בס"ד

L'Chaim

1928

4 Tammuz, 5786

June 19 2026

The Weekly Publication for Every Jewish Person

נוסד תוך ימי השלושים

Dedicated to the memory of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka Schneerson

"Jerusalem has mountains around it, and the L-rd is around His people from now and to eternity" (Psalms 125:2)



It was the custom of the Baal Shem Tov to extend his third Shabbat meal until it was well into the night, thus prolonging the holiness of the day. But one week he made an exception to his usual practice and concluded Shabbat immediately at nightfall. He said the havdala prayer separating the Sabbath from the rest of the week and at once and made arrangements to set off on a journey. His coachman harnassed the horses, and as soon as the Baal Shem Tov mounted the carriage, the horses set off at great speed. Where was the Baal Shem Tov rushing, and why was it important enough to alter his normal Shabbat routine?

It was still night when the carriage bearing the Baal Shem Tov pulled up outside the study house "Chachmei Kloiz" in the city of Brody. Inside, a secret meeting had been convened with the object of placing a cherem, an order of excommunication, on the Baal Shem Tov and his followers. The selected invitees had been sworn to secrecy to assure that no news of the plan would reach the outside. The leader of the Brody group was the famous Reb Moshe Ostrer, a scholar of great renown.

By the time the Baal Shem Tov arrived, the doors of the study house were locked with a guard posted outside barring any uninvited from trying to enter. The Baal Shem Tov approached the doorman and entreated him to open the doors, but to no avail, since he had no invitation. Finally, the Baal Shem Tov said to the guard, "Please, go inside, and tell those gathered that someone wishes to enter, and if they refuse, they are putting their own lives in danger."

The shaken doorman went inside and conveyed the message to the distinguished assembly. A murmur circulated through the crowd. Who, they asked, is this stranger who makes such a dire threat? The doorman relayed the response of the stranger: "Tell them I am Yisroel Baal Shem Tov, and that I have come just now from Medzibozh. I wish to be admitted before them so that they can judge me in person."

The shocked participants allowed him to enter, and he began speaking: "There are two hundred and fifty participants here tonight. Your plot to excommunicate me has caused the curse of Korach's rebels to be brought against you, and you have been sentenced to perish as they did. Several of those present quickly stood and counted the men in the room; true to his word, there were two hundred and fifty people present. The hushed crowd sensed the power of the Baal Shem Tov and understood the profound error of their intentions; they begged for his forgiveness, which he readily gave.

Next, as a gesture of apology, their leader, Reb Moshe Ostrer, rose and presented the Baal Shem Tov with a copy of his new commentary, Arugas Habosem, which had not yet been released for general distribution. The Baal Shem Tov accepted the book, flipped through the pages, kissed it, and announced: "I see that your work contains pure truth from the beginning to the end; it is because your soul was empowered by the spirit of King Solomon that your writing is so close to its source."

Reb Moshe was astounded; how could anyone absorb an entire volume just from quickly ruffling through its pages? The Baal Shem continued, saying, "The entire Song of Songs is explained in your volume, except for the words 'arugas habosem.' Those words are not commented upon."

The author objected, "That is absolutely not so. I most certainly did include an explanation of those words!"

"Show it to me, then," challenged the Baal Shem Tov.

Reb Moshe took the book and looked where he knew it to be, but to his surprise, the explanation was missing, apparently lost in a printing error.

The assembled group no longer harbored any doubt that the Baal Shem Tov was a tzadik. They rose to accompany him to his carriage, grateful to have been saved from a grievous mistake.

THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

On the Weekly Torah Portion

Korach, the son of Yitzhar, the son of Kehot, the son of Levi, took a bold step, together with Datan and Aviram... and Ohn son of Pelet, the offspring of Reuben (Num 16:1)

A distinguished lineage is meaningful only when it brings a person to feel humbled in the face of his illustrious ancestors. Unfortunately, however, it sometimes has the opposite effect, resulting in baseless arrogance. Korach is a prime example of the latter; too much self-esteem allowed him to rebel against Moses.

Ohn was one of Korach's 250 followers in his insurrection against Moses. Yet when the Torah lists those who were punished, Ohn's name is omitted. Why? Ohn was saved by his righteous wife. When she learned of her husband's intentions she persuaded him that it was wrong to go against Moses. However Ohn had already promised Korach he would join him. What did his wife do? She gave him a meal and strong wine, causing him to fall asleep. When Korach and his group came looking for him, she sat in front of her tent, immodestly uncovered her hair and began to comb it. Korach and his followers would not approach her. Because of his virtuous wife, Ohn's life was spared *(Midrash)*

Moses became very angry (Num. 16:15)

The commentator Rashi translates the above as: "He was very upset." Even when Moses was attacked by two trouble-makers he was upset rather than angry. Chasidim relate that the third Rebbe of Chabad, the Tzemach Tzedek, was extremely careful not to become angry. On one occasion he was nearly provoked to anger. He asked for the Code of Jewish Law, noting that the Talmud compares anger to idolatry. He explained, "I am close to an offence similar to idolatry, I will see first if my anger is permitted according to Torah." By the time he had examined the question there was no more need for an answer.



