



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

No Limits

Presented by Rabbi Zacharia Schwartz, former Kollel Scholar and currently a Kollel Adjunct

This week's Parsha tells the tragic story of Korach's rebellion against Moshe and Aharon. Korach and his followers accuse Moshe of exercising nepotism in appointing Aharon as the Kohen Gadol and declare that the entire nation should have an equal opportunity at the priesthood, as *"the entire nation is holy."* As Korach was from the tribe of Levi, Moshe emphasizes the special status of the Levites in his attempt to put a stop to the rebellion. *"This is too much for you...Is it a small matter to you that Hashem the G-D of Israel has separated you from the congregation of Israel to bring you close to Him to perform the service of the Mishkan...and now you desire priesthood as well?"*

Surprisingly, our sages find fault in Moshe's statement, *"This is too much for you."* In fact, Moshe was punished with almost the exact same words when Hashem denied Moshe's prayers to be allowed to enter the Land of Israel, saying, *"It is too much for you"* (Sotah 13b). Why was Moshe punished? It is clear from the ensuing story that Moshe was absolutely right and Korach and his followers were absolutely wrong.

The answer seems to be as follows. Korach and his followers certainly sinned greatly by casting aspersions on the Divine nature of Aharon's appointment to the high priesthood, and seeking to take a position that Hashem had said was not theirs. However, the notion that one should try to reach beyond apparent barriers in order to reach higher levels of spirituality and service of Hashem is the appropriate attitude for a Jew. Moshe's choice of words, *"It is too much for you,"* implies that because the priesthood was out of reach for the Levites, they should "face the reality" of their limitations and be satisfied with whatever spirituality they have attained thus far. Instead, it would have been more appropriate to convey to them that though they may never be able to be *Kohanim*, there is no limit to the closeness to Hashem that they can achieve.

This is an important lesson for each and every one of us. Whether it is our background, our livelihood, our surroundings, or a host of other factors, everyone has his or her constraints that seem to limit the potential for spiritual growth. But our sages teach us that if we make the first move, Hashem will help us reach our goals. Let us never allow ourselves to be victims of our circumstances. Let us always remember that Hashem tells us, *"you make a needle-size opening, and I will make for you an opening like the opening of a hallway"* (Shir Hashirim Raba).

Have a wonderful Shabbos!

TABLE TALK

POINTS TO PONDER

“Say to Elazar son of Aharon the Kohen, and let him pick up the fire-pans from amid the fire...” (17:2)

Why did Hashem decide to involve Elazar? He was not part of the test with Korach. Hashem should have sent Aharon to pick up the fire-pans of Korach’s men. As Aharon was the one who was involved in this, and he was “victorious,” it would seem that he should collect the fire-pans of the dead people.

PARSHA RIDDLE

Why did Hashem choose the ketores as the means with which to stop the plague?

Please see next week’s issue for the answer.

Last week’s riddle:

Who went on two spy missions to Eretz Yisrael?

Answer: Kaleiv

HATORAH V’HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Korach*, we are commanded to support the *Kohanim* (priests) and *Leviim* (Levites) by the donations of *terumah* and *ma’aser* respectively, and the *Leviim* in turn are commanded to give a tithe of their *ma’aser* to the *Kohanim*. This latter injunction is expressed by the words (*Bemidbar* 18:28): “So shall you, too, raise up the gift of Hashem from all your tithes that you accept from the children of Israel.” While the simple sense of the phrase “you, too” apparently refers to the parallelism between the initial *ma’aser* (tithe) of the Israelites and the “tithe from the tithe” of the *Leviim*, the Talmud (*Kidushin* 41b) understands it hermeneutically as an allusion to the possibility of agency: a *Levi* may either separate his “tithe from the tithe” himself, or he may appoint an agent to do so on his behalf. This is one of several sources for the *halachic* doctrine of agency.

One exception to this doctrine is where the task being delegated to the agent is sinful. A principal is not liable for the criminal consequences of his agent’s action: “There is no agent for a sinful matter,” since “the words of the master [i.e., Hashem] and the words of the disciple [i.e., the human principal], to whose words does one listen?” This seems to imply that *halachah* has no notion of criminal conspiracy, and indeed, the Rema (*Shulchan Aruch CM* 348:8 and 388:15) rules that one who merely commissions a theft or other tort but does not participate in its actual perpetration has no liability. He does, however, allow for certain exceptions, such as where the agent has an established history of engaging in the sort of tortious conduct in question, since in this case “it is widely known that he does not listen to the words of the master.” The Shach (*CM siman* 182 s.k. 1, *siman* 348 s.k. 6, *siman* 388 s.k. 67), however, disagrees, repeatedly insisting that as a matter of normative *halachah*, the inapplicability of agency to sinful conduct is absolute and without exception.

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

WHO AM I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. Maybe I am cold.
2. Perhaps I am bald.
3. A split I enabled.
4. A divide was caused.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am for humans.
2. I am for animals.
3. I am for the first.
4. I am for the Kohen.

Last Week’s Answers:

#1 The ‘yud’ added to Yehoshua’s name (I am ten, yet I removed from ten; I made the ‘eh’ into ‘ee’; I prevented birth, yet I brought salvation; I was a life-saving addition.)

#2 Tzitzis (For some I am a mitzvah; for some I am to wrap; do not cut corners; I am a mitzvah remainder.)

All children 13 and under who answer a “Who Am I?” correctly will be entered into a raffle to **win a**

POPCORN POPPER 

The next raffle is September 6th.

Congratulations to Naphtali Tzvi Graham and others for answering last week’s questions correctly!

Visit gwckollel.org to submit your answers.

Answer as many as you can – each correct answer will entitle you to another raffle ticket and increase your chances of winning.

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD

Come join the Kollel for a fascinating 5 minute class on Shem Ha’Gedolim of the Chida, immediately following the 9:45 pm Maariv (approximately 10 pm) given by Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman, Monday - Thursday at the Kollel, 10900 Lockwood Drive.