



# CIRCLE TIME

AT YOUR

## Shabbos Table

... FOR A Meaningful and Entertaining SHABBOS WITH YOUR CHILDREN ...

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DVAR TORAH IN A STORY >>

## THE GOLDEN PITCHER

מְזֻמֹּר לְאֶסְף אֱלֵקִים בָּאוּ גוֹיִם בְּנִחְלָתָךְ טָמְאוּ אֶת הַיֵּכֶל  
קִדְשְׁךָ... (תהילים עט:א)

Asaf was one of Korach's children, saved because he did teshuvah as the earth opened to swallow him. He wrote a perek in Tehillim about the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash. But why did he call it a mizmor, a song? That is a happy term! He should have called it a kinah, a lamentation!

The Gemara (*Kiddushin* 31b) relates that when Rabi Avahu was an old man, he asked his son Avimi for a cup of water. When Avimi returned with the water, he saw that Rabi Avahu had fallen asleep! Unwilling to wake his father, and considering it disrespectful to just leave the water there, Avimi stood holding the cup until he awoke. As a reward, while he was waiting Hashem sent him the answer to this question, which had been bothering Avimi for a while.

Rav Ovadia Yosef explains the answer Avimi received with the following *mashal*:

"Beth!" the cook called. "Beth! Where are you?"

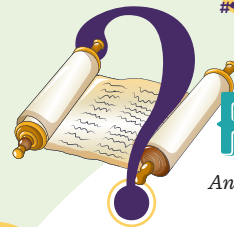
Beth tore her gaze from the pretty blue jay on the windowsill, straightened her maid's uniform, and hastened to the kitchen.

"Ah, here you are. Have you been day-dreaming again?"

Beth twisted her fingers nervously in her



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## PARSHAH RIDDLES

Answers to this week's riddles will appear in next week's issue.

- 1 Where in the Torah do we find mention of an epidemic (plague)? (At least six)
- 2 What other incidents in *Klal Yisrael's* history involve things being swallowed into the ground?
- 3 Throughout Chumash, who brought *ketores* other than Aharon? (four)
- 4 When did Hashem speak to Aharon alone? (two)

## GEMATRIA

875 = קרח + רע

875 = מחלוקת



## CHOLENT STORY

*A story told in parts, designed to get children to come back to the table for the main dish!*

*Recap: Reb Shimon, chavrusa of Rav Yonasan Eibschutz, is incensed because a church has been built directly across the street from the Hamburg shul.*

N

Night fell swiftly in the German city of Hamburg. Throughout the town, people put out their candles and went to bed.

Reb Shimon, on the other hand, was wide awake. The door of his house creaked open, and he slunk out into the night. Wearing black clothes, including a black hood, he blended with the shadows as he moved quickly through the darkened streets, headed for the grounds of the new cathedral.

Arriving at the imposing wrought iron gates of St. Michael's, Reb Shimon scaled the steel bars and dropped noiselessly into the grounds. The moon slipped between shifting clouds. Statues and figures on the church grounds loomed menacingly in the pale light. Hiding in a corner, Reb Shimon shivered. He had never been inside church gates before, and it was creepy.

He carefully watched the guard at the front door of the building, timing the watchman's activities. When he left to circle the grounds, Reb Shimon made a break for the tall trees growing close to the rear of the building. He climbed one easily, and soon lowered himself gently to the sloped roof of the church.

This was the hard part. Ever so slowly, Reb Shimon worked his way forward until he came up behind the huge, imposing wooden cross.

Reb Shimon reached for the tools he had brought along. Quietly, slowly, he began working a saw back and forth across the base of the cross. Careful not to make a sound audible to the guard below, his saw chewed a line through the symbol of *avodah zarah* until it hung at a drunken angle, no longer proud and defiant on the roof. Reb Shimon packed away his tools and began retracing his steps. Across the roof, down the tree trunk... He was nearly at the gate when *it happened*.

A gust of wind blew through the trees, scattering the clouds and rattling branches. A moonbeam broke through the clouds and shone directly on Reb Shimon just as the cross toppled off the roof and landed on the ground with a mighty crash.

The guard sprinted to the front of the building. He took in the fallen cross, and his eyes shifted directly to where Reb Shimon was attempting to clamber over the gate.

"Halt!" the guard shouted. "Who goes there?!"

TO BE CONTINUED....

DVAR TORAH >>

## LITVAK, CHASSID, SEPHARDI

*Three different angles on a dvar Torah, one each from Litvish, Chassidic, and Sephardic sources. Can be split between the three seudos.*

ויקח קרח... (א:טז)

שלקח מקח רע לעצמו (סנהדרין:קט)

The Gemara understands the words ויקח קרח to mean that Korach made a "bad purchase." A bad purchase usually means one ends up with defective merchandise, but Korach ended up with nothing! What does the Gemara mean?

RAV YOSEF SALANT:

Korach thought he would be protected by the merit of his holy descendants. He didn't realize that he would be *zocheh* to such descendants because his failed challenge to Moshe would cause *Klal Yisrael* to have stronger faith in Moshe's *nevuah*, throughout all generations! So Korach "bought" good offspring...but he paid a heavy price.

