

Parashas

Korach

• 739 •

כ"ח סיון תשפ"ו

5786

י"ל ע"י

קהילת שבתי בבית ד'

בנשיאות מורנו ורבנו הר"צ

רבי גמליאל הכהן

רבינובין שליט"א

טיב הקהילה

English edition

באנגלית

טיב הפרשה

טיב המערכת

ונשיהם ובניהם וטפם

*And their wives,
and their children and their infants*

They once asked the Chazon Ish zt"l, from what age a father must educate his children. The Chazon Ish answered that long before he becomes a father, already from when he is a young bachelor the obligation of education rests upon him. How can this be? Because when a person is young, he must refine his character traits so that by the time he marries they will already be refined, and thus his descendants will not see in him any behavior that is not proper.

"And Dasan and Aviram went out standing at the entrance of their tents, and their wives and their children and their infants." (16:27) Rashi explains: "Come and see how severe is dispute, for the earthly court does not punish except until one has grown two hairs, and the heavenly court until twenty years of age, yet here even nursing infants were lost." And we must understand his holy words in depth. Rashi did not say that those infants died without any wrongdoing, chalah to say such a thing about HaKadosh Baruch Hu. Rather, although generally minors are not punished, nevertheless here they were indeed punished with the punishment fitting for them. If so, we must understand why these infants deserved such a punishment.

HaKadosh Baruch Hu, in His abundant mercy, implanted in creation that the body reacts naturally and we do not need to plan our actions. For example, when we wish to drink, we do not need to think about the action required of us: to extend the hand to the cup and bring it to the mouth, and the like. But speech is not so; before every utterance we must plan what and how to say it, and it is impossible to speak without any awareness at all. However, when a person says things that he heard from his father and mother, he can say them without thinking at all, for since he heard them from his parents, these words have become for him like a complete nature, and he does not need to think before saying them. And this is what the Gemara says (Succah 56b): "The speech of a child in the marketplace is either from his father or from his mother." Rashi explains: "What the child speaks in the marketplace, he heard from his father or from his mother." Since this is so, we can understand that those infants who saw their parents disputing Moshe Rabbeinu, had they remained alive, they too would have disputed Hashem and His righteous ones, and therefore they were deserving to die.

And this teaches us how careful one must be with every word spoken in the home, and how great its influence is over time!

Tiv HaTorah - Korach

האמת והשלום אהבו
He loves truth and peace

וישלח משה לקרא לדתן וְאַבִּירָם בְּנֵי אֶלְיָאב וַיֹּאמְרוּ לֹא נִשְׁלָח: (טז, יב)

Moshe sent to summon Dasan and Aviram, the sons of Eliav, but they said, "We will not go up!" (16:12)

Rashi explains: Moshe sent – from here we see that we do not keep up a dispute. For Moshe went after them to restore harmony with them with words of peace.

The source of these matters is in the Gemara (Sanhedrin 110a), and this is its wording: 'ויקם משה וילך אל דתן ואבירם' - "And Moshe arose and went to Datan and Aviram." (16:25) Reish Lakish said: From here we learn that one must not maintain a dispute, for Rav said: Anyone who maintains a dispute transgresses a prohibition, as it is stated (Bamidbar 17:5): 'ולא יהיה' - "And he shall not be like Korach and his assembly." And Rashi explains: "That one must not maintain a dispute—Moshe waived his honor and he himself went to nullify the dispute."

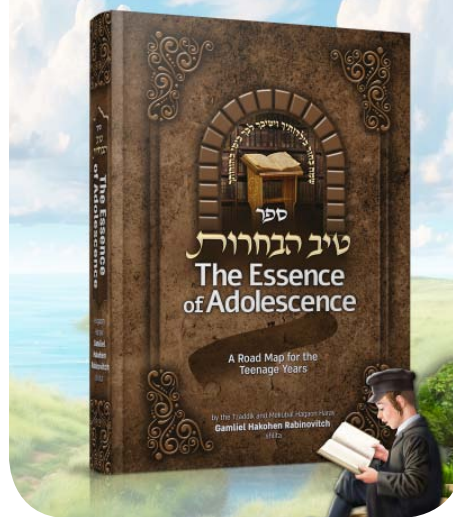
We will not come in our following words except to arouse the hearts of those who study to contemplate quite well what Rav came to teach us in his statement.

