

Toronto Torah

Yeshiva University Torah MiTzion Beit Midrash Zichron Dov

Parshat Korach

3 Tammuz, 5778/June 16, 2018

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This week's Toronto Torah is dedicated by Annie and Shloimie Romberg

for the yahrzeit of Annie's father, Isidore Schindelheim, Yisroel ben Yosef v' Malka Frimet z"l

The Art of Finding a Place for Your Staff

Rabbi Baruch Weintraub

Parshat Korach includes one of the most difficult challenges to Moshe's leadership. Moshe Rabbeinu, it seems, is caught in a pincer movement. On the one hand, his authority is questioned 'from above', by those who form the elite class of the nation – Korach and his two hundred and fifty strong group of important men. They were motivated by the idealistic claim that the whole congregation is holy. On the other hand, he is also confronted from the 'grassroots' level, by Dan, Aviram and their gang, for his seeming failure to bring them into a land of milk and honey.

Why was it at this point that Moshe's charisma was suddenly lost? To answer this, we must first determine when exactly these mutinies erupted. According to the Ibn Ezra, it was after the giving of the Torah, and a result of the election of the Kohanim and Levites. The Ramban strongly rejects this position, suggesting the revolts occurred immediately after the sin of the spies, in the aftermath of the Divine punishment to wander in the desert.

What is clear to both commentators, then, is that the uprising against Moshe was rooted in a strong feeling of despair. Either it was a consequence of appointing the Kohanim as the only ones permitted to serve in the Mishkan, or, even worse, it resulted from the prevention of the whole generation from entering the promised land. The loss of a dream creates a vacuum. Every one of us has a story he tells about himself, and the tale has

a meaning granted by an envisioned goal – a *telos*. This meaning can change from person to person. In the case of Korach, the meaning may have been his dream to lead the service in the Mishkan. For Dan and Aviram it may have been their journey from petty slavery to freedom and riches. As long as these stories could be maintained, the Jews in the desert may have complained, but they were generally content. But, when the stories suddenly lost their meanings, when it became clear that the journey leads to nothing but a lonely grave in the desert – the order fell apart.

Korach and Dan and Aviram represent two different reactions to this loss of *telos*. Korach decided to stick to his dream, even though G-d Himself had appointed Aharon as the Kohen; Dan and Aviram decided to completely abandon everything, forsaking the Divine covenant.

G-d's reaction to both parties is clear and swift – either by heavenly fire or by the miraculous opening of the earth, the rebellions are crushed. However, this can only teach us what is wrong. We still have to learn what is the right way to react when suddenly finding ourselves in what seems to be a meaningless and indecipherable world.

A small story coming in the wake of the great miracles mentioned above may give us the answer. The Torah tells us the following details: Aharon and the rest of the tribes' leaders are asked to leave their staffs in the Mishkan; only Aharon's staff produces flowers; Aharon's staff remains in the Mishkan,

while the other leaders take their staffs back.

This last detail is somewhat strange. Why there is a need to recount that each leader took back his staff? Seemingly, the only important staff in the story is Aharon's! Moreover, perhaps it would have been better to leave the other staffs in the Mishkan, as a constant proof that it was only Aharon's that bloomed!

Not many of the commentators relate to this question (see, however, Seforno and Ha'amek Davar). I would, therefore, like to suggest my personal thoughts. It seems to me, that each leader took his staff in order to find another place, in which it could indeed flower.

After it was conclusively proved that they didn't belong, the leaders did not try to coerce a place for their staffs in the Mishkan, as Korach did. Nor did they throw their staffs away altogether, as Dan and Aviram did. Rather, the right response to the crisis of losing one's story – is an open minded but relentless attempt to find the route on which your staff, and yourself, can thrive.

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**הורשתם את הארץ וישבתם בה (במדבר לג)
Marking the State of Israel's 70th Year!**

Israeli Landmark: The Arbel **Yaron Perez**

Arbel is a *moshav* in the lower Galil, beside the city of Tiberias. The *moshav* is named for an ancient local settlement; the name *Arbel* can also refer to the plains on which the *moshav* is located, and to the adjacent mountain.

