

30 June – 6 July, 2019
 27 Sivan – 3 Tammuz, 5779
Torah:
Numbers 16:1-18:32
Haftarah:
Samuel I 11:14-12:22
PARSHAT KORACH

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 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
 We offer 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 (available to all prisons).

Hyman & Martha Rogal
 Center
 5804 Beacon Street
 Pittsburgh, PA 15217
 412-421-0111
 Fax: 412-521-5948
 www.alephne.org
 info@alephne.org



ALEPH INSTITUTE
 No One Alone,
 No One Forgotten.

SPORTSMEN OR SPECTATORS?

Are you a spectator or a participant? Do you only watch the soccer World Cup, or do you sometimes kick a ball yourself? A few years ago, it was decided to widen the seats at Wimbledon. Apparently, the problem was rather simple — obesity. It appears that the fans who admire the tennis stars in action don't get much exercise. The chairman of the British Sports Council was prompted to state, "If only the admirers of sport would practice it themselves." The Parshah this week is named after Korach, cousin of Moses, and a revolutionary who attempted to usurp the authority of Moses and Aaron. His ill-fated rebellion came to a bitter end when the earth opened and swallowed Korach and his followers, demonstrating to all that Moses and Aaron were truly chosen by G-d. But why name a Parshah after a villain? Korach was a sinner, and is surely not a role model for us to emulate.

My saintly teacher and mentor, the Lubavitcher Rebbe, whose yahrtzeit is observed this week, offered a novel approach. There is one area where Korach can indeed be a good role model. What was Korach's burning desire in life? It was to be a kohen gadol, high priest. He coveted Aaron's position of honor. Now, being a high priest meant much more than just fame, fortune, glory and privilege. Many sacred responsibilities came with the job. It was no easy task to be a kohen gadol. There were numerous restrictions: where he could go,

what kind of activities he could be involved in, whom he could marry, etc. Yet Korach was absolutely single-minded in his aspiration to become the high priest. Said the Rebbe: this is something we can all learn from Korach—the yearning to serve G-d in the holiest capacity, the craving to be a kohen gadol. Would that all of us shared similar aspirations to holiness. Wouldn't it be wonderful if each one of us longed for a life of sanctity, dedicated to the service of G-d? How often we are only too happy to allow others to handle the sacred stuff. "You can put on tefillin for me, Rabbi." And your bobba (grandmother) can keep kosher for you, and the ADL can fight anti-Semitism for you, and the Lubavitchers will save the world for you. And what will you yourself do? Watch them? It is interesting that in many parts of the world, much of the financial support for religious institutions comes from people who themselves are not religious. It has, in fact, been suggested that this phenomenon may well be a form of vicarious Judaism. These are fine people, who really do believe in the truth of Judaism, but they haven't got sufficient commitment to practice it themselves. Nor do they believe that their own children will do it. Who, then, will defend the faith, and perpetuate Judaism and the Jewish people? So they sponsor a religious institution to do it for them. I recall hearing a pertinent story from Professor Velvl Greene of

Ben Gurion University. A young man signed up to join the paratroopers. On his first training flight, the instructor has him in his parachute, huddled at the door of the airplane, and starts counting down. 5 . . . 4 . . . 3 . . . 2 . . . 1 . . . "JUMP!" The candidate is paralyzed with fear, and doesn't move. "Okay, it happens to the best of us," says the instructor sympathetically. "We'll try again." The second attempt, however, is no better, nor the third or the fourth. The would-be paratrooper is simply too petrified to jump. Exasperated, the instructor asks him, "Tell me, son, if you are so scared to jump, why on earth do you want to join the paratroopers?" The young man answers, "It's true, I am scared out of my wits. But I just love to be around people who are not afraid." It is wonderful to support and encourage the activists among us. But let us learn from Korach, who wanted so badly to be a high priest himself. Let's not be content with being spectators as others do it for us. Let each of us participate in the Jewish idea. And let us do it personally.

by Rabbi Yossy Goldman

THE BEAUTY OF DARKNESS Make no mistake. Korach did not start out as a jealous, power-hungry man who chose to rebel against Moses and Aaron because of personal ambition. In fact, the Kabbalists explain, Korach had a deep philosophical dispute with Aaron's approach to spirituality.