Were it not for the words of Rav, even if we would have explained that the posuk "And he shall not be like Korach and his assembly" teaches that one who maintains a dispute transgresses a prohibition, we would have explained that these words are directed only at the one who initiates the dispute, and is like Korach; about him the verse warns that he should refrain from his evil. However, Rav introduces a great novelty, that even the one against whom the dispute is aroused transgresses a prohibition, even though from the outset he did nothing at all, and he also did not respond to those who insulted him. If he does not attempt to appease those who rise against him and to calm their anger and thereby restore peace to its place, he transgresses a prohibition.

At first glance there will be those who will not be able to contain these words. Before them will be portrayed the image of a pious man who is content with his lot, serving his Creator, and immediately upon arising in the morning he remembers the greatness of his merit to fulfill the commandments of his Creator. His feet carry him to the shul, with joy upon his face over his merit to pour out his words before his Creator. And upon entering the gates of the shul, while a radiance of joy is still spread across his face, some people rise and receive him with curses and insults, and before the entire congregation they reveal the wrongdoing of which they suspected him for no reason. And he walks toward his place while biting his lips so as not to respond to those who insult him, and through this he also merits to be counted among those "who are insulted and do not insult," through which reward he becomes very beloved to his Creator (see Gittin 36b). And for all this they will make him liable for a prohibition?! Why? Because he did not apologize before some reckless people who abused him for no wrongdoing?!

Those who are astonished and will find it difficult to contain these words

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will seek to look again into the Gemara, for one must understand what is intended in its words. But even after they rub their eyes and contemplate again, they will again see what they already saw, and perforce they will admit that this is what Rav said. For it is impossible to say that this unfortunate person who was so insulted and remained silent is greater than Moshe, the faithful shepherd. And behold, even regarding the man Moshe, Rav said that had he not attempted to appease his adversaries he would have transgressed a prohibition! Yes, yes! If such had been the case, that the master of the prophets sat in his tent in the wilderness, entirely cleaving to the holy Shechinah, and they came and informed him that within the camp they were murmuring against him that he was taking greatness for himself and that he was fabricating things from his own heart, and this knowledge pained him exceedingly, for who knew better than he that they suspected him for no reason, and they also caused him unbearable humiliations, and nevertheless he accepted upon himself a good resolution not to respond to those who insulted him—a resolution that only exalted righteous individuals can uphold under such humiliating conditions—if he had sufficed with only this, he would have transgressed a prohibition! Even in such a degraded state, the Torah wanted that he add also an element to his humiliation and attempt, with gentle words, to calm the anger of those who incite quarrel against him. Even if they are known wicked people like Dasan and Aviram. Indeed, at a superficial glance it seems to us that the Torah ignores the pain of the pursued and humiliated one. However, when one contemplates this well, one understands that only his benefit is embedded in its

requirement that he respond to the words of those who complain against him with a gentle reply that turns away wrath.

Let us try to descend somewhat into the mind and the state of that unfortunate pious man mentioned above who received a full measure of humiliations and insults. Indeed, how good it was that he did not return to those who insulted him double measure, for then he would have greatly ignited the burning of the dispute, and through his silence he does not allow the fire of the dispute to spread. However, he has still not brought a solution to the “division of hearts” that was created. He himself remains with a broken heart over the fact that they harmed him for no reason, and those who harmed him do not recognize the magnitude of their evil, and it is very possible that they will not seek to reconcile with him at all, for there will be no

one to set them on their mistake—that they suspected one who is innocent, or that they did not properly understand his intentions, which are in fact desirable. On the contrary, in their innocence they think that they acted properly in their rebuke, for thereby they stood in the breach and set the offender or the one who harmed them in his place... And only if he will explain with a gentle response his actions and his intentions will those who provoke him recognize their mistake, and they will not leave him with a pained heart. They will take care to appease him properly, and through this he will benefit primarily himself, and also his adversaries, so that they will not be punished for their actions.

