



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

# SHABBOS DELIGHTS

## TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

### **Korach's Mis-Take**

**Presented by Rabbi Moshe Sadwin, Kollel Adjunct**

**"And Korach took..." (16:1)**

Parshas Korach depicts the unfortunate saga of Korach and his rebellion against Moshe Rabbeinu. The Torah opens up the saga by saying "And Korach took". The Torah then details Korach's co-conspirators and how Korach convinced others to join his rebellion. Notably, the Torah never tells us what exactly Korach "took".

Rabbi Dovid Feinstein suggests that Korach took *everything* for himself. The Talmud and Midrash tell us that Korach discovered great wealth when leaving Egypt. Hashem had given him the wealth so that it can be used in the service of Hashem. Korach, however, made the mistake of thinking that he had earned it all himself. He treated it as if it belonged to him and he could do with it as he pleased. Korach's trait of always taking was his downfall. He made a rebellion against Moshe because he only wanted to take more and more and, ultimately, he was swallowed up by the earth and was left with nothing.

The Midrash brings the verse in Mishlei (5:12) "Wealth is held to bring harm to its owner" to aptly describe Korach.

Conversely, a wealthy person who acknowledges that one's money really belongs to Hashem, and regards oneself as nothing more than the administrator of a trust fund, will find their wealth to be a true blessing. If one diligently and faithfully oversees the fund that has been entrusted to them, in accordance with all the wishes and instructions of its true Owner, then one can be assured of a handsome reward in this world and the next.

**Wishing you a Good Shabbos!**

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## TABLE TALK

### Point to Ponder

**The earth opened its mouth and swallowed them (16:27).**

*Rabba bar bar Chana related, "One time I was traveling and I met an Arab merchant who offered to show me where Korach was swallowed. I saw two holes with smoke rising out of them... I put my ear by the hole and I heard them saying "Moshe and his Torah are true and they are liars" (Sanhedrin 110a).*

It would seem that they should be saying "We are liars", referring to themselves, that they lied regarding Moshe. What does the Gemara mean, "They are liars"?

### Parsha Riddle

**How did the words of Kabbalas Shabbos cause the death of two people in two different instances?**

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

*Which mitzvos (other than those dependent on being in the Land of Israel) did all the B'nei Yisrael not fulfill in the desert?*

*Answer: 1) Bris Mila 2) Kiddush Levana – the Ananei HaKovod (Clouds of Glory) made it impossible to see the moon.*

## HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

### HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Korach* (16:15), Moshe Rabbeinu declares: "I have not taken even a single donkey of theirs." The simple reading of this claim is that he had never stolen from the people, but this is not a very high ethical standard – "had he taken a donkey from them, how would he be different from a bandit?" – and so *Chazal* offer several alternate interpretations of the claim:

- "That which I had [a right] to take I did not take. By universal custom, one who works in the sanctuary receives wages from the sanctuary. [In my case, however,] when I went down from Midian to Egypt I had a right to take a donkey from them, since it was on behalf of their needs that I was going down [there]; but I did not take [one]." (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 18:10)
- "Throughout all those journeys that we journeyed through the desert, I never said to any of them that he should take something of mine and load it onto his donkey." (*Shemos Rabbah* 4:1)
- Moshe was saying that **even with payment** he never took a donkey from the people (against their will). (*Nedarim* 38a and *Tosafos* there)

Why did Moshe not do these things? The simple explanation is that he was being meticulous to not abuse his position to unfairly benefit himself at the peoples' expense. Some *midrashim*, however, take a different approach: had Moshe received benefit ("*shochad*" – bribes) from the people, he would "not have had the strength to oppose Israel and reprove them" (*Midrash Yelamdenu*); alternatively, his reproof would not have been effective:

Had another person come and rebuked Israel, I would have said: Shall a person who ate and drank from them and derived benefit from them, rebuke them? Rather, Moshe, in whose regard it is written: "I have not taken even a single donkey of theirs," for this one it is appropriate to rebuke Israel. ... (*Kohles Rabbah* 3:11).

Regarding the *Yelamdenu's* use of the term "*shochad*," the *halachah* is that a gift given to a judge prior to, and not in connection to, litigation involving the giver does not disqualify the judge from adjudicating that litigation, although the judge should ideally (*mi-midas chassidus*) voluntarily recuse himself if he realizes that the gift has engendered a partiality toward the giver (*Shulchan Aruch CM* 9:2).

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

## KIDS KORNER

### Who Am I?

#### #1 WHO AM I?

1. Entangled Ram.
2. Wooden staff with flowers waiting to bloom.
3. Mouth of the donkey.
4. Mouth of the ground

#### #2 WHO AM I?

1. My lineage was not fully delineated.
2. My lineage caused my downfall.
3. Don't confuse me with Rabbi Akiva.
4. I was not ice.

#### Last Week's Answers

**#1 Ticheiles** (I caused joy on Mordechai, Don't use a calzone, You can see my color, I was lost.)

**#2 Tzitzis** (I am four yet eight, I am knotty, I am wrapped, I equal 613.)

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