



Ohr Yerushalayim News

ט תמוז תשע"ט – קרח – 6th July 2019 - Volume 11 - Issue 51

News This Week

מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to Spencer and Lindsay Davis on the occasion of Binyomin's Bar Mitzvah this Shabbos. The Kehilla is invited to a Kiddush after Davening in the Shul hall.

Annual Bas Mitzvah Event

A great time was had by all at our annual Bas Mitzvah Event. The girls all enjoyed socializing and eating supper and nash together and the Bas Mitzvah girls loved their siddurim that were presented by Rebetzin Cohen.

A most fantastic game was played. A big thank you to Mrs Dansky. We were privileged to have Rebetzin Cohen and Rebetzin Klyne joining us and the girls were all introduced.

Sheloshim for Josh Shields

The Sheloshim ends this Thursday night 11th July - ט' תמוז and the Siyum and Hespeditim will take place in Shul on Sunday evening 14th July, please see details overleaf.

The Rebel Alliance

Dani Epstein

If there ever was an epic parasha story that ought to make it to the silver screen, Korach has to be it. He foments a rebellion and eventually perishes in a dramatic fashion in front of everyone's eyes. Great story, but if we stop to think about it for a minute, there are some odd holes here and there.

Imagine if you will the opening sequence: a long shot of Moshe (we know it's him, because he has the longest, whitest beard) taken just over the heads of the crowd as he announces the appointment of his brother Aharon as the High Priest. Cut to a close up of Korach whose face first turns an ashen grey and then a deep lobster red. He spins around in a fury, pushes bystanders out of the way (we can have one or two shots of fallen "pushees" in the director's cut) and then we see him stomping away in a rage.

We then cut to Korach at home, storming into the house and yelling. "Yentle! That was the last straw! The last straw, I tell you." His harried-looking wife comes into frame, hands him a hot tea and then we see them talking at the kitchen table. Korach is spewing venom, and his wife is nodding and agreeing with everything he says. Great start, no?

Erm, nope. You see, this scene suggests that Korach blew a fuse when he failed to get the top job in the clerical department, and yet Aharon had been the Kohen Godol for quite a while before the rebellion occurred. Clearly there was quite a gap between Aharon becoming the Kohen Godol and Korach losing his cool.

Here is another interesting observation. He gathers two hundred and fifty VIPs at the drop of a hat; how on earth did he pull that one off? Were there that many dissatisfied customers? Did they have a WhatsApp group with which he could summon them at a push of a button?

Another thing: this was hardly the first time anyone complained. If we had a record of their traveladvisor.com reviews they would have read something like: "Catering was great at first, but it's getting pretty monotonous and unimaginative. Scenery likewise. Awesome when we set out, but there are only so many rocks and sand dunes you can see before it gets a little tedious. Water is a bit tight, you might not want to bring pets along in case you end up eating them (unless you are Korean, in which case the more the merrier). Not sure the tour guide knows where he is going." Everyone complained at some point or another, so nothing new here; in which case why does Moshe get such a shock that he falls to the floor?

There is also some sneaky stuff going on. Moshe tells them to bring ketores, but

fails to mention the sting in the tail, i.e. if their offering won't be accepted they will die (yes, I know about the Tanchuma). You can imagine the scene, Moshe standing in front of a few crates of hand grenades, handing one over to each member of the rebellion. "Right lads, there's one dud in this lot. Here's what we do. We pull the pin, then hang on to our own grenade. If yours does not explode, you are the man." A sort of proto-Russian roulette. The way he sells it though, it's more of an experiment: let's all have a go and see who comes out on top. All very harmless.

However, they could have guessed at the potential outcome; after all, Aharon's son's offered unsanctioned ketores and they died. That should have been a bit of a clue.

Why did Korach's mob accept the challenge altogether? Moshe clearly implied that only one person was going to win when he said "הַיָּהוּהוּ הַאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר-יִבְחַר - and the man who will be chosen", yet their argument was that they all deserved to be Kohanim Gedolim - all two hundred and fifty of them. They should have called him out on it and said "no deal".

When Moshe finally gets round to telling them off, what does he do? It looks like he pulled over the Leviim to one side to have a little chat with them, and them only. "Look here lads, you have good jobs, the uniform is smart and the food's not bad either. Why all the fuss? And the Bnei Reuvain, well let's just ignore them for the moment, hopefully they will go away of their own accord." Was this some kind of a divide and conquer strategy? In which case, why offer a test to all of them in the first place?