This is what Rav reveals in his aforementioned statement. Rav is as if saying to the one who is pursued: If you are wise, understand that even if in truth you did not sin toward those who harmed you, you must attribute that they did not latch onto you out of an evil heart. Apparently they did not descend to the depth of your understanding to comprehend your ways, and as a result they were somewhat hurt, or indeed there was some undesirable conduct on your part that resulted from your lack of attention, and it is this that aroused in them some dissatisfaction and caused their heart to become heated against you like a coal, and it did not take many days until the coal of the heart turned into the flame of dispute. And if you do not attempt to settle their hearts with a gentle response, you too are “maintaining a dispute,” for the division between you and them will remain. And only if you respond to their words with a gentle answer will you merit to restore peace to its place...

‘A revolving door’

‘דלת מסתובבת’

I exert my effort for livelihood as a maintenance worker, but since I have a license to drive a bus, from time to time I do special trips at the request of my friend, the owner of a bus company. He knows that until 12:00 noon there is no one to talk to, because I have my learning sederim.

The Yishmaelim had a holiday for several days, which caused a severe shortage of drivers. My friend begged me to give him hours. I told him that from twelve o'clock I would give him hours until midnight. He was happy. I checked the schedule and was happy to see that I had a break for Mincha and a meal at a convenient time, 2:30, before continuing the work.

At a quarter to two I was at the station and the doors would not close. On today's buses there is a safety mechanism that prevents the bus from traveling if the door is not closed. I called the person in charge on behalf of the company, who arrived within a few minutes. He did not manage and called the company mechanic, who asked him if there was someone with good hands. Since I am a maintenance worker, I have suitable hands, and he explained to me where to go and what to do. It took time, but when I grasped what he wanted, I did what he told me, and with good fortune the doors closed as the break ended. However, I had already lost my lunch and midday rest. I said, everything is for the good, I drank a cup of coffee, and later I found, with hashgacha pratis, Mincha and Maariv.

At midnight I was at the station at the Strings Bridge, and one of the passengers who wanted to board the bus despite the crowd at the station opened the door through the emergency handle, which caused the bus

to get stuck, because it is not possible to close the door. And now at midnight a bus full of

people is stuck because of a person disturbed in his mind who opened the door from the outside, thereby causing damage to the other passengers. At such an hour there is no one to fix the malfunction, and what remained for me to do was to lock the bus and go home by taxi.

I had compassion on the many passengers who wanted to get home from Yerushalayim to Beitar, among them entire families, when there are no additional drivers for reinforcement, and this bus also needs to operate from 6:00 AM on other routes. After about twenty minutes of shutdown, a thought entered my mind, to check, perhaps that same method that I did at noon to close the front door would also work for the back door?! I approached the door and did what I had learned today, and behold, wonder of wonders, the doors closed and I was able to continue the journey with all the passengers.

At noon I had a complaint that my break was lost, and only now did I understand that HaKadosh Baruch Hu had prepared for me a remedy before the blow for midnight, when there is no one to come help. And only now did I understand why the mechanic insisted on explaining to me over the phone, something that in itself is not understood...

Had I known at noon that this was a remedy for the blow, apparently I would have been happy also at noon. If only we would internalize that truly everything is for the good, and everything is precise for each and every one of us, even when we do not see the kindness in the matter!!!

ה.ב.ה.

טיב ההשגרה

The lesson taught to us here is that when a man of Israel sets himself to assist and support the Jewish people, in the manner of the kohanim—our emissaries and the emissaries of Heaven—as the pasuk testifies concerning them, יורו מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ, לְיַעֲקֹב וְתוֹרָתְךָ לְיִשְׂרָאֵל - They shall teach Your laws to Yaakov and Your Torah to Yisrael (Devarim 33:10), he thereby merits that Hashem Himself becomes his portion and his inheritance. As it states, אֲנִי חֶלְקְךָ וְנַחֲלָתְךָ - I am your portion and your inheritance. The Borei Yisbarach personally bestows his livelihood upon him from His holy, open, and generous hand, to the extent that he need not occupy himself with the concerns of earning a living, and can devote himself entirely to the needs of the congregation of Yisrael.

