



***Authentic Kabbalah - Sephardic Studies
Benei Noah Studies - Anti-Missionary/Anti-Cult Materials***

Korah – A Lesson In Arrogance A Warning For Today!

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The episode of Korah, Datan and Abiram is possibly one of the greatest of all time examples of sheer arrogance. This episode might today be referred to as an attempted coup d'etat against the leadership of Moshe Rabbeynu.

Two hundred and fifty so-called “leaders of the assembly,” “men of renown” joined forces to challenge the authority of Moshe. Moshe Rabbeynu saw quite clearly that the rebels were not only challenging him personally, Korah, Datan and Abiram were attempting to subtly and deceptively challenge HaShem by attacking Moshe Rabbeynu; HaShem’s chosen spokesman.

The complaint Korah had against Moshe and Aharon was “why do you exalt yourselves over the congregation of HaShem.” (Num. 16:3). Moshe Rabbeynu, who not to long ago was called “exceedingly humble, more than any other person on the face of the earth” (Num. 12:3) responded as expected – he “fell on his face” (Num. 16:4). He did not attempt to justify his position or attempt to persuade the rebels from pursuing their course.

Moshe Rabbeynu was the middleman and he knew it. He responded most appropriately, he said, “in the morning G-d will make known the one who is His own.” (Num. 16:5). Moshe offered the rebels to perform the priestly duty, remembering full well what had happened to Nadav and Avihu, Aharon’s two sons, who attempted a similar offering and were killed for being the wrong persons in the wrong place at the wrong time. No doubt, lightning was about to strike twice in the same place.

How stupid those 250 “leaders of the assembly,” “men of renown” must have been to think that they would not have angered the Almighty One. They also remembered what had happened to Nadav and Avihu. They should have realized the danger in what it

was they were doing. How unfortunate is it that arrogance blinds the eyes of even the most wise and renown.

To add insult to injury Datan and Abiram display a public denunciation of the authority of Moshe Rabbeynu. Moshe summoned them to come and they refused to come! (Num. 16:12). This then is the height of arrogance, when not only is there a challenge to authority but also a clearly defined rebellion against it.

One can still challenge authority, from within the system, adhering to the rules and working to bring about whatever reform might be necessary. Yet, Datan and Abiram did not want to merely challenge authority for the sake of a greater good. No, these two rasha'im (wicked scoundrels) wanted a war, a war which indeed came right to them. They called Moshe Rabbeynu a liar for not bringing them to the Promised Land and accused him of becoming a dictator.

In response, Moshe is defined as being very angry (VaYihar Meod). What does the servant of HaShem do in his fit of anger? He acts in the only right way. He takes up his grievance with the "Boss." Moshe Rabbeynu proclaims before G-d that he is innocent of any wrong doing against these men and asks G-d not to accept their offerings. Moshe knew full well, what the consequences of his prayer were to be.

The rest of the story is well known. Moshe Rabbeynu faces off against the rebels and calls upon HaShem to open the earth and to swallow them up as a sign that he truly is HaShem's servant. Then, there was a very centralized earthquake, just in the area where Korah, Datan and Abiram resided.

The earth opened up and swallowed them whole, them, their wives and children and all that they possessed. It was as if they never were! In such dramatic form did HaShem remove the cancer of rebellion from the midst of Israel. Yet, this alone was not enough. There were still the 250 Kohen-priest "wannabe's" trying to burn the incense offering. Their fate was soon sealed in fire.

Again, our holy Sages have taught us that the events in the lives of our ancestors serve as a lesson and warning to us, their children. From the days of Moshe, through First Temple times, whenever Torah authority was challenged, HaShem Himself arose and responded, punishing the rebels. Ultimately and eventually HaShem had to allow the destruction of His own House (the Beit HaMikdash) to serve as a lesson and warning to us.

After a review of 2,400 years of history since that destruction, we may rightly ask – has the Jewish people learned their lesson to remain faithful to Torah authority? *Barukh HaShem* that even without any official central Torah authority, (L'hav'dil) similar to a Pope among the Catholics, Jews around the world for centuries have remained faithful to our holy Sages and to the Divinely ordained Halakha (Torah Law) that they teach to their communities. Nonetheless, the spirit of an evil Korah, Datan and Abiram still haunt the Torah community in the form of those so-called Jewish "leaders / authorities" who

seek to subvert, defy and ultimately deny the Divinely ordained authority of our holy Rabbanim.

One such form of attack comes in the form of so-called “secular Jewish scholarship,” which attempts to split Torah Judaism between what they refer to as Biblical Judaism and “Rabbinic” Judaism. Secular scholarship attempts to define what they call “Rabbinic” Judaism as some late comer to the Jewish scene and not the true, real form that Torah Judaism should take.

Most scholars, including some Orthodox Jews accept this classification as if nothing is wrong with it. However, indeed there is everything wrong with it! It is a lie, a subtle deception perpetuated by the spirit of the Datan and Abirams among us to ever so subtly subvert the Divinely ordained authority of our holy Sages and Rabbanim! Unfortunately, this is only one of many attacks that true Torah Judaism must endure.

