

# Korach 5771

## BS"D Parashat Korach 5771

The destiny of many things is determined at the precise moment of their inception; like skin complexion, and the color of one's hair and eyes, or a seed planted in the earth that will produce only according to the characteristics inherent in its DNA.

At the precise instant just prior to the Big Bang, our universe, and all that was to be in it, existed in its primordial form as a miniscule "thing" that was created by HaShem and subsequently expanded outward as a result of its internal infinite gravitational pressure.

Above all, the secrets of the worlds are alluded to in the very first word of the Torah "Bereishiet," for those who are able to decipher its elusive nuances.

Several small examples:

"Bereishiet" contains the words bara shiet (created six), referring to the six days of creation or the six Hebrew letters by which HaShem created all that there is.

Or: "Bereishiet" for the sake of "reishiet" referring to Am Yisrael, meaning that Hashem created all only for the appearance of the Jewish people.

Or by changing the order of the letters one gets "aleph be'Tishrei" – the first day of the month of Tishrei when Adam and Chava were created. And so much more is deduced from the single word "Bereishiet".

Our parasha begins:



*And he took (the verse continues to tell who took) Korach son of Yitzhar son of Kehat son of Levi, and Datan and Aviram sons of Eliav and On son of Pelet sons of Reuven*

The Torah does not disclose what it was that Korach actually took, so Rashi, in his commentary, explains that Korach “took” himself out of the national consensus that Aharon and his descendants would forever be kohanim, and demanded the kehuna for himself.

I believe that the great master Rashi would not be affronted if I would suggest an additional meaning to what Korach “took”.

The entire episode of Korach – his discontent and ambitions – are contained in the one opening word “Va’yie’kach” (and he took). But even more, the entire episode of what is transpiring today in the world arena can be summarized with the word “va’yie’kach,” as I will explain.

No more outlandish and absurd statement has ever been voiced by seemingly intelligent people than the United Nation’s (including the United States, the European Union and other friends) declaration that Jewish construction in Yerushalayim, Yehuda, Shomron and the Golan is illegal. The outlawing of loving one’s mother, or a requirement that all the taverns in Dublin serve only tea on the night of December 31, would be far more logical and respected than denying Jewish ownership – with all its attendant rights and privileges – to all parts of the Holy Land.

The allegation that Jewish construction in the heartland of Eretz Yisrael is a breach of international law is *causus belli* (direct declaration of war) on HaShem, and fraught with danger for the future of humanity. It is on a par with the efforts of the original “united” generation whose capital was Babylon, to construct a high tower for the purpose of making war on the Creator of heaven and earth. The first United Nations in

Babylon and its present successor in New York, are ludicrous examples of people cutting the branch upon which they are sitting.

The only nation whose minimal borders are fixed in the Bible are those of Am Yisrael in Eretz Yisrael. All the area between the Euphrates that flows from present day Turkey, through Syria and Iraq into the "Persian" Gulf and the Nile of Egypt is the land promised by HaShem to the Jewish nation. And although Medinat Yisrael occupies at the present time an area far smaller than that which is stated in the Torah, it is temporarily sufficient for the needs of the five and a half million Jews now living here. When our numbers will increase through aliya or the return of millions of anusim (conversos), or will increase dramatically by the reappearance of the Ten Lost Tribes , we will witness parallel dramatic events which will expand our de facto possession on the entire Holy Land, as defined in the Torah.

Our claim to the Holy Land, which based on the Torah is not respected by the honorable representatives of the countries that comprise the United Nations. But this should not affect us, because we have undeniable, empirical proof that we are God's chosen people and He has restored us to His holy land.

The proof is in the reality of our lives.

Picture for a moment two Japanese Sumo giants fighting over possession of a diamond ring lying on the floor between them. Each warrior weighs over 150 kilograms (330 pounds), and as they batter their bodies into one another with their huge torsos, a midget runs under their bellies and snatches the diamond ring away. Its a scene that is appropriate for a cinema cartoon. But who is to say that the history of mankind is not a cinema cartoon?