Thus the pasuk declares (Malachi 2:5-7), לְהִיּוֹת בְּרִיתִי אֶת לְוִי אָמַר ה' צִבְאֹת, בְּרִיתִי הִיְהִי אִתּוֹ הַחַיִּים וְהַשְׁלוֹם וּגו'. תוֹרַת אֱמֶת הִיְהִי בְּפִיהוּ, וְעוֹלָה לֹא נִמְצָא בְּשִׁפְטֵיךָ, בְּשִׁלּוֹם וּבְמִישׁוֹר הִלָּךְ אִתִּי, וְרִבִּים הִשִּׁיב מִעוֹן. כִּי שִׁפְטִי כֵהֵן יִשְׁמְרוּ דַעַת, - וְתוֹרָה יִבְקֶשׁוּ מִפִּיהוּ - That My covenant be with Levi, says Hashem of Hosts; My covenant with him was life and peace... The Torah of truth was in his mouth, and injustice was not found on his lips; in peace and uprightness he walked with Me, and he turned many away from sin. For the lips of a kohen shall guard knowledge, and Torah shall be sought from his mouth.

It emerges from all this that one who gives himself over for the sake of the community—to Bnei Yisrael Torah and knowledge, to strengthen the people, encourage them, and uplift their spirit—loses nothing thereby, nor will he, chas veshalom, be found lacking. Rather, Hashem will reward him measure for measure and repay his labor, in accordance with the promise given to Aharon and his sons, I am your portion and your inheritance. For (Tehillim 34:11), וְיִדְרְשֵׁי ה' לֹא יִחְסְרוּ כָּל טוֹב - those who seek Hashem shall not lack any good.

Chazal (Avos 3:5) expressed this principle succinctly: רַבִּי נְחוֹנְיָא בֶן הַקָּנָה אָמַר, כָּל הַמְּקַבֵּל: עָלָיו עַל תּוֹרָה, מַעֲבִירִין מִמֶּנּוּ עַל מַלְכוּת עוֹלָם דְּרַךְ - "Rabbi Nechunya ben Hakanah says: Whoever accepts upon himself the yoke of Torah, from him are removed the yoke of government and the yoke of worldly concerns." The matter follows an a fortiori reasoning: if one who accepts the yoke of Torah upon himself merely to learn and occupy himself with it privately merits such relief, how much more so one who also teaches it to others, who influences Yisrael with his Torah and draws their hearts near to Torah and mitzvos—he will certainly have removed from him the yoke of government and the yoke of worldly toil.

טיב המעשיות

I Am Your Portion and Your Inheritance

”וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל אַהֲרֹן, בְּאַרְצֶם לֹא תִנְחַל, וְחֶלֶק לֹא יִהְיֶה לְךָ בְּתוֹכָם, אֲנִי חֶלְקְךָ וְנַחֲלָתְךָ בְּתוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל” (יה, ב).

Hashem said to Aharon: In their land you shall have no inheritance, nor shall you have a portion among them; I am your portion and your inheritance among Bnei Yisrael. (18:20)

Well known in the public domain is the precious explanation of Maran the Chasam Sofer zt”l, on the pasuk (Tehillim 37:26), – כל היום חונן ומלווה וזרעו לברכה - All day long he is gracious and lends, and his offspring are for a blessing. When a Jew is all day long gracious and lending—meaning that he gives his entire day to others, devoting all his time to imparting Torah and yiras Shamayim amongst Klal Yisrael—he need not fear or worry about the education of his own children, even though he lacks time to study with them, to raise them, and to make them wise in Torah and purpose. For the pasuk assures him, and his offspring are for a blessing — he will merit to see children and grandchildren engaged in Torah and mitzvos, great in Torah and seated in judgment.

So, too, did the Chasam Sofer write in a letter to one of his students, who exerted himself greatly to uphold the faith in the city where he served as rav, and complained that as a result he had no time to study with his own sons. He reassured him that he was guaranteed, by the word of Heaven, and his offspring are for a blessing.

In a similar vein is the well-known saying of the holy Rebbe, Rav Shlomo of Zvhil zt”l: For every single step that a person takes on behalf of his fellow, he thereby saves himself a thousand steps.

Once, the renowned rav of the great city of Krakow, the holy gaon Rav Shimon Sofer zt”l, met with Maran the Divrei Chaim of Sanz zt”l.

