



DVAR TORAH

KORACH



By: Rabbi Chaim
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Seeing Without Seeing

One of the most puzzling episodes in the Torah is the rebellion of Korach. How could someone who witnessed Matan Torah and experienced countless miracles, and even merited to carry the Aron HaKodesh deny the authority of Moshe Rabbeinu?

Rav Chaim Kamil (the rebbe of Rav Nosson Tzvi Finkel) explains that seeing something does not necessarily mean that it penetrates the heart. A person can witness extraordinary events and still remain unchanged. This was Korach's tragedy. Despite everything he witnessed, he never allowed those experiences to enter his heart and transform him.

Based on this idea, the Sfas Emes explains why Parshas Korach follows the parshah of tzitzis. The Torah teaches that looking at one's tzitzis can protect a person from sin. Yet the Torah immediately warns us not to stray "after your hearts and after your eyes." The message is that seeing alone is not enough. What a person sees must be internalized and brought into his heart. This was Korach's failure. Rashi comments that "his eye misled him." Korach saw, but he did not internalize.

Rashi's comment that "his eye misled him" reveals an even deeper flaw. Rashi stresses that "his eye" misled him, using the singular rather than the plural. The Shem MiShmuel explains that Hashem gave a person two eyes for two different perspectives. One eye is meant to see the greatness of Hashem. The other is meant to help a person recognize his own smallness and understand that he is part of something far greater than himself.

Korach possessed the first eye. He saw the greatness of Hashem. However, he lacked the second eye. He viewed everything through the lens of his own interests and ambitions. As a result, he could not appreciate the role of Moshe Rabbeinu and instead became consumed by the pursuit of kavod.

This explains why Korach's entire perspective became distorted. Rav Schwab develops this idea in explaining the opening words of the parshah, "Vayikach Korach." Rashi famously explains that Korach "took himself aside." Rav Schwab explains that Korach removed himself from the broader perspective of reality. Everything became about himself. He viewed the world through the prism of his own interests and calculations.

The lesson of Korach is that it is not enough merely to see. We must allow what we see to penetrate our hearts and change us. We must also learn to look beyond ourselves and recognize that we are part of something far greater than our own personal interests and ambitions. May we be zocheh to remove the Korach within us, to set aside our personal agendas, and to allow the lessons Hashem places before us to elevate our avodas Hashem.

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By: Rabbi Aryeh Gitlin

SUMMERTIME HALACHOS

KIBBUD AV VA'EIM PART II



Continuing our discussion of the mitzvah of Kibbud Av Va'eim, we will discuss some of the practical halachos pertaining to the proper manner of referring to one's parents. As always, specific questions should be addressed to one's Rav.

One may not refer to his father or mother by their first name, even when the parent is not present and even after the parent has passed away (S.A Y.D 240:2; Taz 240:4). This prohibition stems from the obligation of Morah/reverence for one's parents. According to most poskim, when a parent is not present, one may mention the parent's name when necessary provided that a title such as "Avi," "Rav," or preferably "Avi Mori" is used beforehand (Gra YD 242:36, Sdei Chemed, Klalim, Chof, Igros Moshe Y.D 1:133).

When asked what one's parents name is, one may say the name if they add a title or they can say it as a statement, "My father's name is ploni" (Pischei Teshuvah YD 240:2).

A friend who shares the same name as one's parents should ideally be called by a slightly altered version of the name, especially in the parent's presence. However, some poskim are lenient and permit using the friend's regular name, reasoning that parents generally do not object in such situations (Taz Y.D 240:5 and Shach Y.D 240:3). However, if the parent has an uncommon name, one should avoid using that name for a friend even when the parent is not present (Rambam Hilchos Mamrim 6:3). After a parent's passing, many permit using the name normally while others maintain that it should still be modified slightly (Morah Horim V'kibbudim 6:24).

Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv (Morah Horim V'kibbudim 6:32) opines that if a parent is commonly called by a nickname and not by his or her actual name, one may use the parent's given name when addressing a friend who shares that name because that is not how the parent is ordinarily referred to.

When reciting a Mi Sheberach for one's parents, Rav Benzion Abba Shaul (Morah Horim V'kibbudim 6:33) opines that one should say "Avi Mori" or "Imi Morasi" before the parent's name. If the parent is present, one should mention only the title and omit the name. Likewise, when called to the Torah and asked for one's father's name, it is proper to add a title before mentioning the name.

The Sefer Chassidim (800) writes that when davening for a parent, one should not add honorary titles because when one is praying to Hashem one does not emphasize the greatness of other people.

Rav Moshe Feinstein writes that a child may refer to a parent by name if the parent explicitly grants permission. Nevertheless, one who refrains from doing so still fulfills the mitzvah of honoring and revering one's parents (Igros Moshe Y.D 1:133).



Glimpse of Kollel Boker!!!

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For any questions reach out
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