History

Because the area is a juncture for travel from various northern centres to Jerusalem, and because of its proximity to the Kinneret and its elevation, many battles were waged for control of Arbel across the generations. For example, some identify the biblical *Beit Arbel* battlefield (Hosheia 10:14) with the historical Arbel settlement. Within this view, the settlement existed in the First Temple period.

There is clear evidence of the Arbel community from the Second Temple period, as Book of Maccabees I (9:2) references a battle between the Seleucid army and local forces in the Greek period. Also, one of the heads of the Sanhedrin during the early mishnaic period was a local resident, Nitai of Arbel.

When the Romans named Herod as King of Judea, the Arbel population rejected his control and rebelled. They used hidden caves along the slopes of the Arbel cliffs, such that Herod's army could not reach them easily. Herod's forces suffered great losses, until they brought in overwhelming numbers and lowered soldiers down the cliff face in containers to do battle in the caves. Twenty years later, during the great revolt against Rome, regional commander Josephus Flavius reinforced the Arbel fortress as part of a chain of seventeen fortresses around the region. However, the Romans' overwhelming might ultimately took Arbel, along with the rest of the Galil.

Some scholars maintain that after the Second Temple was destroyed, families of kohanim migrated to the Galil, and the Yeshua clan settled in Arbel.

There are various accounts of Jewish and non-Jewish populations visiting the Arbel region in the Middle Ages. Also, stories abound of biblical figures buried in the area, including Shet (son of Adam and Chavah), Reuven, Shimon, Levi and Dinah. Talmudic

figures include Nitai of Arbel, Rabbi Zeira, and Chizkiyah the Exilarch.

Today

The modern *moshav* of Arbel was established in 1949, but nearby is an archaeological dig researching ancient Arbel. Here one can see the remnants of a synagogue which lasted from the 4th century CE to the 8th century CE. One can also tour Mount Arbel. There is a great fortress atop the cliffs, composed of various natural caves which were widened during the rebellion against Herod. To aid tourists, ropes have been added for ease of access to the caves. The descent down the cliff affords a fantastic view of the Kinneret and the mountains of the Golan.

It is highly recommended that one reach the Mount Arbel observation point, 400 meters above the Kinneret, early in the morning. This allows for a spectacular view of sunrise, of which Rabbi Chiya Rabbah said, "Such is the redemption of Israel – at first bit by bit, but increasingly radiant as it builds." (Jerusalem Talmud, Berachot 1:1)

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The Zionist Idea: The Rebbe and the State of Israel **Adam Friedmann**

The relationship between the late seventh rebbe of Lubavitch, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, and the Land and State of Israel, was complicated and intense. Rabbi Sholom Dovber Schneerson, the fifth rebbe of Lubavitch, opposed the secular Zionist movement in the late 19th century, fearing a Jewish state which would be detached from G-d and Judaism. This position set an overtone for subsequent relations between the Chabad movement and the State of Israel. Nevertheless, the seventh rebbe and his predecessor, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneerson, considered it important to be involved with the affairs of the settlement in Israel, and the subsequently established state, because of the large number of Jews who lived in the land.

The Rebbe's Zionism was therefore not based in an idealistic commitment to Zionist movements and was devoid of messianic elements. Instead, the State of Israel was viewed as a massive, and therefore critically important, Jewish community. For example, the Rebbe's support for the IDF stemmed simply from the need to have an army to defend the Jews living in Israel. Because he cared for the lives of the soldiers and those they protected, he made it his business to know as much as possible about the operational capacities of the IDF. Once, he questioned a visiting IDF major for close to three hours about the equipment used by the army. He castigated the major because the army was not using thick enough steel plating on its personnel carriers. (<https://bit.ly/2MihWDA>)