TIFERES YEHONASAN:

Korach bought the title of "poster boy for *machlokes*" forever. Whenever someone picks a fight, people say he is acting like Korach! Even the Torah terms the prohibition against making *machlokes* as "Don't be like Korach."

BEN ISH CHAI:

Korach took the concept of *machlokes* in the world to a new level. There is a Korach or two in every generation; they are his *talmidim* and legacy. That was a really bad purchase.

# PERSONAL GROWTH AVODAH OF THE WEEK

*This section views the procession of parshiyos and Yamim Tovim as a ladder for personal growth. It identifies a theme in the parshah and a related area that needs growth, and assigns a weekly mission based upon it.*

## PARSHAH SUMMARY

*Parshas Korach* focuses on trust in the purity of *gedolim* even when some will accuse them of personal motives.

Korach and his henchmen accuse Moshe and Aharon of terrible things, including narcissism, lying, making up rules in order to take people's money, and even inappropriate behavior. Korach makes up a story about Moshe and Aharon forcing an old widow to give up all her possessions for *matnos kehunah* and *leviyah*, until she has nothing left. He also accuses them of keeping the leadership positions for their close family members.

Many people are taken in by Korach's arguments. It seems like he has a point, *chas v'shalom!* But what he said isn't true. Hashem had ordered every step in a fair, perfectly just way. The *parshah* even concludes with a lengthy description of the various *matnos kehunah* and *leviyah*.

## AVODAH FOR THIS WEEK:

People often accuse *talmidei chachamim* and leaders of ulterior motives. Aside from the fact that the accusation is not true, this weakens our trust in *gedolim* and leaves us leaderless.

We have spent the past two weeks working on our connection to *gedolim*. This is an important next step.

Find a story of a *gadol* who did something that people didn't understand and seemed to have ulterior motives, but was later revealed to be selfless.

Think of a situation in which people make such accusations today, and work on trusting that there is a good reason for the *gadol's* actions and that Hashem does not lead His people to trust wrongly.

## ANSWERS TO LAST WEEK'S RIDDLES:

1. Can you find five *pesukim* in a row that have a double *chaf*? ***Bamidbar* 15:11–15.**
2. Where is there a (*shoresh* of a) word in the *parshah* that is an onomatopoeia (a word that imitates a sound, like “beep”)? ***Bamidbar* 13:30, ויהס (see *Rashi*).** Can you think of some other ones in the Torah? **There are several good candidates, such as אבטב, עות, the word אוי (in *Parshiyos Chukas* and *Balak*), and the names of many animals, such as נחש and ציפור.**
3. Who was the *mekoshesh*? **According to Rabi Akiva, it was Tzelafchad.**
4. Which *melachah* did he violate by collecting wood (three opinions)? **Carrying (מעביר), harvesting (תולש), gathering (תעמר).** See *Shabbos* 96b.
5. Which *pasuk* in the *parshah* is a major part of Yom Kippur *davening*?  
**וְנִסְחַל לְכָל עַדְת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְלִגְר הָגֵר בְּתוֹכָם כִּי לְכָל הָעָם בְּשַׁגְגָה (טו:כו)**

Did you notice that the story of the haftorah, besides relating to the depth of the parshah or day, usually sounds like it is right out of current events?

# HAFTORAH FROM THE HEADLINES

## SUMMARY:

*Klal Yisrael* initially scorn the appointment of Shaul as their first king. But when Shaul leads them in a successful battle against Amon, they accept him. Shmuel Hanavi then assembles the people at Gilgal to re-coronate Shaul. There, he gives his farewell speech to the people, as he is passing the mantle of leadership to Shaul.

In his speech, Shmuel defends his record. He challenges the people to present any claim they have against him, and they all confirm that he never took a dime of public funds. According to the Midrash, a *bas kol* testifies to Shmuel's righteousness.

Shmuel then reprimands the people for demanding a king. It would have been better to trust the *Shoftim* and *gedolim* in each generation, for each is as great as any other, relative to his generation. He punctuates his point by causing a miracle; he brings a thunderstorm in the middle of the summer, something unheard of in Eretz Yisrael.

The people fear for their lives, and the Navi exhorts them to do *teshuvah*. They commit to improve, and he comforts them.

Shmuel passes away shortly thereafter at the age of 52.

## CONNECTION TO THE PARSHAH:

The haftorah parallels the *parshah* very closely. Moshe and Shmuel both defend themselves from accusations of dishonesty. They even use the same phrase—"I didn't take even one donkey." They both predict a miracle, which Hashem brings to prove their righteousness. The people then fear for their lives in both the *parshah* and the haftorah.

Shmuel also chastises the people for not trusting their spiritual leaders (he specifically mentions Moshe and Aharon), asking instead for a political leader. Korach also sowed distrust of Moshe and Aharon and made the leadership into a political battle.

Shmuel is a descendant of Korach; in fact, he is the reason Korach felt confident that he would not die. In truth, Chanah, Shmuel's mother, *davened* for Korach to be lifted out of Gehinnom (*Sanhedrin* 101a), because she did not want her son to be responsible in any way for Korach's endless punishment. According to some, Chanah's request was granted.

