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KORACH COMPILATION FROM VARIOUS DROSHAS

PIRKEI AVOS - 082 EREV RAV IN THE SOUL

The people involved in Korach's argument against Moshe has the lower perspective of "rav" and thus they were able to oppose him; they needed to be reminded by Hashem that Moshe is trustworthy. But when a rav is viewed as "kol", and not rov, then he cannot be opposed.

Why is there ever opposition towards a rav? It comes from riv, as we said previously. How do we repair the riv aspect in rav? Not through rov, but through kol.

The depth of Korach's argument that he was saying that there is already a kol aspect of chochmah in Klal Yisrael, so he was saying that we don't need Moshe as a rav. Korach said that "The entire nation is holy", therefore, he came to deny the halachos of the rights of Priesthood. The depth of his argument was that Korach wanted to deny the level of "rav" of kol; he was saying, either there is a rav, or there is kelayos\kol but there cannot be both. He was trying to take away the kelal of the Torah by saying how the mitzvos don't make sense.

Why was he wrong? Because he didn't realize that a rav is about kol. He thought Moshe was the rav who is not a rav of kol. He thought kol is an independent concept of rav. Korach was wrong because Moshe is not just the rav – he is the kelal where he drew his "rav" from. He is the rav who comes from the kelal; he had the rav on the level of kelayos. Korach didn't understand this perspective about rav; he was aware of the concept of kol, but he couldn't connect it with the concept of rav, therefore, he didn't see Moshe as the rav who contains kol.

031 KORACH | HOW YOU CAN AVOID MACHLOKES

In the episode of Korach's rebellion, the Heavenly Court decided that all of those who took part in the machlokes must incur the death penalty, including the children - a matter which requires explanation. Why were even the children sentenced to die?

The Maharal explained that when a person is a "baal machlokes" (a collaborator of dissension), he invites Gehinnom (hell) upon himself, and not because this is a punishment, but because his very being is connected with Gehinnom, when he allows himself to be connected with the very idea of machlokes. ...

When Korach rose up against Moshe to argue with him, this was not just against Moshe. It was against the entire Klal Yisrael, for Moshe is the root of all souls in the Jewish people. Therefore, when Korach instigated the machlokes, the damage he had done was that he engraved the idea of machlokes into every soul in the Jewish people. Ever since then, we have been afflicted with the negative character trait of machlokes.

DROSHOS - BEIN HAZEMANIM - TIME FOR REFLECTION

Chazal say that as the pit was swallowing Korach and his followers, the children of Korach did teshuvah, and a place above Gehinnom (hell) was formed for them where they would settle upon, and they continue to sing shirah from there. We see from here a concept that there can be a place formed within Gehinnom that is separate from Gehinnom.

We must know that the world we are found in is really a Gehinnom.

One who hears this the first time might not be used to such harsh terminologies, but this is the true definition. It is a very precise description.

TEFILLAH - 061 REMAINING PURE

Shamai and Hilel always argued, but Chazal say that they only argued for the sake of Heaven. However, their students misinterpreted their teachers' arguments, and because of this, many arguments entered into the Jewish people. Here we see that even a machlokes that was purely for the sake of Heaven eventually evolved into a machlokes that wasn't for the sake of Heaven [in the later generations]. How much more so it is a problem when it's a machlokes that resembles the machlokes of Korach and his colleagues, whose intentions were not for the sake of Heaven.... The Sages (Sotah 49a) say that in the era preceding Moshiach, "the wisdom of scholars will rot." Why? The Sages explain elsewhere that even though jealousy of scholars is a good quality, still, "jealousy makes the bones rot". This is because if the jealousy isn't coming from a pure place in the soul, it is infected with impure motivations, and it instead becomes detrimental to one's Torah wisdom.

FIXING YOUR WIND - 005 FLATTERY PART I: INTERNAL DISHONESTY

Why does a person not say what's really on his heart? One reason is because he simply doesn't want to say them. But why doesn't he want to say them? He is being silent from those words, and his silence is really a form of flattery. The Sages state that the followers of Korach were silent so that they could flatter him and win his approval. So we see that being silent in the face of flattery can be a form of flattery itself.