By and large it looks like we are going to have to rewrite our script.

So here goes. Purists warning: I'm taking a little licence with the Abravanel, but I think it's worth it.

The opening scene takes place many months before, when Aharon is appointed as Kohen Godol. We see a large crowd, everyone is quite excited since before their very eyes history is being made. Everyone except for, of course, our delightful protagonist Korach. He is livid. However, smart man that he is, he puts a nice face on, congratulates Aharon and then comes home to his wife in a fury.

"There is no way I'm letting this slide, Yentle. No way."

"Of course not, my dear," says his devoted lady wife. "But what can you do? You are one man alone against Moshe, and he is far too powerful for you to take him on yourself."

"Aha! Good point - myself. Of course! I need some henchmen."

"Who would join you, O wise beloved husband of mine? Sure, there are a lot of things people are unhappy with, but they all have the same problems.

The Week Ahead

שבת פרשת קרח

Mincha	7.30pm
Candle Lighting	7.54pm - 8.00pm
Shacharis	9.15am
סוף זמן ק"ש	9.00am
Children's Group	10.45am
1st Mincha	2.00pm
2nd Mincha	6.00pm
3rd Mincha	9.49pm
Rov's Shiur	Following
Motzei Shabbos	10.54pm
Sun	7.15am / 8.20am
Mon / Thurs	6.45am / 7.10am / 8.00am
Tues / Wed / Fri	6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am
Mincha & Maariv	7.45pm
Late Maariv	10.45pm

Yours is nothing like theirs.”

Korach lowers his head in the realisation that his wife is correct.

But then came the day when Bnei Yisroel were split into flag groups and Doson and Avirom became neighbours. One day the two of them pop in to Korach to chill over a beer.

“It ain’t right,” they say to him. “We are Reuvenites, we ought to be the royalty, not Yehudoh, coz our grandpappy was the Bechor. This Moshe has messed everything up.”

“Huh,” says Korach. “Look at me. I was supposed to be the Kohain Godol, and who got the job? Moshe’s brother. Looks like he took everything from us. Not much we can do, though, the three of us.”

Now the screen opens up to a scene of general weeping and wailing, a caption fades into views: “A few months later, after the Meraglim returned...” Some close up shots of people crying and saying: “We are all gonna die, die here in this here miserable day-ert.” They have a Kentucky accent for some odd reason. Now all of a sudden there was a large sub-group of people with a real grievance. 600,000 roughly.

We cut to a new scene, with Korach, Doson and Avirom huddled around a table drinking moonshine out of Mason jars.

“Now”, says Korach, “we have plenty of people to join our rebell- I mean, freedom fighters group. We just need a couple of hundred people, and that should not be hard to do. Go git, boys. Let’s get us some compadres.”

After a few brief shots of the three musketeers running around rabble rousing, we are at the opening scene of the main action, the actual rebellion. Just over two hundred and fifty mean-looking men circling around Moshe, demanding their rights.

Korach steps forward, folds his arms and with a smug look on his face and states his complaints.

“You are playing fast and loose, Moshe. Sure, you should be king. But me? I should have been kohen godol, and these blokes,” his arms sweep all around the include his fellow rebels. “They should have been working in the Mishkon, not just the Leviim. Some of these lads are from Reuvein, and they feel as such that they should have been selected for royalty, not Yehudoh. So, what do you say?”

So now we have three complaints: Korach should have been Kohen Godol, Reuvein should have kept their Bechor status with regards to royalty and all bechorim should have been Kohanim.

Moshe’s face goes ashen, and he falls face down on the floor. Looks like the rebellion is over. But then he gets up with an odd look on his face, compassionate yet determined.

“Look here here, lads. I’m not sure what’s going on, maybe some of you have had a glass or two more wine with supper than you intended, why don’t we settle this in the morning? Hmm? A good night’s sleep, and all the issues will still be there tomorrow, and we can discuss it then. What do you think?”

The group looks at each other, then at their leader. Korach looks around and sees he essentially still has their support, so he shakes his head.

“No way. We want this settled here and now.”

Moshe strokes his beard (very long and quite white, remember?). So he replies:

“את-אשר-לנו - בקר יודע ה’ - tomorrow Hashem will reveal who is His. i.e. the Kohen Godol, וְאֵת-הַקֹּדֶשׁ וְהַקָּרִיב אֵלָיו - who is Holy and who he has brought near to Him, i.e. who should be Kohanim, וְאֵת אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַרְבוּ יִקְרִיב אֵלָיו - and who He chooses to bring near him, i.e. which tribe should hold the Bechor status.”