Korach's argument went something like this: Spiritual light is only a manifestation of the Infinite Source of light, just as the sun's rays are emanations of the sun. But in the sun itself, there is no light. In order Korach did not start out as a jealous, power-hungry manto see the essence, the light must be submerged in its source. Only darkness can truly capture the essence of the Infinite Source. Korach resented Aaron, specifically because Aaron was in the light business. Aaron spent his days lighting the menorah in the Tabernacle as well as lighting the metaphorical menorah in the heart of every Jew. Aaron was all about inspiring people to ignite spiritual light in their lives through the study of Torah and the observance of mitzvahs, to spend time and energy on spiritual pursuits, and to illuminate their souls with a love for G-d. Aaron was the embodiment of the Divine attribute of chessed, kindness/sharing/light. Korach believed that Aaron's approach to increasing spirituality missed a deeper truth. Korach argued, "Give me the job of high priest, and I will introduce a completely different model of spirituality. I will teach that no matter what the people are engaged in, they are still holy: 'The entire congregation is all holy, and the L-rd is in their midst.' (Numbers 16:3). There is no need for spiritual light. No need to inspire people to yearn to cleave to their source in heaven. No need to seek inspiration to escape the lure of the material. What I will preach is the celebration of the physical. It is precisely because the physical represents an absence of spiritual light that it is capable of directing our attention to the essence, to the Infinite Source of both darkness and light." Korach viewed light with disdain. In his view, darkness was what encompassed the absolute truth of the Infinite Creator. According to Korach's plan, the people would live a materialistic life, without the burden of seeking spiritual inspiration. Eventually, more and more people would come to appreciate what Korach understood. They would understand that they could be satisfied with materialism as a testament to the fact that G-d cannot be expressed in a limited measure of light. Where did Korach go wrong? Let's begin by pointing out what he got right: He was right that darkness has a higher source than light. He was right that the material has a higher source than the spiritual. And yet, his philosophy was completely wrong. He was wrong because in order to understand the truth of darkness, a person needs light. Yes, indeed, the material is the greatest manifestation of the essence. In the messianic era, the material itself will express its source, as the prophet says, "All flesh together shall see that the mouth of the L-rd spoke." (Isaiah 40:5). Yet the only way a person can crack the shell of the material and connect to Where did Korach go wrong? its source is by subjugating the material to the spiritual. Only when we allow Torah to illuminate life with spiritual light, with a yearning for holiness, will we be able to appreciate that the material is an expression of the essence of G-d. Only a soul inspired by Aaron can reveal and connect to the superior essence of the body. Only light can reconnect the darkness to its lofty source. A soul illuminated with spiritual light can find G-d wherever it looks. Not only in the light, but also in the darkness; not only in the holy, but also in the mundane; not only in heaven, but also on earth. (Or Hatorah, Bamidbar, p. 722; Maamar Hasam Nafsheinu Bachayim 5718.)

By Rabbi Menachem Feldman

July 1, 2019 - 28 Sivan, 5779: Rebbe Arrives in US (1941). After escaping Nazi-occupied Paris, and many perilous months in Vichy France, the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, & his wife, Rebbetzin Chaya Mushkah, boarded the SS Serpa Pinto in Lisbon, Portugal. On June 23--Sivan 28 on the Jewish calendar--at 10:30 A.M., they arrived in New York. Shortly after his arrival, the Rebbe's father-in-law, the then Lubavitcher Rebbe Rabbi Yoseph Yitzchak Schneersohn (who had been rescued from Nazi-occupied Warsaw in 1940), appointed him to head the social & educational outreach programs of Chabad-Lubavitch. Thus the Rebbe began his decades-long revolutionary work to revitalize Jewish life in the Western Hemisphere, which spread, by means of the emissaries ("shluchim") he dispatched from his New York headquarters, to every part of the world.

July 2, 2019 - 29 Sivan, 5779: Spies Dispatched (1312 BCE). Moses dispatched 12 spies to tour the Holy Land in preparation for its conquest by the people of Israel.

July 3, 2019 - 30 Sivan, 5779: Passing of R. Shlomo Kluger (1869). R. Shlomo Kluger, rabbi of Brody, was one of the renowned halachic authorities of his day. He was a prolific writer, authoring over 100 books.

July 4, 2019 - 1 Tammuz, 5779: Birth and Passing of Joseph (1562 and 1452 BCE). Joseph, the son of the patriarch Jacob, was born in Charan (Mesopotamia) on the 1st of Tammuz of the year 2199 from creation (1562 BCE), the first child of Jacob's most beloved wife, Rachel, born after 7 childless years of marriage. He passed away on the same date 110 years later, in Egypt. When Joseph was six years old, Jacob and his family returned to the Holy Land, eventually settling in Hebron. Though younger than 10 of his 11 brothers, he was his father's favorite, and a great rivalry existed between him and his brothers, whose animosity toward him increased when he related two dreams he had forecasting that he is destined to rule over them. When Joseph was 17, he was sold into slavery by his brothers and taken to Egypt; when he refused the advances of his master's wife, she had him placed in prison, where he languished for 12 years. At age 30, he interpreted a pair of mysterious dreams dreamt by Pharaoh, and was appointed viceroy of Egypt to oversee the gathering and storage of grain in preparation for the seven years of famine that Pharaoh's dreams had predicted. He married Asnat, and had 2 children, Menasseh and Ephraim. The great famine brought his brothers to Egypt to purchase grain; after subjecting them to a series of trials to test their loyalty to each other and their remorse over what they had done to him, Joseph revealed his identity to his brothers, was reconciled with them, and settled his father and entire family -- 70 souls in all -- in Egypt. Joseph passed away in Egypt on his 110th birthday. The 1st of his brothers to die, he transmitted to them the divine promise to Jacob that his children will be taken out of Egypt and restored to their homeland, and made them promise to take his remains with them when they go.