One issue with which the Rebbe became very involved with was "Land for Peace" negotiations, particularly when it came to exchanging parts of the West Bank. The Rebbe was vehemently opposed to giving up land. He also opposed any type of negotiation which might lead to this. In the early 1990s, the government of PM Yitzchak Shamir was considering negotiations with the Palestinian representatives to allow for autonomous Palestinian rule in the West Bank for a five-year period. When Moshe Katzav, then the Transportation Minister, visited the Rebbe, the latter excoriated Katzav for his government even entertaining this possibility. The Rebbe argued that the danger of entering such negotiations is that it played into the plans of the PLO, who sought not just autonomous rule, but ultimately for Israel to forfeit the lands in the West Bank, making way for a Palestinian state. The Rebbe viewed giving up land in such a way as dangerous. However, in keeping with his general approach to the State of Israel, this was not because he considered this an abrogation of some messianic vision. Rather, the issue was practical. The Rebbe agreed with the perspectives of many military authorities who held that giving up land directly endangered Jewish lives. As such, ceding land, or even showing weakness, is forbidden on practical, and potentially halachic grounds.

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Biography

Rabbi Avraham Shapira

Rabbi Baruch Weintraub

Rabbi Avraham Shapira was born circa 1911 to a family with deep Jerusalem roots. As a young man, he learned in the prominent yeshivot of the time, including Yeshivat Chevron. He exchanged letters with leading Rabbis, including the Chazon Ish, Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, and Rabbi Isser Zalman Meltzer - who even printed their exchanges in his renowned book, "Even Ha'Azal."

Rabbi Shapira married into the family of Rabbi Kook, and in 1945 he was invited to teach in Yeshivat Merkaz HaRav, where he raised generations of Torah scholars over the next sixty years. Rabbi Shapira became a member of the Jerusalem Rabbinical Court in 1956, and beginning in 1974 he served in the highest Israeli Rabbinical court. In 1982, following the passing of Rabbi Tzvi Yehudah Kook, he became a Rosh Yeshiva in Yeshivat Merkaz HaRav.

Due to political pressures, the Knesset decided in 1980 that the term of Chief Rabbis would be limited to ten years. Thus, in 1983 the two Chief Rabbis - Rabbi Ovadiah Yosef and Rabbi Shlomo Goren - were forced to leave office. Once it became clear that the law would not be repealed, Rabbi Avraham Shapira agreed to take the position of Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi. After his term, Rabbi Shapira returned to Merkaz HaRav. Rabbi Shapira passed away on Sukkot 2007, and was buried on Har HaZeitim (Mount of Olives).

Rabbi Shapira never tired of emphasizing the crucial role of tradition in both Torah study and the adjudication of Jewish law. He opposed changes in the Yeshiva curriculum and insisted that his students be well versed in the later commentators (*Acharonim*), so that they wouldn't be detached from the chain of tradition. He was also an unyielding advocate for Eretz Yisrael. He organized the 'Rabbinical Union for Eretz Yisrael', and opposed vehemently the Oslo accords, which he saw as violating the mitzvah to inhabit our land. He went as far as calling on soldiers to refuse withdrawal orders; nonetheless, he stressed the strict prohibition against any kind of violence against soldiers or policemen. Rabbi Shapira was also well-known for his kind demeanor; he ruled for his students based upon what he thought their place in life.

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Torah and Translation

Redemption and Temple: An Interview

Rabbi Avraham Shapira, *Techumin* Vol. 5

Translated by Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner

כיצד אפשר לקרב ולקדם את חזון בנין בית המקדש?

חזון זהו ענין של אמונה. יהודי אמיתי יודע כי בלי בית מקדש איננו יהודים שלמים. כבר ציינתי את נסיונו של הרב קלישר להחזירנו למצבנו הטבעי בזה"ע"י חידוש העבודה במקדש, ונחלקו עליו בזה כל גדולי הדור. יהודי אמיתי בוכה על חורבן המקדש, ומצפה לבנינו וכל המתאבל על ירושלים זוכה ורואה בשמחתה, ושאינו מתאבל על ירושלים אינו רואה בשמחתה (תענית ל, ב).

