very difficult test. In that moment, I thought to myself: If I fail this test and sin, how will I ever face the Rebbe? Surely, he will recognize my failure and see the sin etched on my face! I countered this voice with a decision to begin traveling to a Rebbe of lesser stature, someone who lacked such spiritual prowess and would not know of my shortcomings. However, I immediately realized that even if I could exchange my Rebbe for another one, where would I ever find such good friends as the Chassidim with whom I sit and farbreng? This thought is what saved me from transgression!"

Sometimes, a few good friends are even more important than a holy Rebbe. 🤴

LAST WEEK, WE learned that the highest form of the *avodah* of eating is when one partakes in a *seudas mitzvah*. The Chernovitzer Rav continues by explaining that, while certainly a *seudas mitzvah*, the eating of the Shabbos meals is in a category by itself. The tzaddik begins with a question. If, as described by the Zohar HaKadosh and all the tzaddikim, the eating of Shabbos is so exceedingly exalted, why is there no commandment regarding this obligation in the Torah? It seems strange that something so important and holy would only be hinted in a verse from *Nach!* To answer, the Chernovitzer reminds us of a fundamental concept we learned in the very beginning of this series, that the holiness of Shabbos is “*k’viyah v’kaymah*” – automatic and independent of our actions below. Unlike other mitzvos whose performance triggers the activation of spiritual energies in the heavenly realms, the mitzvos on Shabbos merely correspond to processes that are taking place on their own, gifted to the lower realms without relying on our *avodah*. Although on a simple level, the calm, joy, and contentment we feel on Shabbos may be seen as a result of the pleasurable and restful activities we engage in on this holy day, in truth, it is a direct result of the wondrous heavenly process that filters through the worlds to elevate our souls – the process those activities embody. Indeed, if a Jew does not naturally feel these feelings on Shabbos, it is not the best sign. This, explains the tzaddik, is why the eating of Shabbos is not mentioned in the Torah. Because the Jewish soul which maintains a conscious connection with its source will be compelled by the spirit of Shabbos and the heavenly processes taking place to make a feast on this awesome day, there was no need for the Torah to issue this as a commandment. 🌟

This section is adapted from the sefer “Sidduro Shel Shabbos” by R’ Chaim of Chernowitz zy”a (1760-1816)

P’nimiyus Ha’Halacha

The Inner Dimension of Jewish Law

THERE ARE A number of disparate areas of *hilchos berachos* treated in the teaching from Reb Nosson we will explore together this week. 1. The *Mechaber* (*Orach Chaim* 210:1) writes that if one plans to eat different kinds of fruits of the same *beracha*, if any of the fruits are from the *shivus haminim*, the seven species of Eretz Yisrael, the *beracha* should be made on that fruit (the order of precedence within *shivus haminim* is: olives, dates, figs, and then pomegranates). If none of the fruits is one of the seven species, one should make a *beracha* on the fruit he particularly enjoys. This is known as “*chaviv*.” 2. If a fruit or vegetable is not fully grown (but still edible), their *berachos* are reduced one level. The vegetable descends from “*ha’adamah*” to “*shehakol*” (*Mishnah Berurah* 204:13), and the fruit from “*ha’eitz*” to “*ha’adamah*” (*Bior Halachah* 202:2). 3. When eating various food items together, the *beracha* one makes on the *ikar* (primary food) covers the *beracha* on the *tafel* (secondary food). This rule applies to *beracha rishona* as well as to *beracha achrona*. The intricate *halachos* of *ikar* and *tafel* involve cases when two entities are either intermixed and eaten together or are eaten one after another deliberately so that one entity will completely serve the other (see *Shulchan Aruch*, 212). 4. There are various *halachos* in place to ensure that proper respect for food is maintained, such as the prohibition against throwing food or sitting on a bag of food if this will crush the contents (see *Shulchan Aruch* 171).

In *Likutei Halachos* (*Hilchos Birkas HaPeiros* 1), Reb Nosson of Nemirov illuminates the general conception of these halachic topics with an idea expressed by his master, Rebbe Nachman of Breslov zy”a.

In *Likutei Moharan* 54, Rebbe Nachman teaches that each day, Hashem prepares a measure of holy sparks trapped by the negative forces of creation that are to be elevated via the *avodas* Hashem of each and every individual in accordance with the particular spiritual source of that individual’s soul. Because they share a deep bond with his soul, when these sparks trapped in

physicality are elevated to the side of holiness, they complete the soul of the one who elevates them.

Reb Nosson teaches that these sparks of holiness are predominantly found in the food we eat. Hashem arranges for those sparks that maintain a bond with a particular Jew’s soul to be positioned in the food he will eat each day. When he eats the food in a way of holiness and God-consciousness and then uses the energy gained from this meal to live a life of connection with Hashem, these sparks are elevated and complete his soul, granting him greater vitality. This process, writes the tzaddik, is referenced in the words “*borei nefashos rabbos v’chesronan*,” “Who creates many souls and their deficiencies,” as the sparks elevated by our eating serves to complete the deficiencies in a Jew’s soul. With this idea, Reb Nosson explains that the deeper reason for the halachic appreciation of “*chaviv*”, the preferred food, with regard to precedence in *berachos* is because when a person has a special desire toward a particular food, this demonstrates that the sparks trapped in this food are of particular significance to his soul-completion and are yearning to be consumed by him. (Eretz Yisrael is the root of all souls, and the seven species therefore take precedence even over “*chaviv*”.) The same goes for the *halachos* of *ikar* and *tafel* – the *beracha* on the primary food item covers the secondary food because the main concentration of holy sparks are located in the primary food. Reb Nosson writes that, when equally preferred, “*ha’eitz*” takes precedence over “*ha’adamah*” because fruits contain particularly precious soul-sparks, as the verse states, “for man is a tree of the field.” Therefore, when one eats a raw fruit, the *beracha* goes down to “*ha’adamah*” because the soul-sparks have not yet been fully implanted within the fruit. The tzaddik concludes by explaining that the reason we must treat foods with respect is founded upon this concept as well. Each food contains sparks of souls that are yearning to be elevated. When we understand the spiritual significance of food and the process of eating, it behooves us to treat those foods with greater respect. 🌟