



**ALEPH
INSTITUTE**

No One Alone,
No One Forgotten.

TORAH WEEKLY

T"01

10 - 16 June, 2018

27 Sivan -

3 Tammuz, 5778

Torah :

Numbers 16:1 - 18:32

Haftorah:

Samuel I 11:14 - 12:22

■ **CALENDARS**

We have Jewish Calendars, if you would like one, please send us a letter and we will send you one, or ask the Rabbi / Chaplain to contact us.

■ **FAMILY PROGRAMS**

Do you have family on the outside who are struggling, please contact or have them contact our office to learn more about our family programs. You and they are not alone, we are here to help.

■ **GRAPE JUICE & MATZAH**

Aleph offers free Grape Juice and Matzoh for you to be able to make the blessings every Shabbos. Please have your chaplain / Rabbi contact us to enroll, it is available to all prisons.

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BUT WHY LEADERSHIP?

In this week's Torah Portion we read a tragic story, one in which many meet a bitter end due to misguided behavior. This all begins when a man named Korach attempts to lead a mutiny against the leadership Moses and Aaron. He claims, "All the people are God's chosen ones, all the people are holy. Why should you and Aaron be exalted above everyone else?"

Moses takes his claims to God and a face-off is set to determine who is in the right. Each of the respective parties would offer a sacrifice to God and the people would watch and see whose sacrifice would be accepted. Needless to say, God's holy presence descends upon the sacrifice of Moses and Aaron, and Korach and his many followers suffer a fatal consequence when the earth miraculously opens up underneath them and they along with all of their possessions are swallowed up.

There was some element of wisdom and virtue to what Korach and his henchmen were claiming. Their logic was simple; being that the bottom line is the action, the level of a person's spiritual inspiration or divine sensitivity should be irrelevant. If the main thing is that the mitzvah get done in the physical sense, and no matter how spiritually inspired one is he must still perform the action, what difference then does it make whether that person is a "Moses" or a "Regular Joe?"

Now, if his protest was indeed

so well-intended and noble at its core, albeit misguided, why was he punished? Was he even wrong? What is, in fact, the role of a leader in the world of Torah and Mitzvot?

The Lubavitcher Rebbe explains that the inherent holiness of every single Jew is indisputable. Every Jewish man, woman and child possesses a spark of God Himself which can never be taken away. It is for that reason that was a Jew, any Jew, performs a Mitzvah, he or she is introducing additional Godly light in the world regardless of his or her religious affiliation, status or scholarship.

Nevertheless, that alone is not always enough to drive a person forward. That spark of God alone is not always enough to generate the motivation needed to keep a person going. As we see clearly in the Torah that time and time again, throughout our history, we have failed to keep ourselves as a nation motivated to follow God's ways. It is true, as Korach claimed, that the value of a Mitzvah performed by Moses is exactly the same as that of one performed by the most simple minded Jew. That, however, is the role of the Jewish leader. A leader is not one who simply instructs or directs others, but a true leader is someone who is able to light the spark in others, no matter how deep it might be buried inside their souls, and ignite it so it glows with the warmth and passion necessary to keep moving forward in the service of God.

By Rabbi Nissan Isaac

Parshat Korach

THE REBBE: A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

The Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, of righteous memory (1902-1994), the seventh leader in the Chabad-Lubavitch dynasty, is considered to have been the most phenomenal Jewish personality of modern times. To hundreds of thousands of followers and millions of sympathizers and admirers around the world, he was — and still is, despite his passing — "the Rebbe," undoubtedly, the one individual more than any other singularly responsible for stirring the conscience and spiritual awakening of world Jewry.

The Rebbe was born in 1902, on the 11th day of Nisan, in Nikolaev, Russia, to the renowned kabbalist, talmudic scholar and leader Rabbi Levi Yitzchak and Rebbetzin Chana Schneerson. Rebbetzin Chana (1880-1964) was known for her erudition, kindness and extraordinary accessibility. Her courage and ingenuity became legend when during her husband's exile by the Soviets to a remote village in Asian Russia she labored to make inks from herbs she gathered in the fields — so that Rabbi Levi Yitzchak could continue writing his commentary on kabbalah and other Torah-subjects. The Rebbe was named after his ancestor, the third Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Lubavitch, with whom he later shared many characteristics.

To Save a Life

There is a story told

about the Rebbe's early life that seems to be almost symbolic of everything that was to follow. When he was nine years old, the young Menachem Mendel courageously dove into the Black Sea and saved the life of a little boy who had rowed out to sea and lost control of his small craft. That sense of "other lives in danger" seems to have dominated his consciousness; of Jews drowning in assimilation, ignorance or alienation—and no one hearing their cries for help: Jews on campus, in isolated communities, under repressive regimes. From early childhood he displayed a prodigious mental acuity. By the time he reached his Bar Mitzvah, the Rebbe was considered an illuy, a Torah prodigy. He spent his teen years immersed in the study of Torah.