הגרי' ל דיסקין גר בעיר העתיקה מול הכותל, ובקשו הרופאים להעבירו לדירה אחרת, כי בכל פעם שהיה פותח חלונו ורואה את המקדש בשממונו היה פורץ בבכי, בכיה שפגעה בבריאותו. לפני מלחמת ששת הימים, היינו ראשי הישיבה ומתלמידיה נוהגים לסור למוסררה בחגים להשקיף על הר הבית, כדי לעורר כסופינו למקדש.

מה עם מצות קרבנות?

תורת הקרבנות היא רצון אבינו שבשמים, כאמור בתורה. צריכים להיות מלאי אמונה בתורה מן השמים, להדבק בתורה ולהאמין בקדושתה. את הפסוק "רק השמר לך וגו' פן תשכח את הדברים" (דברים ד, ט) מונה הרמב"ן עה"ת שם כמצות לא תעשה מיוחדת - לחיות ולחיות את מעמד הר סיני, "כי ד' עשה המעמד ההוא כדי שתלמדו ליראה אותו כל הימים ואת בניכם תלמדו לדורות עולם"....

יהודי בא לפני הרבי מאפטא ותנה בפניו צרותיו. הרבי נחמו ועודדו, ולפני שיצא אמר לו, לעם ישראל קרתה היום צרה גדולה יותר, נבהל אותו יהודי ושאל מה קרה? לא הקריבו היום קרבן תמיד - ענה הרבי.

עם כל זאת יש לנו ליוזר במורא מקדש. הכסופים לבנין הבית הם רצויים ואמתיים, אך אסור לנו לפרוץ גדרי הלכה כדי לבטא אותם כסופים. כבר פסקו כי איננו רשאים כיום ליכנס למקדש כשאנו טמאי מתים, ואין אפשרות מבחינת הדין להקריב שם קרבנות עד כי יבוא מורה צדק, ואין אהבה סותרת שורת ההלכה.

legally we cannot bring korbanot there until the arbiter or righteousness comes, and love does not subvert the legal process.

How might one bring closer the vision of the construction of the Temple?

A vision is a matter of faith. A true Jew knows that without a Temple we are not complete Jews. I have already noted Rabbi Kalischer's attempt to return us to our natural state in our own times, via renewal of the Temple service, and all of the leaders of the generation disputed his views. A true Jew cries for the destruction of the Temple, and anticipates its rebuilding. Any who mourn for Jerusalem will merit to see its joy, and those who do not mourn for Jerusalem will not see its joy. (Taanit 30b)

Rabbi Yehoshua Leib Diskin lived in the Old City, near the Kotel. The doctors tried to move him to another dwelling, for whenever he opened his window and saw the Temple in its ruins, he would burst out crying, weeping which harmed his health. Before the Six Day War, we - the roshei yeshiva and its students - would go to Musrara on festivals to gaze upon the Temple Mount to awaken our longing for the Temple.

What about the mitzvot of korbanot?

The laws of korbanot are the will of our Father in Heaven, as recorded in the Torah. We must be full of faith in Torah from Heaven, to stick to Torah and to believe in its sanctity. Deuteronomy 4:9, "Only guard yourselves... lest you forget", is counted by Ramban (ibid.) as a dedicated prohibition - to live and express the Revelation at Mount Sinai, "For G-d established that gathering so that you would learn to revere Him always, and you would teach your children for all generations..."

A Jew came before the Opter Rav and wept before him for his woes. The Rav comforted and encouraged him. Before he left, the Rav said to him, "An especially great tragedy befell the Nation of Israel today!" The Jew was shocked, and asked, "What happened?" The Rav replied, "They did not bring the daily korban today."

