

קרח ויקח Korach took (16:1) – Rashi explains that he took himself to one side of the Machlokes. In Pirkei Avos this Machlokes is contrasted with that of Shammai and Hillel but how can one person who rebels be compared to the Machlokes of Shammai and Hillel? **Rav Nosson Tzvi Finkel ztl.** explained that Korach also debated a big question in life – how to properly get close to Hashem. The difficulty was not the difference with Moshe in this regard. It was that he pulled himself over to one side and used it to be Michalek and separate from the crowd.

ויקמו לפני משה ואנשים מבני חמישים ומאתים And he stood in front of Moshe with 250 people (16:2) – **Rav Soloveitchik ztl.** gave a very well known Derasha that Korach's rebellion was based on his common-sense logic and how he wanted to use it to Pasken Shaylos. The problem is that sometimes there is logic for the discipline. Halacha is no different. Sometimes Sevara is only ok from the Torah. **Rav Schachter Shlita** would often add from the Sifrei that if the Beis Din paskens that we are not allowed to veer from their Psak even if they tell us to follow the left that it is right. Rav Schachter told us that this doesn't mean that you can do the wrong thing, it means that if it appears to YOU to be backwards then you might need to learn the system of Torah logic.

כי כל העדה כולם קדושים For the entire nation is holy...so why do you rise above the congregation of Hashem (16:3) – The Mishna in Pirkei Avos contrasts Korach's arguments with those of Hillel and Shammai. One gets the impression that the Mishna did not accept the questions of Korach. Why? How is one to ask tough questions? **Rav Haim Sabato Shlita** suggests that it was not the tough ideological questions that made Korach's relationship difficulty. Rather Korach was guilty of personalizing his desires and his problems – precisely the same thing that he accused Moshe Rabbeinu of. When one does not really ask questions but rather makes ideological demands – this is not something easily quieted.

He spoke to Korach and his whole group stating Boker -- as with day Hashem will make it clear (16:5) – Rashi notes that in the same way there are boundaries between day and night, you can try to change those in the way you are trying to change these. What does Day and night have to do with Korach's challenge? **Rav Asher Weiss Shlita** suggested that the issue is similar to the original debate between day and night when the moon asked Hashem to shrink one (meaning the sun) of the illuminaries (Chullin 60b). The sun stayed silent and Hashem answered the moon and allowed the sun to shine within its strength. In the same way that Hashem took care of the sun when the moon challenged its boundaries he would take care of Moshe in the face of Korach's challenge as well.

Korach gathered the entire assemblage on them (16:19) – **Rav Elyashiv ztl.** pointed out that there is a strong contrast between the ease that Korach had at bringing the people together to listen to him and that of a different period. The **Yalkut Shimoni** explains that Yirmiyahu, Tzafaniah and Chulda all offered Nevuah. Yirmiyahu offered it in the marketplaces, Tzafaniah in the Shuls and Chulda to the women. The Yalkut adds that Yirmiyahu went to the markets because he was not sure that the people would come to him to listen. Tzafaniah went to the Shuls to those who didn't hear Yirmiyahu. Chulda sought out the women to hear them in a language that others didn't or couldn't hear. Rav Elyashiv notes that when it comes to the word of Hashem it takes a large effort to have His words heard. That is a strong contrast to someone who comes for personal glory against Hashem – to that everyone seemed to come.

והיה האיש אשר אבחר בו מטהו יפרח And the one I select, his flower shall blossom (17:20) – Ramban notes that this test came about because the Bechoros wanted to serve in the Mishkan instead of the Leviim. But if after the test of the ground opening and the fire consuming the Ketores bringers, the people were not swayed, why would this test prove anything either? **Rav Simcha Zissel Broide ztl.** explains that this test had an added component – the almonds. Lest the people think that Moshe was stringing the situation along, Hashem added to Moshe's test in a manner not revealed to him – which proved to the people that Hashem and not Moshe was calling the shots here. He alone was setting the structure and it was His decisions that Moshe was charged to implement.

ואני הנה נתתי לך את משמרת תרומותי And as for me, I gave you the responsibility to guard my Terumah (18:18) – We learn that Terumah needs protection from becoming Tamai and being wasted. The **Avnei Miluim Teshuvos 18**) notes that creating a Bittul L'Chatchilah is a rabbinic prohibition except when one is Mivatel Terumah which would be biblically forbidden since one who does so, is causing a loss of Kedushas Terumah. **The Steipler ztl.** disagreed noting that there is a major difference between Being Mivatel and being Mitamai. Being Mitamai is a problem because one is actively removing the Kedusha from Kodesh. When bittul happens, the Kedusha disappears on its own. It is not the same embarrassment to Kodesh that this Issur discusses.

Haftorah: If you fear Hashem and serve Him and listen to him and do not rebel against Hashem (Shmuel I: 12:14) – Why does Shmuel caution the people with three different aspects of the Tzidkus needed to serve Hashem? **Rav Zalman Sorotzkin ztl.** explains that even if one serves Hashem and fears Him, the Yetzer HaRa can still get the person to sin unless he is careful to be on guard not to rebel against Hashem.

Questions to ponder:

1. Moshe asks Hashem not to look at the Mincha (16:16) of the bringers of Ketores. Why is this a question? This was not a Mincha. It was not brought in the right place. Why then Does Moshe need to daven to ask Hashem not to look at their offering?
2. The Gemora in Yoma (75a) teaches that the Manna fell at the doorsteps of the righteous, far away from the tents of the wicked, and somewhere in-between for the average. Why wasn't Moshe able to answer Korach's argument that he was as righteous as Moshe and Aharon by publicly pointing out that Korach's Manna fell far from his tent, revealing his true wicked core? (Shevet Mussar 37:22, Ayeles HaShachar Shemos 16:4)