WEEKLY SHMUESS - 002 KI SEITZEI | FATHER-SON RELATIONSHIP

Our Avos and our Imahos had to deal with having evil children like Esav and Yishmael, and they also bore descendants such as Korach. They were as spiritual and as righteous as can be and they did their best, but they were not always spared from having troubles with their children.

UTILIZING YOUR DA'AS - SEEING ONLY ONE SIDE OF SOMETHING

Bilaam was called one who had "heavenly knowledge" (daas elyon). Chazal say that he knew how to calculate the exact time that Hashem gets angry. But the daas which he had was not the same kind of daas as Moshe. What was the difference between the daas of Bilaam and the daas of Moshe? The daas of Moshe is complete; it includes all daas. The daas of Bilaam only knows parts and details; he knew the moment when Hashem has anger, and that was all his daas: one detail alone.

UTILIZING YOUR DA'AS - 09 NULLIFYING YOUR DA'AS

Korach argued with Moshe. As is well-known, Moshe represents da'as. Korach saw only a part of the situation; thus he thought he could argue with the da'as of Moshe, because he perceived the da'as of Moshe only through his 'partial' understanding; thus he didn't see the total picture. He argued with Moshe's da'as because he had only a divided kind of da'as which could only see divisions.

This was the depth of the mistake of Korach and his group. Korach argued on Moshe – he has partial daas, which is the evil power of machlokes. He could only come to argue on Moshe because he had partial daas, not the complete daas.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR MIDDOS - 91 FIRE - GRIEVANCES

The Gemara says that the lives of three people are not considered to be lives, and one of them is the kapdanim, people who are always intolerant of others. (Pesachim 113b). This is also related to the trait of machlokes, dissension. The machlokes of Korach caused divisiveness, and it came from hakpadah. This is because the very power to cause division is hakpadah, for hakpadah creates a chatzitzah (a separation). When one feels intolerant towards something, this creates a separation and divisiveness, and the result of this is machlokes (dissension), which can later lead to the trait of hatred.

PIRKEI AVOS - D81 MAKE A RAV FOR YOURSELF

The Gemara says that the lives of three people are The word rav is related to the word ribuy, “many”, and it is also related to the word riv, argument. This hints to us that every Rav is potentially a controversial rav, because a person has to go through much internal questioning about who his Rav is.

Korach was only able to argue on Moshe Rabbeinu because he couldn’t come to terms with the concept of having a rav. He fought and argued with Moshe, because since Moshe was the Rav, it was inevitable that there would be some riv (argument) about this.

The very concept of a Rav is that he is someone who, as prominent as he is, invites riv\arguments from others. When people try to make for themselves a Rav, they go through a riv in their soul – they feel a battle going on inside. People aren’t able to clarify if a certain Rav is supposed to be their rav, and they feel a great argument going on inside their own soul as they try to clarify: “Is this person my rav...?”

The truth is that this power of the soul, riv, is rooted in the soul’s power of safek, doubt. People have the tendency to doubt things, to be skeptical about things. For example, a person might even be learning Torah a whole day, and after some time, he begins to doubt if he’s doing the right thing or not. From where does this come from? Why do people doubt themselves even when they are doing the right thing? It is because there is a nature in the soul to doubt things. It is the power of riv\safek in the soul – the tendency in people to have an inner struggle with things and be skeptical about things, unable to decide if they are doing the right thing or not.

The very concept of a Rav is that he is someone who is above the student’s level. Therefore, it is very hard to be able to choose a Rav for yourself, because if he’s beyond your understanding, how do you decide that he’s meant to be your Rav? It’s not possible for us to determine who can become our Rav. Who are we to decide this?

The Mishnah elsewhere says “Make for yourself

a teacher, and remove yourself from doubt.” Once we have for ourselves a Rav, we will no longer have doubts; but how do we get to that point in the first place? What are we to if we are having trouble choosing who our Rav is – who helps us decide this? Trying to choose a Rav creates an inner turmoil in our soul, a “riv”.

Even if a person has a Rav, it’s not always because he chose the Rav; he might be simply acting in a habitual manner (melumadah). Indeed, we cannot choose our Rav.