Nonetheless, we must be careful of reverence for the Temple [site]. The longings to build the Temple are desirable and authentic, but we may not break the bounds of law to express those longings. It has already been ruled that we may not enter the Temple today, when we are *tamei* from contact with the dead, and

(continued from last week)

Historically, some argued that we should keep a minimal quantity of chametz to destroy *after* midday on Erev Pesach, as that is the biblical time to destroy chametz. They explained that the earlier time we observe for destroying chametz is a rabbinic safeguard, but by burning the chametz early, we miss the opportunity to fulfill the biblical mitzvah; by the time the biblical mitzvah begins, we possess no chametz to destroy. This is consistent with the view of Tosafot, that the mitzvah of destroying chametz requires active destruction. However, Rambam contends that eliminating chametz before that deadline, so that no chametz remains at the deadline, also fulfills the mitzvah.

[See Or Zarua II Pesachim 256, Mordechai Pesachim 533 and Minchat Chinuch 9:1.]

The prohibition against owning chametz during Pesach forbids taking responsibility for preserving any chametz during Pesach; we equate guardianship with ownership. This creates practical difficulties for a Jew who keeps a refrigerator in her work cubicle and allows non-Jews to keep their food in her refrigerator. Aside from an imperative to avoid any chance that she might accidentally consume the chametz, the Jew would also need to make clear to the chametz-owners that she takes no responsibility for the fate of their chametz. For more on this, see Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 340.

Weekly Highlights: June 16 – June 22 / 3 Tammuz – 9 Tammuz
Some of our classes are going on summer hiatus, but opportunities remain!

Time	Speaker	Topic	Location	Special Notes
שבת June 16 Shabbaton at Bnai Torah: 70 Years of Jewish Coexistence!				
8:15 AM	R' Jonathan Ziring	Appreciating Secular Zionism	Bnai Torah	
After musaf	R' Jonathan Ziring	Unity in the IDF		
6:45 PM	R' Mordechai Torczyner	Chasidim & Mitnagdim & S. Y. Agnon		
7:45 PM	R' Mordechai Torczyner	Sharing the Kotel		<i>For women</i>
Seudah Shlishit	R' Mordechai Torczyner	Wars of Words		
After Hashkamah	Adam Friedmann	Parshah Analysis	Clanton Park	
7:45 PM	Adam Friedmann	Pirkei Avot	Clanton Park	
After minchah	R' Jonathan Ziring	Choosing Gender	BAYT	<i>Simcha Suite</i>
Sun. June 17				
8:45 AM	R' Jonathan Ziring	Responsa	BAYT	
Mon. June 18				
10:00 AM	R' Mordechai Torczyner	Are Jews Superstitious? Week 3: Black Magic	Beth Tikvah	
8:30 PM	R' Jonathan Ziring	Psak of Israel's Chief Rabbis 3 Rabbi Shlomo Goren	Shomrai Shabbos	<i>Third Floor; For men</i>
Tues. June 19				
1:30 PM	R' Mordechai Torczyner	Nechemiah: Jerusalem	Shaarei Shomayim	
Wed. June 20				
10:00 AM	R' Mordechai Torczyner	Israel's Chief Rabbis: Clergy or Politicians?	Yeshivat Or Chaim	<i>Week 1 of 4</i>
8:00 PM	Adam Friedmann	Contemporary Issues	Shaarei Tefillah	
8:00 PM	Yaron Perez	הפרשה ואני	Shaarei Shomayim	
Thu. June 21				
1:30 PM	R' Mordechai Torczyner	Book of Shemuel	49 Michael Ct.	
Fri. June 22				
10:30 AM	R' Jonathan Ziring	Muktzeh	Yeshivat Or Chaim	<i>Advanced</i>

For University Men, at Yeshivat Or Chaim

11:00 AM Sunday, Contemporary Halachah: Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner: Studying Other Religions

8:30 AM Friday, Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner, The Book of Yeshayah

For University Women, at Ulpanat Orot—On Summer Hiatus