

A PARASHA THOUGHT

The Heart Of
The Argument

When we think about Korach, or at least when I think about Korach, the general outlook is that he was a bad man who cooked up some horrible accusations against Moshe and incited others against him as well. However, when you chance upon a certain *mishna* in *Avos*, things get a little bit fuzzy. The *mishna* states, "Any disagreement that is in the name of Heaven will endure, while any disagreement that is not, will not endure." Interesting, why do disagreements need to endure?

The *mishna* then continues with something even more interesting: "Which disagreement was for the sake of Heaven? The disagreements of Hillel and Shammai. Which disagreement was not for the sake of Heaven? The disagreement of Korach and his congregation." One second—the only difference between Korach and Hillel and Shammai was if it was for the sake of Heaven? Didn't Korach just make up accusations because he was jealous? How can you put the disagreements of Hillel and



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Shammai in the same sentence as Korach? What this means, then, is that our notions of Korach might be off. Yes, Korach was motivated by something unholy, but the substance of what he stood up for was holy. Korach's point was not about the honor that Moshe or Aharon received being unfairly won. Rather, his stand was about the Jew's desire to serve Hashem in ever higher forms! He incited others to

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THE RABBI WAS ASKED
ON THE PARASHA

THIS WEEK WITH
RABBI YITZCHOK PREIS

Q. When Korach and his followers make their rebellious claims, Moshe proclaims that there will be a clarifying showdown "in the morning." Rashi states that Moshe was stalling until morning to give time for the sinners to mend their ways. But, the excuse that Rashi attributes to Moshe seems perplexing. "Now is a time of drunkenness, therefore we must wait..." Who was drunk!?

A. The *Maharal* quotes commentators who interpret this drunkenness to be a metaphor for corruption and the insurrection at hand.

Maharal then argues that there is no need to treat the drunkenness as anything other than literal intoxication. Since this protest was happening well into the day, after the participants would already have partaken of significant meals, it is likely that some would have already imbibed some wine. Even a *reviis* (small amount) of wine disallows performing *avodah* (Temple service) and as such the "showdown" would have to wait.

Interestingly, the *Maharal* points out that Moshe could not have meant that either he or Aharon had imbibed wine because

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THE RABBI WAS ASKED ON THE PARASHA

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“they never did”! Aharon was constantly involved with Temple service and therefore refrained from wine. Arguably, Aharon could drink wine in the evenings after all service was completed, but the *Maharal* deduces that this dialogue happened prior to the offering of the afternoon *Tamid* and hence Aharon would definitely not be “drunk.”

Moshe was always “on call” for Divine communication and therefore always avoided wine! 🤖

Something always bugged you about the upcoming parasha (or last week's)? Ask! Submit a question on the parasha by Monday at noon by emailing parasha@cincykollel.org. Questions will be selected to address at the discretion of the Rabbi who is answering that week. Questions may be edited for brevity/clarity.

A SHINING EXAMPLE

RABBI EPHRAIM SKOLNIK

Last week I was in the Grove kosher supermarket in Cleveland waiting online at the pizza counter to get some lunch for my family. The man in front of me finished his order, thanked the cashier and the other workers, and left the store. I walked up and was about to place my order when I overheard the worker talking to the cashier. “You see that man who just ordered and left? He is a real *mentch*, a real nice guy. Of all the dozens of costumers who come in here every day, he is the only one who not only thanks the cashier, but also remembers to thank me with a big smile. He is a really good guy.” Just a few moments, a little extra thought, can make all the difference. 🤖

TEFILLA TIDBITS

RABBI YAAKOV MARCHUK

We previously discussed that we begin *Pesukei D'zimrah* with *Mizmor Shir*, which is the *tefilla* Dovid *Hamelech* wrote for the inauguration of the *Beis Hamikdash*, and how on opening day of the *Bais Hamikdash*, Shlomo *Hamelech* was only able to succeed in opening the doors of the *Bais Hamikdash* by invoking the merit of Dovid. When that happened, the entire Jewish nation knew Dovid was forgiven. Why did Hashem wait specifically until that moment? Perhaps we can answer this based on the *Rada"k*, who writes that there were Jews who could not believe that the child born from Dovid and Bas-Sheva would be the next king and build the *Bais Hamikdash*. So even though many of the people believed that Hashem had forgiven Dovid and he truly was righteous, only Shlomo successfully building the *Bais Hamikdash* would convince the remaining few. Therefore, only when the *Bais Hamikdash* doors opened in the *zechus* (merit) of Dovid was there no longer a doubt that he was truly a *tzaddik* and forgiven. 🤖

A PARASHA THOUGHT

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join him because the claim itself was holy and therefore resonated. We want to be more holy! The downfall was because Korach's heart did not match his words. The ultimate driver was his ego, not a true will to serve Hashem. We see something powerful about arguments in general from the narrative of Korach. Standing up to fight the good fight in Hashem's eyes is only allowed if you are genuine to

the depths of your being that you are standing up to another for the sake of G-d and his Torah. If not, even if what you say, and the side you are on, have a point, and a holy one at that, if the motive is not pure, it leads to destruction. Korach also had a holy point to make, but in the end it destroyed him and many others as well. 🤖



ABARBANEL: THE EDICT OF EXPULSION OF 1492 AND THE NEGOTIATIONS

RABBI NOSSON WIGGINS

Recap: Abarbanel prepares for a second meeting with King Ferdinand. This time a large bribe, several thousand pieces of gold, has been gathered in the hope that the edict of expulsion will be rescinded.

Despite the hopes and fervent prayers of Jews across Spain, Abarbanel's final attempt was a failure. King Ferdinand stood his ground and the edict of expulsion remained intact. After 1,500 years, the Jews of Spain would be expelled. August 2nd 1492, which was Tisha B'Av, the Jewish day of mourning, was the last day that Jews would be permitted on Spanish soil. The next morning, nearly 175,000 Jews began their journey into exile. Abarbanel personally led a group of 10,000 Jews to Italy, while 120,000 Jews from Castile were temporarily allowed to enter Portugal for a hefty fee. Another 20,000 headed to the coast of North Africa. Among the exiled Jews was a young boy of four, Rabbi Yosef Karo, who would go on to author the *Beis Yosef* and *Shulchan Aruch*.

Aside from the colossal tragedy which occurred on August 3rd when 175,000 Spanish Jews left their homes, it is estimated that 100,000 Jews converted to Christianity in the months before the expulsion. 🤖