

PARSHAS KORACH

CHASSIDIC INSIGHTS, HIGHLIGHTS AND HAPPENINGS

פרשת קרח
ג' תמוז תשפ"ג / June 22, 2023



HAPPENINGS IN BELZ

On Tuesday, the second day Rosh Chodesh, following Shacharis, Chassidim passed the Belzer Rav Shlita to wish 'A Gutten Chodesh.'

The Belzer Rav Shlita is actively involved in the various outreach programs under the auspices of Belz Institutions in Israel. Tzohar, which conducts seminars for affiliated and non-affiliated Jews, runs various seminars in Eretz Yisroel and abroad throughout the year.



One of Tzohar's leading activist, R' Nosson Rosen, conferred with the Belzer Rav shlita this week regarding upcoming programs.

EVERYONE LOVES A GOOD STORY, ESPECIALLY A CHASSIDISHE STORY...

ויאבדו מתוך הקהל (קרח טז:לג)
They were lost from amongst the congregation...

The Gerer Rebbe – the Imrie Emes zt"l once conversed with another Gadol HaTorah in Poland about the conflicts that were taking place at the time and compared it to a scenario: There was once a wealthy Yid who supported two of his sons-in-law. One son-in-law preferred to eat milchig, while the other preferred fleishig food. So each son-in-law sat at a separate table during meals.

Years later, the father-in-law lost his money and couldn't provide them with food, just some measly water and bread. Yet he notices that his sons-in-law still ate at separate tables, so he asks them: "When you ate separate milchig and fleishig, it made sense you should sit at separate tables, but today when all we possess is bread and water, why do you need to sit on separate tables?"

"This is the situation by us," the Imrei Emes explained. "Once upon a time, when Yidden were on a loftier level, disputing over holy topics, halachic debates, and ways to serve Hashem, it made sense for them to be separated – each on their path. But today, when there is a decline in ruchniyas –

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**Everyone loves a good story,
especially a Chassidic story...**
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spirituality, and the daily battle is over the fundamentals of Yiddishkeit, in which we're all equal, what is the point of fighting?"

ולא תשארו עליו חטא (קרח יח:לב)
You shall not bear a sin...

The Shinover Rav zt"l was honored to be 'Mesadar Kedushin' at a wedding in a foreign city. The Rav arrived in the town an hour before the chuppah. He went to the Beis Medrash to meanwhile learn.

The shamesh of the shul, a notable and reputable Yid, was in the middle of cleaning the shul at the time, and a boy was disturbing him from cleaning. The shamesh told the boy to leave the Beis Medrash. But the boy didn't listen, and the shamesh slapped the child, and he started crying.

When the Shinover Rav arrived at the chasunah, the city's Rav honored him with Mesadar Kedushin. The Shinover Rav asked who are the "Eidim Kedushin" (witnesses), and the Rav answered that we only take right-worthy witnesses, such as the shamesh of our Beis Medrash.

The Shinover Rav proclaimed that he couldn't proceed with the ceremonies if the shamesh were an "eid-witness." The people assembled asked the shamesh what happened. Why is the Shinover Rav adamant

that you can't be a witness?

It took a few minutes for the shamesh to realize why. Perhaps the reason was that he slapped a child. The city's Rav agreed that he wasn't worthy of being a witness at a chuppah until he asked the child for forgiveness. (He needed to wait for the child to become an adult, eligible to be considered as halachic forgiveness.)

ומדוע תתנשאו על קהל ה' (קרח טז:ג)
Why do you exalt yourself over the congregation of Hashem...

It was the last Motzei Yom Kippur in Belz during WWII when a young chassid received a telegram from home commanding him to return immediately. The young man was perplexed about what to do.

(Belzer Chassidim knew it wasn't a good omen to shake hands and take farewell from the Rebbe before the famed "Hamavdil Tish" conducted Motzei Yom Kippur.)

Since the Frierdige Rav zt"l was very stringent about this custom, his son, Maran, Reb Aharon zt"l, was very rigid about it.