FIXING YOUR WATER - D11 IMPULSIVENESS

Much machlokes (strife) that goes on in today’s times is often fire-related, not wind-related. A person today who gets caught up in machlokes not simply out of curiosity and impulsiveness, but because he thinks that he has a personal involvement with the machlokes and that he belongs in it, while in reality, he really had nothing to do with this machlokes. He involved himself in the machlokes when he really shouldn’t have, and he enters it with fiery passion, feeling that he must get involved. (This resembles the nature of the machlokes of Korach and his followers...)

BILVAVI PART 4 - CHAPTER 10 ESSENCE TEMIMUS

The more a person is a tamim (wholesome), the more he is “with Hashem.” The further he is away from temimus, the further he is from Hashem. In order for a person to really reach closeness to Hashem, he has to remove his analytical thinking a bit and just have a very simple attitude towards Hashem.

It is written, “G-d made man upright (yoshor), but they seek many calculations (cheshbonos rabim).” By nature, Hashem made us to be “yoshor”- to be very “straight” and simple, rather than to be sharp, clever and cunning.

Korach was called a “pikeach”, a “clever” person. Yet, his very cleverness brought him to sin. If he only would have had temimus and to accept that

Moshe Rabbeinu is the prophet that Hashem chose, he never would have come to sin.

If a person remains with his cheshbonos rabim, he is far from being yoshor. The Baal Shem Tov said that even after all the comprehension he merited, his main task was to just be, “And a righteous person lives by his faith.”

Anyone who finds himself getting involved in a fight or argument with others needs to clarify: Is this an argument stemming from my de’os (beliefs), or is it perhaps an issue of middos? Usually, upon some reflection, a person can discover that it was a lack of refined middos which prompted him to get into a heated argument with others, and not simply his de’os. After all, who can say he is so pure that all of his arguments with others are entirely due to de’os and not to his middos....?

TEFILLAH - 170 PEACE

When a person allows himself to stay in a machlokes and keep passionately to his beliefs as he argues his points with others, this usually gets out of hand, causing him to lose both this world and the next - like what happened with Korach and his assembly, who lost everything, because they couldn’t let go and leave the machlokes.

Only a very great and purified person can enter a machlokes and retain his good middos. Ordinary people are not strong enough in their souls to be unaffected by machlokes. Even when a Gadol has to be involved in a machlokes, he keeps checking himself to see if it’s affecting his middos; he doesn’t stop suspecting himself of ulterior motives.

A truthful person keeps suspecting himself of his motives. Even if he knows that his opinion was right, he suspects that perhaps by now it is becoming more personal.

FIXING YOUR EARTH [SADNESS] - 010 HARMONIZING WITH OPPOSITION

After this lesson, the Rav was asked: “Is it possible for

a person to get along with every kind of person?” The Rav answered: “The only person who can integrate with all personalities in the world is Mashiach. Even Moshe Rabbeinu couldn’t harmonize with everyone – and the proof to this was Korach. If a person thinks that he can get along with everyone in the world, he is just imagining it. It is not possible for a person to get along with every kind of personality in the world!”

ELLUL - 017 CRYING IN ELLUL

By the sons of Korach, [as they were falling into Gehinnom, they did teshuvah], there was a special place prepared for them where they could be protected from Gehinnom, even as they were surrounded by it. So too, even though we are surrounded by Gehinnom, there is a light in the darkness available to us – for those who want it and yearn for it and will do anything to connect to it.

For the amount of darkness that descends onto the world, there is an equal amount of light that comes onto the world. The light of Hashem is therefore more readily accessed in our times, much more than ever. However, one must be willing to separate himself from the darkness of the world, with mesirus nefesh (total willingness), to be willing to give up his soul for HaKadosh Baruch Hu, and to really agree, that the world today is not such a good place to stay on.

FIXING YOUR FIRE [HONOR] - 008 ATTENTION SEEKING

There are two kinds of people with regards to honor. One kind of person, when he is honored (or if he thinks he is being honored....) will be confident that everyone will honor him. If he is a Rav in a shul, he may be confident that everyone respects him, and that he won’t have any “Korach and his followers” in his congregation, Baruch Hashem. They are all dedicated to the cause of according him honor....

That is a fantasy.