

Torah Weekly

ת"ש

June 26-July 2, 2022
27 Sivan - 3 Tammuz, 5782

Torah Reading:
Korach: 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).

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No One Alone,
No One Forgotten.

Spiritual Immunity

As soon as the spring pollen season begins, my body gears up for battle. I need to keep a stock of tissues handy for the inevitable sneezing and runny nose, as my body struggles to keep the intruders at bay.

An allergy is an overreaction of the immune system. A relatively minor, harmless stimulus, such as a speck of dust or a grain of pollen, is misidentified as a danger to the system, and the body acts as if it is fighting off a deadly infection. And sometimes the immune system even turns against the body itself. Autoimmune diseases occur when the same antibodies that normally protect the body against viruses and bacteria mistakenly launch an attack on the body's own tissues.

Like all matters in the physical world, autoimmunity has a spiritual counterpart: Since the Jewish people is like one body with one soul, when we overreact and attack someone else, we are actually hurting ourselves.

In this week's Torah portion we read of a particularly unfortunate episode of "autoimmunity"—when Korach and his followers rose up to challenge the authority of Moses. Korach and his men opposed the division of the Jewish people into the three classes of Kohen, Levite and Israelite. Rather than recognizing that each group has a distinct and essential role to play, Korach demanded equal roles. He attempted to convince the Jewish people that Moses was somehow a threat to them and their own status, and he very

nearly succeeded in convincing the Jewish people to go along with his philosophy.

Moses, in his humility, had a very difficult time confronting this challenge. His entire being was dedicated to the welfare of the Jewish people, and he was reluctant to see his own brothers, his own flesh and blood, punished because of their waywardness. He begged Korach and his men to reconsider, to change their course of action. But when Korach refused to reconcile, Moses was forced to take steps to eliminate Korach's rebellion, which threatened the integrity of the Jewish people.

The leading cause of the destruction of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem was "autoimmunity"—the senseless hatred between brothers. It is explained in chassidic teachings that no nation in the world has the power to harm the Jewish people or destroy the Temple. Only when we weaken ourselves through internal battles are the non-Jews able to overcome us.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe taught that by virtue of the love we show to one another, we can correct the cause of the destruction and hasten the redemption. The third Temple, which will be rebuilt with the coming of Moshiach, will be an expression of our selfless love for each other, a love that transcends our different views, beliefs and practices. And a house built on the strength of this love will never be destroyed.

Our task now is to begin to

live with the type of love and harmony we will experience in the era of redemption. Instead of developing "antibodies" by focusing on what is repellent about others, we need to develop "pro-bodies"—to constantly look for the good in others, and try to strengthen and encourage them in any possible way. This is sure to bring about the ultimate redemption—a time when we will perceive that we are truly one united body with one soul.

By Chaya Shuchat

Do You Live Near Korach?

We are all influenced by society. One who lives in a place with a low moral standard will eventually start believing that this is what morality is all about. When all the people on the block act one way, a newcomer is likely to follow suit.

This is true with regards to cultural quirks, such as the fact that the average Moroccan citizen doesn't appreciate baseball, or the fact that you'll be hard-pressed to find an American who does a 25-hour workweek, or who closes his shop for three hours in the afternoon for a siesta.

How much more so in the world of right and wrong, where all too often objectivity is lost in the wind. That is how millions of Germans came to believe that exterminating Jews was their calling. Everyone else says so; they must be right.

Korach—the filthy rich, rabble-rousing, charismatic opposition leader—is the protagonist of the Torah reading in Numbers named after him.

But instead of focusing on his motives, let us zero in on his co-conspirators. Were they simply a bunch of unemployed town criers?

No. Our sages teach that they were great leaders of the tribe of Reuben.

How, then, did they fall into the pit (pun intended)?

They lived next to Korach. Korach was a Levite from the family of Kohath, who lived on the south side of the Tabernacle, and the tribe of Reuben lived just to their south. That's why they, too, fell.

Rashi puts it this way: "Woe to the evil man; woe to his neighbor." Great men can fall because of a bad neighbor.

That is why, when searching for a place to live, a place to work, and a school for our children, we must ask ourselves: How do I want my children to grow up? What do I want their (and my) values to be?

Then we look for a community that lives those values today, so that our family can live them tomorrow.

If, however, due to circumstances beyond our control, we must live in a place where the popular definition of right and wrong is not compatible with Jewish morals, we should take these words from the Rebbe to heart: "You will either affect your environment, or the environment will affect you. There is no middle ground." We must try to raise our community to a higher plane; to teach, inspire, be a role model, be proud of who we are and what we stand for.

Rashi puts it this way: "It is good for the *tzaddik* (righteous one) and good for his neighbor." Great people are formed by great neighbors.

In summary: If I live next to a Korach, I must either move away, or turn him into a Moses. There is no third option.

By Levi Avtzon

Monday, June 27, 2022 --- 28 Sivan, 5782

Rebbe Arrives in US (1941)

After escaping Nazi-occupied Paris, and many perilous months in Vichy France, the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson (1902-1994), and his wife, Rebbetzin Chaya Mushkah (1901-1988), boarded the *SS Serpa Pinto* in Lisbon, Portugal. On Monday, 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 and 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.

Tuesday, June 28, 2022 --- 29 Sivan, 5782

Spies Dispatched (1312 BCE)

Moses dispatched 12 spies to tour the Holy Land in preparation for its conquest by the people of Israel.

Wednesday, June 29, 2022 --- 30 Sivan, 5782

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.

Thursday, June 30, 2022 --- 1 Tammuz, 5782

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.

Friday, July 1, 2022 --- 2 Tammuz, 5782

Passing of Rabbi Nachman of Horodenka (Gorodenka) (1765)

Rabbi Nachman of Horodenka was a close colleague of the Baal Shem Tov. His son, Rabbi Simcha, married the Baal Shem Tov's granddaughter, Feiga. Their son, the famed Rabbi Nachman of Breslov, became the founder of Breslov Chassidism. The Baal Shem Tov once asked Rabbi Nachman of Horodenka to deliver a letter to Rabbi Dov Ber of Mezritch (who later became known as the Mezritcher Maggid) in which he attempted to persuade Rabbi Dov Ber to become his disciple. Upon receiving the letter, Rabbi Dov Ber said, "I see an auspicious sign in the student who bears this letter. If Rabbi Nachman of Horodenka is such a holy tzaddik, how much more so is his teacher—the Baal Shem Tov." Rabbi Dov Ber then agreed to meet with the Baal Shem Tov and later to join the Chassidic movement.

Shabbat, July 2, 2022 --- 3 Tammuz, 5782

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 Schneersohn (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 Kostrama, 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).