The yungerman approached Reb Moshe zt"l, the son of Maran, Reb Aharon, to consult what he should do – since he needed to leave and wanted to bid farewell to Maran.

Reb Moshe suggested that he stand by the entrance, and when Maran passes, he should ask Maran what to do.

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When Maran passed, the Yungerman told Maran that he received a telegram to return home immediately. Maran told him: "Oy, but my father was makpid – stringent not to give a hand before 'hamavdil'..." And Maran added, "אבער א איד טאר נישט אויספירן, אבער דער טאטע ז"ל האט דאך נישט געגעבן די האנט פאר המבדיל. A Yid isn't allowed to always have his way, but my father didn't give a hand before hamavdil. Even so, a Yid isn't allowed always to have his way."

And so, Maran wrapped his hand in a towel and bid farewell, "**Go home** – לחיים ולשלום –"

וישב אהרן אל משה אל פתח אהל מועד והמגפה נעצרה (קרח יז:טו)
Ahron returned to Moshe at the entrance of the Ohel Moed, and the plague had been checked.

SHORT STORIES OF SEGULAHs THAT HELPED CEASE PLAGUES AND HEAL ILLNESSES:

Harav Hachassid R' Itcha Ausberg z"l related that a few 'heimishe Yidden' passed away in Krakow during a short time. The Chassidim were scared and traveled to Belz to Maran Reb Yissochor Dov zt"l and asked for a blessing for protection. Maran told them to learn Minshnayos in the shtiebel (Beis Hamedrash) every night between Mincha

and Maariv – and the plague stopped.

Harav Hachassid R' Naftuli Gottesman z"l retold an episode in the name of Harav Hachassid R' Haenich of Radim z"l.

A rare disease was circulating in the city of Belz. Maran, the Sar Shalom of Belz zt"l, told Harav Hachassid R' Shraga Feivish of Hivniv z"l to check the kashrus of the tzitzis from all the city's inhabitants.

A gentile shepherd once came to Maran Reb Aharon of Belz zt"l, bemoaning his fate. He said there was a terrible plague amongst his animals, and they were dying out.

Maran asked him where his animals graze. Was there a water well nearby? The shepherd answered in the affirmative, and Maran told him to find a different field where his animals should graze and that they won't die anymore.

The shepherd was amazed by Maran's answer, saying he was an 'angel' that sees everything. However, Maran didn't want the gentile shepherd to talk about it, so Maran simply told him, "The well caused the earth to be moist, which causes the animals to catch colds and that's why they died."

פדה תפדה את בכור האדם (חקת יח: טו)
You shall surely redeem the firstborn of man...

Harav Hachassid R' Moshe HaKohen Gross z"l

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of Geneva, Switzerland, made his first trip to Eretz Yisroel for the occasion of the Belzer Rebbe shlita's bris. However, his plane was delayed, and he arrived to Eretz Yisroel the day after the Bris.

When R' Moshe arrived, Maran, Reb Aharon of Belz zt"l, told his brother, the Bilgorai Rav zt"l, to honor R' Moshe to be the Kohen at the Pidyan Haben. The Bilgorai Rav replied, "We already have a Koehn, Harav Hachassid R' Chaim Nuta Katz z'l, planning to come for the Pidyan Haben."

Maran said, "First honor R' Moshe, and when R' Chaim Nuta arrives, we will see then."

After the Pidyan Haben, R' Moshe went to Maran Reb Aharon to present a kvittel - since he heard it was an honor to present a kvittel to the Rebbe and present him with a coin from the 'pidyan' along with it.

R' Moshe was so awed by the idea that he offered two coins to Maran.

After a few days, Maran summoned R' Moshe and told him: "For several reasons, I can't take the pidyan coins you gave me. Please go to that cupboard and take them back." When R' Moshe repeated the episode to the Bilgorai Rav, he told him: "When my brother, Reb Aharon says 'for several reasons,' I don't comprehend them at all, but there's one reason I can think of. Since my brother and I

receive our income from one source, Maran is afraid that I used the pidyan coin from that source, and now it is being returned to him, and it is prohibited from being used by the father of the redeemed." (Since we both receive our income from the same source.)