The Torah clearly defines that Halakhic authority lies in the hands of the “Judge who shall be in those days” (Deut. 17:9-12). This is a reference to none other than our holy Rabbanim who posek (ordain-judge) Torah Law in accordance to the precedence established at Mt. Sinai and followed consistently ever since. One of the greatest punishments that the Jewish people suffer during these long years of exile is the loss of Divine intervention to validate Torah authority.

While the Torah is clear about how legal Torah precedence is to be established and followed, there are those who rise up like Korah to challenge and deny Torah authority. In what they claim is “in the name of a higher good,” these modern day Korahs seek to twist and pervert Torah law to permit that which is forbidden and forbid that which is permitted. These self proclaimed Torah authorities use Jewish Law as a smoke screen to confuse issues of right and wrong until they eventually twist and turn the most perverted of abominations into a glorified permissible thing.

Of course, such twisted pseudo-Halakhic arguments are deceptive and wrong, but today the masses often do not follow the dictates of the holy Rabbanim, they more often follow the dictates of public opinion. Therefore, there has arisen some so called Rabbis who will proclaim Torah opinions which they say are necessary for the times, when in reality they are perverting true Torah authority and causing an abomination of G-d’s holy Name.

How to recognize a Korah today might be a hard task, but it is a necessary one! In order to accomplish this task the holy Mekubalim have revealed to us an insight into the soul of Korah himself. They have revealed to us that Korah was a reincarnation of an aspect of the soul of Kayin, the murderer of his brother Hevel. By understanding more about Kayin, we understand more about Korah and this offers us insight as to how to recognize and expose the Korahs among us today.

Kayin was a tiller of the fields, a man much in touch with the more physical side of life (as opposed to the spiritual). He brought to HaShem an offering from his fruits; an

offering that he decided was good enough for HaShem, not the offering that HaShem had commanded. As known, HaShem rejected Kayin's offering. Hevel, Kayin's brother, on the other hand offered what G-d had prescribed. His offer was accepted. In jealousy, Kayin killed his brother Hevel. The sins of Kayin, therefore, prior to murder, were the sins of selfishness and of jealousy. Kayin wanted to offer to G-d what he wanted to give, not what G-d had asked from him. Korah was the same. He wanted to observe the mitzvot the way he wanted to, not the way HaShem wanted, as commanded by Moshe.

Here we have now the quintessential manifestation of the Kayin-Korah spirit, the essence of the spirit of rebellion. It is not that the rebellious do not want to do mitzvot, they just want to do it their way, according to their own desires and logic. In other words, they do not mind making an offering to HaShem, as long as it is they, and not HaShem, who pick and choose what to do (G-d forbid).

It is this spirit of selfishness, pride and arrogance that today is deceptively packaged as Halakhic "rationality" and "practicality." Some aspects of mitzvot observance do not fit into the modern social structure or into certain aspects of current trends in Israeli politics. Rather than society change itself to conform to the Will of G-d and the Word of Torah Law, the evil spirit of Korah arises to attempt to subtly shift the Halakha and to confuse issues with wasteful arguments and perverted logic.

There are numerous cases where single Rabbanim issued Halakhic rulings that were unacceptable to their Rabbinic peers. In the Talmud, these singular rulings were often recorded. According to the Talmud, the reason why these rejected minority views were recorded and not forgotten was that so if anyone in a future generation would bring up the same argument, the Sages could point to the Talmudic text and say, that point of Halakha was considered and rejected. It cannot, therefore, be revived today.

Yet, today, in our many sins, some Rabbis, following in the spirit of Korah instead of the spirit of Moshe Rabbeynu attempt to stretch or bend the meaning of Torah Law by relying on Halakhic opinions that do not have full authority. These rebellious Rabbis try to patch together different Halakhic principles to try to make them express opinions that indeed, they do not relay. Unfortunately, examples of this today are numerous, such as:

1. attempts to permit married men to take for themselves concubines,
2. nullifying kosher marriages in bogus Beit Dins in an attempt to free agunot,
3. allowing homosexual activity so long as no anal penetration is involved,
4. surrendering the Land of Israel under the false premise of making peace with a hate filled enemy.

All four of these positions are held to be Halakhically acceptable by certain so-called prominent Rabbis. On the other hand, the vast majority of Halakhic authorities, to their credit, condemn these and any similar attempts to blur proper Halakhic teachings.

We are inundated today with Korahs of all kinds. What are we to do? It has come to the point where these modern day Korahs, so-called frum Rabbanim, have made void

(worthless) the Torah of HaShem. G-d's sacred Name is thus being desecrated in the eyes of the nations, and we Jews are suffering the consequences.

From the episode of Korah we must learn to search our hearts and to weed out any aspects of selfishness, pride, ego or arrogance that motivates us. Especially our Rabbanim must place Yirat Shamayim (the fear of G-d) at the top of our list for good midot. We must follow the example of Moshe Rabbeynu, when faced with a modern day Korah we must fall upon our faces in silence and pray that HaShem prevent such an evil influence from contaminating the Jewish people, especially the true scholars of the Torah.

If we take this matter seriously, and seek to recognize, expose and dismiss the modern day Korahs, the Jewish people will not only dwell securely in our own land, the Jewish psyche will be at rest in a calm and lucid mind, one that is humble and in a state of surrender before G-d.