The two largest faiths are Christianity, that harbors the major characteristics of the Biblical hedonistic Aisav, and

Islam through which we can perceive the personality of the wild, untempered Yishmael.

There are over one billion adherents of Christianity, whose churches extend the world over. The Moslem faith also has over one billion followers, who are beset with untamed global ambitions.

Over two billion gentiles – one third of the world's population – have had their sights on the Holy Land for close to 2000 years. Caliphs, kings, princes, popes, crusaders, empires and UN mandate officials have passed through this land, made their little marks and departed to the footnotes of history.

As these two Sumo giants battle it out, HaShem, from behind the curtains of reality, ever so elegantly pulls the strings of history and restores the coveted, craved for Holy Land to the numerically insignificant nation of Israel. Two billion plus people with untold wealth and influence are unable to loosen the God given bonds between Am Yisrael and the Holy Land.

As stated previously, what is now transpiring around the Jewish people in Eretz Yisrael, and what will yet happen is alluded to in the first word of our parasha, "Ya'yie'kach," – "And he (Korach) took".

Korach was one of the four Levites whose task was to carry on their shoulders the poles that supported the holy Arc. But this was not enough for the insatiable ambitions of this gifted man. He coveted the status of Kehuna with which Aharon and his sons were ennobled.

But Korach did not understand (or did not want to understand) that kedusha (sanctity) is not something that one "takes" (va'yie'kach). The most an individual can do is to prepare himself in the advent that HaShem chooses to **grant him** a spirit of kedusha.

The only man who was able to achieve prophecy at will was Moshe Rabbeinu; all others had to wait for the inspiration to fall upon them. The Tanach describes the first time King Shaul felt the spirit of HaShem; he fell into a convulsive state that he was totally unprepared for.

Kedusha is given as a gift to an individual or nation by the grace of HaShem, it is not something that one can "take".

Shvuot is called "zeman matan Toratainu" – the time of **giving** the Torah, not *taking* the Torah. When called to the Torah one recites the blessing, "Asher natan lanu et Torato," HaShem who has given us His Torah.

"And Korach took" was a profanation of the relationship between man and the Creator. Man cannot take HaShem's spiritual gifts, they must be granted by HaShem.

HaShem gives kedusha to Am Yisrael. He does not give kedusha to the gentiles. The seat of kedusha in this world is Eretz Yisrael and Yerushalayim – they were presented to the Jewish nation by HaShem, they were not given to the Christians nor to the Moslems as numerous as they are. As much as these Sumo giant religions attempted to "take" the Holy Land, they were always denied possessing it for more than a short time in history.

Korach sought to take kedusha that was not meant for him, and today's descendants of Aisav and Yishmael seek to take kedusha that is not meant for them.

In a much wider sense, the gentile world is transgressing by establishing organized religions with their premises and ideologies. By doing so, they are **taking** spiritual liberties not meant for them.

We perceive the world as consisting of two peoples: We who received the 613 mitzvot at Mount Sinai and are called Am Yisrael, as opposed to those who received 7 mitzvot (actually

these 7 give rise to 39, as stated in the tractate Chulin 92a) and are called Bnei Noach.

An individual gentile can draw close to HaShem through study and good works, but not within the framework of organized religions. If a gentile has a spiritual issue, he has to confide with a rav who decides on these matters for both Jews and gentiles.

However, one could argue that in the absence of these organized religions the gentiles would turn to paganism, idolatry and hedonism, which are certainly contrary to the will of HaShem. To this I would reply: Paganism and idolatry, with their attending hedonistic customs are indeed far from the ideal lifestyle required of the gentile world. But, on the other hand, their obsession to feed their never ending quest for pleasure would leave them no time to conceive, plan and erect gas chambers and crematorias.

Shabbat Shalom,

Nachman Kahana

Copyright © 5771/2011 Nachman Kahana