## RIPPED FROM THE HEADLINES:

Shmuel presented a farewell speech to *Klal Yisrael* just before his death. Many *manhigim* have done the same. But in recent months, *Klal Yisrael* has lost numerous *gedolim* and leaders, many of whom were taken without warning or prolonged illness. They did not have time to say goodbye, nor did they receive proper funerals or *hespedim*.

Shmuel held the people accountable for the infirmity of *gedolim*, each in his own generation. In fact, Shmuel himself looked very old and ill despite his 52 years (see *Malbim, Taanis* 5a). The strain of caring for *Klal Yisrael* and the scoffers of the generation takes its toll.

A strengthening of our love for *gedolim* is definitely overdue.



>> CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

apron. "N-no, I mean, yes, ma'am. I'm so sorry."

The cook dipped her head imperiously. "Beth, we are in need of water. Take the clay jug from the counter and draw some from the well, quickly. And look smart about it!"

Beth hurried to the well, gripping the heavy clay jug. She had better avoid crossing the cook, or the queen would get rid of her. She lowered the jug into the well and leaned over to reach the water. The queen was nice enough, but she listened to the cook, and the cook didn't have time for birds, and birds were so pretty, she loved to observe the way they chirped and sang, and their colors, and especially that red one that... *Oh no!* The jug had slipped from her grasp, into the well!

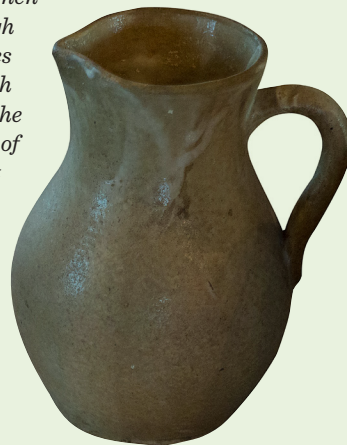
Beth clapped her hand over her mouth and stood there, frozen in dismay. She couldn't come back without the pitcher, and she couldn't get it out! What was she to do?

She looked around desperately, helplessly. None of palace guards would care enough to get her jug out of the well. Someone was coming... It was just Princess Gertrude. She wasn't one whom Beth should fear, but she couldn't help. That girl was really an airhead.

The princess was carrying her special gold pitcher. She went over to the well and began to draw a pitcherful of water for herself. Beth stepped back and watched. Maybe, just maybe... Yes! Good old Gertie dropped the gold pitcher into the well too!

Beth was immediately relieved. She knew that one of the king's men would be sent to fish the gold pitcher out of the well, and he would certainly get her clay pitcher as well.

*Asaf was worried about his father, Korach. Would he ever get out of the ground, out of Gehinnom? When Asaf saw, through nevuah, that the gates of the Beis Hamikdash would sink into the ground at the time of the Churban, he felt better. He knew that the gates, made by Dovid Hamelech, would certainly be drawn out of the ground when Mashiach comes. And Korach would be too.*



# HALACHAH



**When Korach and his men came to pick up On ben Peles, his wife brushed her hair at the doorway, and the men fled. What are the obligations of men with regard to women's hair covering?**

**SAYING**

**BRACHOS**

It is forbidden for a man to say a *bracha* within view of a *tefach* (about 3.5 square inches) of hair that halachically should be covered. He must turn his body so that the hair is not within eyeshot. This does not apply to the hair of unmarried girls or non-Jews. If the hair is seen through glass, such as a bus or restaurant window, it is sufficient for him to close his eyes while saying the *bracha*.

A woman may say a *bracha* within sight of another woman's hair.

**DIFFICULT**

**SITUATIONS**

The *Aruch Hashulchan* states that in a time in which most women do not cover their hair, it is permitted to say a *bracha* in view of uncovered hair. Many *poskim* reject this *heter*. Rav Moshe Feinstein allowed it to be relied upon in difficult circumstances. Difficult circumstances may include saying Kiddush or the Haggadah when a guest at the table does not keep the halachah, or saying the *bracha* of *siddur kiddushin*.

**AT**

**HOME**

While a woman may not be technically obligated to cover her hair in the privacy of her own home, her husband or sons may not say a *bracha* within sight of her hair.

The *Zohar* and *Mishnah Berurah* are emphatic that a woman should cover her hair at home as well. Kimchis had seven sons who were *kohanim gedolim* in the merit of her covering her hair at home. Today, the accepted practice in many communities is that hair may not be visible even to close family, and that may make it obligatory (*das Yehudis*).

**NEW SECTION!**

## THE LAST WORD

**A one-liner worth remembering**

**"NOW I REALIZE HOW MUCH I OWE HASHEM FOR THE THOUSANDS OF DAYS HE GAVE ME AIR TO BREATHE!"**

— A man explaining to nurses the reason he cried upon receiving a bill for 5,000 dollars for one day on a ventilator with coronavirus.

**AT YOUR SHABBOS TABLE IS COMPILED BY RABBI YITZCHOK LANDA. COMMENTS, SUGGESTIONS: CIRCLETIME@CIRCMAG.COM**

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