פרשת קרח – THIS WEEK'S VORT

ויקה קרח (קרח טז:א)

And Korach separated himself...(from the rest of Bnei Yisroel).

Parshas Shlach finishes with the mitzvah of tzitzis, which alludes to the fact that Korach created a fight with Moshe because of tzitzis (as Rashi states from Medrash that Korach presented to Moshe a Tallis made of complete תכלת (blue wool) and asked if such a Tallis absolves him of the obligation to attach tzitzis to his Tallis.

ויקה קרח (קרח טז:א)

And Korach separated himself...(from the rest of Bnei Yisroel).

The name "קרח" is the same letters as the word "רחק" - far - the pasuk tells us that by creating a fight against Moshe, Korach distanced himself from both Worlds - from עולם הבא and עולם הזה.

רב לכם בני לוי...(קרח טז:ז)

It is too much for you, offspring of Levi.

Rashi comments "וקרח שפקה היה מה ראה לשטות" - "זה" - Korach was a wise man; how could he

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This week's vort – פרשת קרח
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have acted so foolishly?

Why doesn't Rashi talk about the 250 people from Korach's group who were comprised of head Senhadrim and notary people; for sure, they were also in the category of wise people – how did they also act so foolish? Chazal says that Korach bribed them all, as it says, "כי השוחד יעוור פקחים" (ויסלף דברי צדיקים) (שמות כג:ח) bribery blinds and distorts the words of the righteous." Therefore, though Korach's people were Dayanim and Chachamim – smart and righteous people, since they accepted שוחד – bribery, it blinded their eyes, and they lost their wisdom.

כי נאצו האנשים האלה את ה' (קרח טז: ל)
Then you should know that these men provoked Hashem.

The acronym for the word כי נאצו האנשים האלה is is הכהן – alluding to the fact that Korach and his followers requested the כהונה – priesthood from Moshe Rabbeini.

ברית מלח עולם היא לפני ה' (קרח יח: יט)
It is an eternal saltlike covenant before Hashem...

Salt enhances the taste of food, but too much food can ruin the taste too. The same is with the כהונה – priesthood – if you handle its holiness appropriately, its 'Avodah' is

accepted graciously in Heaven. However, if one desecrates his role as a Kohein, his 'Avodah' is worthless.

פרקי אבות - פרק ד'

אל תהי בו לכל חכם (אבות ד:ג)
Don't despise any wise man...

Rev Shmiel was giving a shiur to his talmidim when a woman came running in screaming: "Rebbi...I placed a piece of unsalted meat on my window, and a cat came and ate it. What is the halacha...with the cat?"

The talmidim controlled themselves from bursting out laughing but seeing Reb Shmiel seriously contemplating the answer; they remained silent. Reb Shmiel answered the woman in all seriousness, "The cat can continue roaming around, but I ask you to be careful next time not to place unsalted meat where a cat can eat it!"

Reb Shmiel explained himself to his talmidim when the woman left the room. "If I would've embarrassed the woman, then the next time she had a rightful question, she would be embarrassed to come and ask the question. Therefore I answered her question..."

מאד מאד הוי שפל רוח (אבות ד:ד)
Very, very low spirits...

It's a simple equation. Just like when one wants to pour from one cup into another, he has to place the receiving cup below the cup pouring out. So too, a person can only

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פרקי אבות - פרק ד'
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emulate a good trait from another person by standing and considering himself lower than the other.

מאד מאד הוי שפל רוח (אבות ד:ד)
Very, very low spirits...

Reb Refoel of Bershed zt"l used to say: Hashem did the right thing commanding us with the mitzvah of "ענוה" to be humble and to refrain from 'גאווה' – haughtiness. For if it would be the opposite, that a person would have to hold highly of himself, how would one be able to perform the mitzvah, for what can he hold highly about himself?