The Sanzer Rebbe greeted him with great honor and a welcoming countenance, befitting a leader of Israel. As they sat together, the Divrei Chaim began inquiring into the affairs of the rabbinate in Krakow. First, he asked about the mikva’os in the city—whether they were all constructed and supervised according to law and halachah. The Krakow Rav replied that

he had appointed a learned scholar from the city for this responsibility, a man who, beyond being upright and God-fearing, was also an outstanding expert thoroughly versed in the laws of mikva’os, and upon whom he relied with full confidence.

And what of the state of kashrus in Krakow? asked the Divrei Chaim.

To this as well, the Krakow Rav responded with satisfaction that he had already established a special rabbinical court for the matter—upright rabbanim, outstanding Torah scholars—appointing them as a trusted committee overseeing all matters of kashrut in the city.

And what of the batei din in Krakow? the Rebbe continued his inquiries.

Here too, the gaon replied that, with Hashem’s help, he had established several large and well-known rabbinical courts throughout Krakow, with a great central court presided over by expert judges, eminent Torah scholars of renown. In addition, many teachers of halachah and ordained rabbanim were spread throughout the city, instructing the people in the word of Hashem—this is halachah.

He further detailed all the charitable and benevolent institutions in the city, including the establishment of a communal kitchen for the poor and hungry, where they always found a good and hearty meal—whoever was hungry could come and eat. Krakow also had a designated preacher who delivered sermons of strengthening and ethical exhortation to the populace.

The rav concluded by giving thanks to Hashem that he had merited to establish and uphold the faith throughout the great city of Krakow.

The Sanzer Rebbe rejoiced in the great success of the Krakow rabbinate and then asked: if so—if the supervision of the mikva’os is entrusted to a rav in charge of mikva’os; if matters of Orach Chaim and Yoreh Deah are overseen by teachers of righteousness; if kashrus is handled by a trusted committee; if all matters of Choshen Mishpat are adjudicated by multiple rabbinical courts with distinguished judges; and if sermons of inspiration are delivered by a designated preacher—what, then, remains for the rav himself to do?

Rav Shimon Sofer remained silent and did not answer.

The Divrei Chaim then said to him warmly: the primary task of a rav is this—to revive the spirit of the lowly and to uplift the hearts of the downtrodden, to uplift the hearts of the people, to encourage them, and to draw them close to Torah.

When the Elder of Slabodka z t ” l ,

opened his great and renowned yeshivah in the city of Kovno—later transferred to nearby Slabodka—he met, in the yeshivah's earliest days, with the holy gaon Rav Yisrael Salanter zt"l, the father of the Mussar movement, and asked him for a few words of guidance to direct him in his role as rosh yeshivah.

Rav Yisrael replied to him in the manner of one confiding a deep truth: the world is mistaken in thinking that the role of a rosh yeshivah is to deliver a general lecture or elevated talks on the weekly portion and the like. That is not the essence of the task. Rather, the central and most fundamental responsibility of a rosh yeshivah is to encourage and uplift the weaker students—those who walk along the margins and the farthest edges, to whom no one pays attention. It is to them, above all, that the rosh yeshivah must devote his primary attention and his heart.

In the early years following the terrible Holocaust, when the lion arose from Babylonia, the holy Rebbe, the Yoel Moshe of Satmar zt"l, encountered here in the Holy Land many orphaned and crushed youths—lonely, homeless, destitute survivors of the inferno—wandering the land broken and shattered, without support for body or soul.

His great heart filled with abundant compassion for them. He rose to action, mobilized benefactors of means and generous spirit, and opened for them a special yeshivah, beautifully built and meticulously organized. There those young survivors found a refuge—a home of escape, a place of rest for body and soul.

Rav Yoelish himself stood at the head of the yeshivah, established its order, and imbued it with abundant Torah, understanding, and fear of Heaven.

One of the students from those difficult days later related: in the initial period after the yeshivah opened, during the first days when the Rebbe sat with the students to learn the fixed lesson in Gemara, the young men rejoiced greatly over the new tractates that had been given to them, and over the immense merit of sitting once again on the benches of study after years of torment and dreadful upheaval in the camps of destruction. Yet the holy Rebbe did not immediately begin his lesson. He left the sacred Gemara closed before him and asked the students to recount before him all the events of the Holocaust they had endured, from beginning to end.

