



PhiloTorah D'var Torah

Take-aways from the Meraglim and Korach

78 p'sukim of Parshat Sh'lach's 119 p'sukim (just about 2/3 of the sedra) deal with CHEIT HAMERAGLIM - the Sin of the Spies.

Similarly, 63 p'sukim of Parshat Korach's 95 p'sukim (again just about 2/3 of the sedra) deal with the Korach rebellion.

The final third of each sedra contains a number of mitzvot and mitzva-topics that can (and should) be studied with the episodes they follow - these mitzvot are neighbor-mitzvot (made-up term).

But the two stories themselves, contain quite a number of lessons for us, and quite a number of helpful reminders for a proper Torah Life.

Let's filter them out.

Bamidbar 13:30 - Kalev silenced the people... "We can surely go up and take possession of it, for we can indeed overcome it."

Without ignoring the whole story of the Meraglim, this statement of Kalev's should be taken seriously by Jews - today.

Bamidbar 14:7-9 - They spoke... "The land we passed through to scout is an

exceedingly good land. If HaShem desires us, He will bring us to this land and give it to us, a land flowing with milk and honey. But you shall not rebel against HaShem... and HaShem is with us; do not fear them."

Again, in addition to its original context, see this as a message and encouragement for us - today.

Bamidbar 16:3 - ...for the entire congregation are all holy, and the Lord is in their midst...

Once again, take just this statement. True, it was stated by Korach as part of his argument and challenge, but as a take-away from the sedra, focus on it out of context, just as a statement of truth. We are KODESH; HaShem is with us. Contemplating this and internalizing and personalizing it should have an impact as to how we live a Torah way of life.

And then, we need to understand that we are - or should be - K'ISH ECHAD B'LEIV ECHAD, united as one person with one heart, but we also need to understand the fact that we are made up of Kohanim, Leviyim, and Yisraelim. We are not homogenized into identical people. We have differences. And not just Kohen, Levi, and Yisrael. But there should be cooperation among us so that we can grow as a People and as individuals.

As Rabbi Bienenfeld beautifully explained (see separate link), whereas a

Yisrael cannot be a Kohen or a Levi, he (and she) is capable of becoming a Teacher in Israel to inspire and educate his/her fellow Jews towards Torah and Mitzvot, service of HaShem, acts of Chessed. Leave the functioning of the Mikdash to the Kohein and the Levi, but be active in whatever way each of us can, in living a Torah Life and in helping others to see the beauties of that Torah Life.

In a way, this is a huge take-away from Parshat Korach. There's a lot of depressing stuff to filter out (but not to forget), but there is also an encouraging message - We are all holy. **PTDT**