Moshe continues: “You all want to be Kohanim Gedolim? Fine. Ketores is brought in the morning. Bring firepans, bring Ketores, and everyone gets a chance to shine.”

Now, we are going to have to employ some literary licence and fabricate ourselves a little dialogue to support the next few scenes.

The crowd has dispersed, and Moshe turns to his trusty assistant, Yehoshua. “Do me a favour. Go to Doson and Avirom and ask them to come and have a chat with me.”

“Master, why didn’t you speak to them when they were here?” Asks Yehoshua.

“Because they have a solid argument as leaders within Reuvein, and I’m hoping a quiet word with them will reduce Korach’s numbers sufficiently that this whole thing will just fizzle out.”

The camera cuts to Yehoshua confronting the two Reuvenite barons. Their arms are folded in defiance, and they shake their heads.

“So you think your boss can just buy us off with some promises of land and bounty when we are not even going to make it there? He took us from a land of milk and honey – Egypt. Once the plagues started, we were doing just fine, and now he dragged us out to die here. We know we will never get to see anything Moshe promises us, so you and he are lying. Even if you gouge our eyes out to pretend we have made it to the land, we are not going to talk to Moshe. No way. All he has done was to pile on more and more oppression

on us. He’s a dictator.”

Yehoshua returns to Moshe with their reply and his master becomes livid so turns to Hashem.

“I never, ever oppressed these people. Sure, I received gifts from various parties who might have wanted to butter me up, but those were things that they gave voluntarily; however even when I was entitled to take out cash from the till I didn’t even invoice for a donkey Uber. I pay my own way for everything, and I never push anyone around.”

Moshe thinks out aloud while Yehoshua stands watching him. “Whatever I do now, the situation has gone too far. I can’t defuse it any more. Worse yet, they are now questioning the very foundation of Hashem’s Torah. They know I did not take them out from Egypt or tear the sea apart myself, they know that was all Hashem’s doing.”

Moshe turns back to Yehoshua: “I know now that Doson and Avirom will not listen to a word I say, so give this message to Korach. Come tomorrow with all of your band – including Doson and Avirom.” As we see him repeating himself in verse 16:16 אֶתְּהָ וְכָל-עַדְוָתוֹ הָיָי לִפְנֵי ה’ אֶתְּהָ וְהֵם וְאֶהְרֹן מִתָּר.

Moshe continues: “Don’t tell them this, but I have changed my mind now. Tomorrow the test will be something quite different.”

Cut to the next day. Two hundred and fifty-odd men are holding fire pans along with Aharon, and Moshe is facing them and talking.

“Some of you might have realised that unauthorised ketores can kill you, and you still want to take the chance. However, this won’t prove all that much because your children and the bystanders will argue I pulled a fast one on you. So, in the same way you bad-mouthed me and in that way cast seeds of doubt on me and Hashem with your mouths, so shall your end be, with the mouth of the earth. If you die from ketores like any other man would, then maybe I am right, maybe I am wrong. But if you die by a completely new death, the mouth of the earth swallowing you and closing up again, then everyone will know that everything I did was justified and the word of Hashem.”

The camera shakes, the earth opens up dramatically below Korach and his band of less-than-merry men; the screen fades to the closing credits and music with the screams of the rebels echoing off the walls of the mouth of the earth.

The End.

ת"ס

THE KEHILLA ARE INVITED
TO PARTICIPATE IN A **סיום**
AND **הספדים** IN MEMORY OF

JOSH SHIELDS
ר' יהושע אהרן ז"ל בן יבלח"ט ר' שלמה

י"א תמוז - SUNDAY 14TH JULY

745 מנחה & מעריב FOLLOWED BY
שליט"א ש"ס דברי פתיחה BEREL COHEN

הספדים
נ"י SIMON WANDERER
נ"י DANIEL SHIELDS

סיום
נ"י SHMUEL SHIELDS

FOLLOWED BY לחיים (8.55 APPROX)

MEN AND WOMEN WELCOME

FEDERATION

If you have the desire to spread Divrei Torah on the Parsha or on any other interesting topics, please contact Boruch Michaels via the following details: Mobile (Call, Text, WhatsApp) : 07419747766, Email: boruchmichaels@gmail.com