Thus the Rebbe sat with those students for several days before opening the Gemara at all. He offered no introductory remarks and delivered no lesson, whether in depth or in breadth. He listened—heard and absorbed—every account in full detail. He resembled a father listening with wondrous attentiveness to his child's story, asking each one to tell everything, probing and inquiring of every individual about all that had befallen him from the outbreak of the war until its end.

Only after several days, when all the students had finished recounting everything they had endured in those times of distress, did the Rebbe open the sacred Gemara and say to the pure-hearted youths: until now, we have learned page one of the meseches. Now, let us open page two. And thus he began the study of the meseches with profound analysis, in length and breadth, in his holy manner.

The student testified that those few days—during which each young man poured out his heart concerning all that had happened to him in the days of calamity—were like the first page preceding the Gemara. Without those “days of telling,” which the Rebbe granted them with wisdom, the pain would have remained lodged in their hearts, causing great sorrow and hindering their ability to settle their minds properly into Torah. With his great insight, the Rebbe understood that one must first allow the students to unburden what lay upon their hearts, to release all their pain and worry outward, in accordance with the words of the wisest of all men (Mishlei 12:25), דְּאִגָּה, בְּלֵב אִישׁ יִשְׁחָזֵק, וְדִבְרֵי טוֹב יִשְׁמְחֶנּוּ - Anxiety in a man's heart weighs it down, but a good word gladdens it.

The Vilna Gaon explains there: When a person is anxious, that anxiety greatly lowers the heart. But when one comes and speaks good words and offers consolation, those words gladden the heart—this is a good word gladdens it. Moreover, a good word gladdens it—there is no good except Torah. For whoever takes upon himself the yoke of Torah is relieved of thoughts of the sword, of immorality, and of folly. This, too, is a good word gladdens it.

Indeed, it was the power of that immense strengthening and encouragement which the Rebbe poured into them in the formative days of the yeshivah—through his calm, attentive listening to each and every personal account—that laid the foundation for the yeshivah's great success. The students became deeply bound, in heart and soul, to their Rebbe and luminary, who bestowed upon them boundless love and compassion. From that yeshivah emerged many famous rabbanim, for the good of Klal Yisrael.

Maran the Chazon Ish zt"l, once encountered, while walking along a city street, a very young man who was moving about dejectedly, his face downcast, his entire bearing marked by deep sadness and despondency.

The Chazon Ish greeted him warmly and asked him gently, What has happened to you? Why are your spirits so low?

The young man related that he had been “thrown out” of the yeshivah in shame, and that he was now wandering the streets aimlessly, not knowing what to do with himself. And why were you expelled from the yeshivah? the Chazon Ish asked, with great warmth and love of Klal Yisrael burning within him.

The young man lowered his head in embarrassment and replied softly, Because I desecrated Shabbos—Rachmana litzlan.

The Chazon Ish therefore summoned the rosh yeshivah who had expelled the boy and said to him: Now that this young man has been cast into the street, his situation is far worse, and he is liable—chas veshalom—to deteriorate rapidly and transgress the entire Torah, not merely desecrate Shabbos.

The rosh yeshivah attempted to justify his action with various arguments and explanations, and even proposed alternative frameworks for the boy. But the Chazon Ish refused to hear of any possibility of “throwing out” a student from a yeshivah. He explained his position clearly: to expel a boy from a yeshivah is a matter of capital cases—and today we do not judge capital cases.

In the end, that rosh yeshivah did not leave until the Chazon Ish persuaded him and spoke to his heart, convincing him to take the boy back to the yeshivah benches, with the Chazon Ish himself assuming responsibility for the young man's success in his studies.

With his abundant goodness and broadness of heart, the Chazon Ish understood that what this boy primarily lacked was encouragement and strengthening, closeness and support—and that this was more essential to him than air to breathe. Accordingly, in addition to instructing the boy to come in to see him from time to time, when he would shower him with words of warmth, encouragement. He also arranged that several of the older students take it upon themselves to draw this boy close, nurture him, and bestow upon him abundant love and affection.

As a result of all the Chazon Ish's devoted efforts, the boy returned to the yeshivah and grew greatly in his Torah study. He achieved remarkable success in his learning, until in the course of time he became an outstanding scholar, one of the foremost Torah scholars of his community.