

BITACHON LESSON FROM THE PARSHA

פרשת ויקח קרח תשפ"ו – *I Can't Touch What's Yours!*

קִרְחַן בֶּן יִצְחָר בֶּן קֵהֵת בֶּן לֵוִי.

His name is synonymous with the destructive fire of *Machlokes*.

The Mishna (Pirkei Avos Perek 5) tells us **איזו היא מחלוקת שאינה לשם שמים זו מחלוקת קרח וכל עדתו**. His intentions were not for the sake of Heaven, and thus the Torah (Bamidbar 17:5) makes it very clear to not be like him and his group, as it states **ולא יהיה כקרח וכעדתו** (See Sanhedrin 110a)

What led Korach down this perilous road of *Machlokes*? Jealousy, of course! What is the root cause of the terrible attribute of jealousy? A lack of Bitachon!

Bitachon, at its core, is the knowledge that Hashem is firmly in control of this world, and He orchestrates everything exactly as He sees fit. Hashem decrees with extreme precision exactly how everything will be, down to the last detail.

The Gemara (Yoma 38b) reminds us **אין אדם נוגע במוכן לחבירו אפילו כמלא נימא**; nobody can touch what is meant for another, by even a hair's breadth. If one is jealous of his friend's position, his friend's wealth, his friend's family, his friend's accomplishments, or of anything else about his friend, he is in essence doubting the perfection of how Hashem orchestrated things to be, and is thereby expressing his lack of Emunah and Bitachon that it was Hashem who caused the "chips to fall" where they did.

By being envious of Ahron Hakohen's position as Kohen Gadol, Korach was declaring that he was sorely lacking in his level of Bitachon. He was asserting that he knows better than Hashem!

So, how did Moshe Rabbeinu put out this dangerous fire of rebellion? He used *Ketores* to prove that everything he did was according to the command of Hashem. All the rabble-rousers who wrongly offered *Ketores* were consumed by a Heavenly fire, and Korach was swallowed up by the ground and sent to Gehinom, to forever be burnt alive.

Why did Moshe choose *Ketores* as the vehicle to deliver this powerful message?

The Midrash (Tanchuma Tetzaveh 14) teaches us that of all the *Korbanos* in the Bais Hamikdash, the one that was most pleasing to Hakadosh Baruch Hu was the *Ketores*. The *Ketores* had in it positive attributes that implanted into

Klal Yisroel a high level of holiness, purity, compassion and *Tikvah* (One of the 10 expressions of Bitachon listed at the end of Chovos Halevavos Sha'ar Habitachon – **לישיעתך קויתי ה'**), which enabled them to overcome many harsh decrees. The word *Ketores* is an acronym for these 4 attributes:

ק' קדושה
ט' טהרה
ר' רחמים
ת' תקוה

Why was the *Ketores* so beloved by Hashem, and why was it such a powerful remedy against plagues and other troubles? One of the ingredients of the *Ketores* was the "*Chelbenah*", a foul smelling element. This item was specifically added to the mix, to signify that the evildoers of Klal Yisroel were also represented, together with the rest of the nation - and Hashem loves all of His children, and maintains His bond with us, even the wayward ones among us. (See Kerisus 6b)

ולא יהיה
כקרח
וכעדתו

When it comes to Bitachon, too, Chazal teach us (Yalkut Tehilim 32:10; See also Sefer Ha'Ikrim 4:46):

רבים מכאובים לרשע, והבוטח בה' חסד יסובבנהו, ר' אליעזר ור' תנחום בשם ר' ירמיה אפילו רשע ובוטח אליעזר ור' חסד יסובבנו, *even if one is a wicked person, if he has Bitachon in Hashem it will be beneficial for him.* (This is a lengthy topic, which is beyond the scope of the current discussion. We explained this more at length in our "Orchos Bitachon" Shiurim #283 and #284. Access the archives at www.OrchosDaily.org)

Moshe understood that the *Ketores* represented Bitachon, and those who did not have proper Bitachon were not fully represented by the *Ketores*.

Thus, to publicly demonstrate *Korach's* lack of Bitachon – *which was the root of his jealousy, and what led to his terrible Machlokes in the first place* - Moshe utilized the *Ketores*.

What followed was a public display of Kiddush Hashem. It clearly demonstrated that those who failed to trust Hashem - and Hashem's way of divvying up the positions of authority in *Klal Yisroel* - will not merit to be protected by the *Ketores*; rather they will be consumed by it!

They tried to swallow up the *Kehuna Gedola* and other positions of power that were not theirs; instead they got swallowed up by the ground for all to see that Hashem is fully in charge.

The lesson is clear: Nothing that isn't meant for someone can ever become theirs.

Good Shabbos!