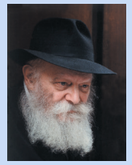
8:12 PM *Candle Lighting Time*

NY Metro Area
4 Tammuz // June 19
Torah Portion *Korach*
Ethics: Ch 4
Shabbat ends 9:21 PM

מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות לכ"ק אדמו"ר נשיא דורנו

Dedicated in honor of the 5th Birthday of
Basha Batya Grossbaum
of Livingston,NJ
By her Saba & Safta Friedman

to dedicate an issue
call (718) 778 6000



LIVING WITH THE REBBE

from the teachings of the Rebbe on the Torah portion

In this week's Torah portion, Korach, we read about the rebellion of Korach and his cohorts Datan and Aviram. At one point, G-d commanded Moses "Speak to the congregation saying, 'withdraw from the dwellings of Korach, Datan and Aviram.'" Then it says "And Moses arose and went to Datan and Aviram, and all the elders of Israel followed him." It continues, "And he spoke to the congregation..."

The Torah doesn't say anything extra. Why then does it say that Moses arose, and that all the elders followed him? It could have just said that Moses went to Datan and Aviram. What moved the elders to follow him?

Rashi explains, "And Moses arose" because he thought that Datan and Aviram would show him respect, but they didn't. This was already after G-d gave the command to separate from the rebels. At this point their fate was, so to speak, sealed. It was beyond the point of reconciliation and repentance. For that matter, going to talk to them, would be going against G-d's command, to separate from them. And even more, Moses was on a mission from G-d to warn the people to separate themselves from Korach, Datan and Aviram, it would be highly inappropriate for him to do anything before completing his mission!

Even though Datan and Aviram's fate was sealed, and even though they acted brazenly against Moses and were instigators of the rebellion, still Moses, out of his great love for every Jew, sought to find a way to save Datan and Aviram from their looming fate.

He couldn't go talk to them nor do anything that would interfere with his mission. This is why Moses arose, meaning, he used his position and stature, as king and leader of the Jewish people in the hope that it would affect Datan and Aviram to at least show respect, saving them from being swallowed by the earth.

This is also why the elders followed him, because Moses was acting in the capacity of the king, and where the king goes, so do the elders. This added to the prestige of the event, but unfortunately it still didn't have the desired affect on the conspirators.

If Moses found love in his heart to try and find ways to save these evil people, how much more so must we find ways to include and accept all Jews!

We have many brothers and sisters who were not granted a proper Jewish education, for what ever reason. We must take a page of Moses's play book and Moses's love, and seek to find ways to include these Jews as well into the life of Torah which is an everlasting life.

More than anything else, it is our love of every Jew, that is the key to bringing Moshiach, which all Jews will experience together. May he come now!

Adapted by Rabbi Yitzi Hurwitz from the Rebbe's teachings, yitzihurwitz.blogspot.com. Rabbi Hurwitz, who is battling ALS, and his wife Dina, are emissaries of the Rebbe in Temecula, Ca.

When Quiet Isn't Peace

Two relatives who haven't spoken in years stand at opposite ends of the same family celebration. No shouting, no insults, nothing you'd call a fight. Would anyone in the room call it peace?

We tend to think peace is whatever's left once the noise stops. The kids are at it again. "He started it." "It's mine." "I had it first." There's no way to referee, so you reach for the one thing that works: "Both of you, separate rooms." Quiet follows. Adults get the grown-up version. Keep the rivals apart, respect the borders, leave what's on the other side alone. Mine is mine, yours is yours. We do it in families, in business, between nations.

But that's not peace. That's distance. A ceasefire, at best. The absence of war is not the same as peace, whether between countries or between cousins.

Real peace runs the other direction. It needs the borders to soften, a give-and-take, a crossing over, some blurring of mine and yours. Not erased. Smudged.

The Hebrew says as much. Shalom doesn't just mean peace; it means completeness, wholeness. So the real question was never how to stop the fighting. It's how a roomful of separate people becomes one whole thing.

Watch an orchestra, or a team, or a cast on opening night. Each one does something the others can't, and none of them works alone. Behind them stand the people you never see: the stagehands, the crew, whoever sold the tickets. Remove any of them and the whole is no longer whole. That's interaction. But it only turns into music when it's harmonious. Let the violins try a drum solo, move the quarterback to linebacker, and you're back to noise.

Rabbi Shneur Zalman, the founder of Chabad, compared the Jewish people to a single body. Every limb has its own task, and every one matters to the health of the whole. A hangnail troubles the heart. The head sits higher than the feet, but the feet can walk, and they carry the head wherever it needs to go. Where we're higher, we give to the lower. Where we're lower, we receive.

So what is peace? Three things. First, recognition: seeing your own limits and the limits of those around you. Second, interaction: taking in from those above you, passing it down to those below. Third, harmony: playing your part and keeping the rhythm.

When you find people who aren't fighting and still aren't at peace, in a family, among nations, within our own community, one of those three is missing.

So before we send each other off to separate rooms, let's try the harder thing. Let's give true peace a chance.

L'chaim L'chaim L'chaim