Marriage in Warsaw:

In 1929 Rabbi Menachem Mendel married the sixth Rebbe's daughter, Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka, in Warsaw. (The Rebbetzin, born in 1901, was chosen by her father, the sixth Rebbe, to accompany him in his forced exile to Kostroma in 1927. For sixty years she was the Rebbe's life partner; she passed away on 22 Sh'vat in 1988.) He later studied in the University of Berlin and then at the Sorbonne in Paris. It may have been in these years that his formidable knowledge of mathematics and the sciences began to blossom.

Arrival in the U.S.A.

On Monday, Sivan 28, 5701 (June 23, 1941) the Rebbe and the Rebbetzin arrived in the United States, having been miraculously rescued, by the grace of Almighty G-d, from the European holocaust. The Rebbe's arrival marked the launching of sweeping new efforts in bolstering and disseminating Torah and Judaism in general, and Chassidic teachings in particular, through the establishment of three central Lubavitch organizations under the Rebbe's leadership: Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch ("Central Organization For Jewish Education"), Kehot Publication Society, and Machne Israel, a social services agency. Shortly after his arrival, per his father-in-law's urging, the Rebbe began publishing his notations to various Chassidic and kabbalistic treatises, as well as a wide range of response on Torah subjects. With publication of these works his genius was soon recognized by scholars throughout the world.

Leadership:

After the passing of his father-in-law, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneerson, in 1950, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson reluctantly ascended to the leadership of the Lubavitch movement, whose headquarters at 770 Eastern Parkway in Brooklyn, New York. Soon Lubavitch institutions and activities took on new dimensions. The outreaching philosophy of Chabad-Lubavitch was translated into ever greater action, as Lubavitch centers and Chabad Houses were opened in dozens of cities and university campuses around the world.

The Rebbe keenly understood that our every action is part of a bigger picture. Every good deed we do brings humanity closer to the ultimate goal, the era of cosmic perfection and universal awareness of G-d, known in Judaism as the time of Moshiach. The Rebbe spoke tirelessly about this time, demonstrating how the world is heading closer and closer to this special era and how every person can actualize it by increa-

sing in acts of goodness and kindness.

Passing:

On Monday afternoon (March 2, 1992), while praying at the gravesite of his father-in-law and predecessor, the Rebbe suffered a stroke that paralyzed his right side and, most devastatingly, robbed him of the ability to speak.

Two years and three months later, the Rebbe passed away in the early morning hours of the 3rd of the Hebrew month of Tammuz, in the year 5754 from creation (June, 12 1994), orphaning a generation.

In Jewish History

Shabbat, 3 Tammuz, 5778 - June 16, 2018

Joshua Stops the Sun (1273 BCE)

On the third of Tammuz of the year 2488 from creation (1273 BCE), Joshua was leading the Jewish people in one of the battles to conquer the Land of Israel. Victory was imminent, but darkness was about to fall. "Sun," proclaimed Joshua, "be still at Giv'on; moon, at the Ayalon valley" (Joshua 10:12). The heavenly bodies acquiesced, halting their progress through the sky until Israel's armies brought the battle to its successful conclusion.

R. Yosef Yitzchak Released from Prison (1927)

The sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneerson (1880-1950), who was arrested on Sivan 15 of 1927 by agents of the GPU (soviet secret police) and the Yevsektzia ("Jewish section" of the Communist Party) for his work to preserve and disseminate Jewish learning and observance throughout the Soviet Empire. Held in the notorious Spalerno prison in Leningrad, he was repeatedly interrogated and beaten. Initially sentenced to death, international pressure compelled the Soviet regime to first commute the sentence to ten years hard labor in Siberia, and then to a three-year term of exile in Kostroma, a town in the interior of Russia.

On the 3rd of Tammuz, 18 days after his arrest, he was released from prison and allowed six hours at home before reporting to the Leningrad train station to embark on his exile. Many gathered at the station to see him off. Though he knew that there were GPU agents present, he spoke to the assembled crowd, encouraging all to persist in the very activities for which he had been arrested. "This," he proclaimed "all the nations of the world must know: Only our bodies were sent into exile and subjugated to alien rule; our souls were not given over into captivity and foreign rule. We must proclaim openly and before all that any matter affecting the Jewish religion, Torah, and its mitzvot and customs is not subject to the coercion of others. No one can impose his belief upon us, nor coerce us to conduct ourselves contrary to our beliefs!"

(On the 12th of Tammuz, after serving only nine days of his three year term, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak was informed that he was free to return home. Shortly thereafter, he was allowed to leave the Soviet Union and resettled in Riga, Latvia.)

Rebbe's Yahrzeit (1994)

The Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson of righteous memory (b. 1902) passed away in the early morning hours of the 3rd of Tammuz, of the year 5754 from creation (1994).