



From the desk of
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Office of the Rabbinate of Elad, Rosh HaAyin and Herzelia

Religious Court of Elad * Batei Hora'ah * Religious Services * Marriage Licensing * Kashrut * Mikvaot * Eiruvim

TORAT

Parashat Korach

HAMELECH

Envious Korach

Korach held a prominent position in the midbar. He was from the Kehat branch of Shevet Levi. When Klal Yisroel travelled from place to place, who held the Aron Kodesh, holiest of all vessels? None other than Korach!

Nonetheless, when his younger cousin Elitsafan was appointed overseer of Shevet Kehat, oy! Korach could not take that blow to his pride. Korach was: j-e-a-l-o-u-s! Envious! He wanted the honor for himself! He could not take it. So he rebelled against Moshe and Aharon, against Hashem! What did he gain from it all? Live burial! For himself and his family and friends and their belongings. With a side order of "fries", i.e., 250 Roshei Sanhedrin, burnt to a crisp.

The Camel Grows Horns

The Torah is telling us something here. Something is scary about the trait of jealousy. It is just not worth it. If jealous thoughts gnaw at you, run away to a healthier mindset. Nothing good comes out of jealousy! It just eats away at you, in this world and the next!

There was once a camel who wanted horns. He saw the oxen goring each other. It looked like fun. He also wanted a pair of those precious weapons. He found a dead ox and somehow affixed a pair of horns to his ears. Everything was

going great until he met his match. A "fellow" bull challenged him to a bullfight, and he lost his ears!

The Gemara (Sanhedrin 106a) uses this parable to describe Bilaam, who went to collect his wages for having brought about the demise of 24,000 Jews. As he was present at the battle, he was slain. Had he remained home and not been so frantic to get his money, he may just have stayed alive a bit longer.

It's Just Not Worth It!

But it is not only Bilaam. History is replete with those who looked outside of themselves and set their eyes on what was not meant for them. And what happened? What they yearned for, they never got; and what they previously had had, was taken away.

Where else do we see this? Kayin (he was jealous that Hevel had an extra sister as a wife), Doeg (jealous of Dovid Hamelech), Achitofel (wanted to become king), Gehazi (wanted Naaman's money), Adoniyohu (wanted to marry Avishag), Uziyaha (wanted to serve as a Kohen) etc.

All of these examples are brought in Gemara Sota (9b). The lesson is applied to the Sotah herself who set her eyes on someone other than her husband and in the end, only loses out on what she already had. Once she drinks the waters, she will die an ugly death. If instead she chooses to



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confess, she forfeits her ketubah money and must be divorced.

The concept dates back to the beginning of history as we know it, all the way back to the Garden of Eden. The serpent wanted Eve as a wife, and he lost his hands and feet, in addition to suffering a number of other curses as well. For our purpose, he sought to foster a fond relationship with a female and Hashem decreed that everlasting animosity and rivalry exist between them.

You Can't Touch This

Rebbi Elazar HaKapor teaches (Avot 4:21): Jealousy, desire and pursuit of prestige take a person out of this world.

The moon had to become smaller because it wanted to be the lone ruler (Hullin 60b).

Ben Azai teaches (Yoma 38a): You will be called by your name (of stature), you will be seated in your place, and you will be given exactly what you deserve. Nobody (and I mean Nobody) touches anything which is meant for another. No kingdom infringes upon its neighbor, even a hair's breadth.

Pele Yoeitz says of Jealous people: All their days are painful, his food is not tasty to him, he has no friends, he picks fights, his only happiness is another's downfall or failure, he yearns for others to stumble and make mistakes, even in matters of mitzvot. So many *aveirot* come from jealousy.

Chonio and Shimmy

A tragic tale of jealousy is recounted in Menachot (109b). There are two versions of the story. Here is how Rebbi Yehudah said it. Shimon Hatsaddik served faithfully as Kohen Gadol for 40 years. When he saw that his end was near, he declared that his younger son, Chonio, would take over his position.

Well, Shimon Hatsaddik passed on, but Chonio did not accept the position. He deferred to Shimmy, his elder brother. Shortly thereafter, Chonio regretted his decision. He was j-e-a-l-o-u-s! He wanted to be Kohen Gadol. But it was too late. Shimmy had already received the appointment, although he had not yet begun active service.

So jealous Chonio came up with a plan, a diabolical plot. He told Shimmy, "Let me teach you how to do the avodah."

Chonio dressed up Shimmy in a robe (commonly worn by women in that era) and a belt (a woman's belt). Then he began to show him around the Beit Hamikdash. When they got to the *mizbei'ach*, Chonio said, "Wait here a minute."

Then Chonio went and told the other Kohanim, "Do you know what my brother Shimmy did?! He told his girlfriend that on the day that he becomes Kohen Gadol, he is going to wear her robe and belt and do the avodah!"



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The Kohanim heard Chonio's story and saw how Shimmy was dressed. Infuriated at this disgrace, they ran to Shimmy planning to kill him! Shimmy begged to be allowed to explain himself. He told them the truth, and then the Kohanim turned against Chonio, planning on killing him instead.

Chonio ran to take refuge in the king's palace, but it was not so safe there either, so he fled to Alexandria, Egypt, where he built a *mizbei'ach* and offered up *korbonot*.

Envy Almost Killed the Wise

In the introduction to his sefer *Be'er Yitzchok*, the author tells his story, how his life was almost ruined due to jealousy.

When Avrohom Yitzchok Glick was a young boy, he learned with a *melamed* who taught a number of children. Young Avrohom Yitzchok excelled and surpassed them all. One of the fathers, a learned man, but plagued with the terrible trait of jealousy, could not stand to see someone else's child outdoing his own. So he paid the *melamed* to convince Avrohom Yitzchok's father that his son was not capable of understanding Gemara. From then on, Avrohom Yitzchok was only present at the Shiur for chumash and mishna, but when it came time to learn Gemara, he was sent outside to play.

One day, the regular *melamed* could not teach so he found a substitute. When it came time for Gemara, young Avrohom Yitzchok went outside. The substitute asked why he went away. The

remaining children said, "Oh, him? He doesn't have a head for Gemara."

The substitute found that to be queer, so he decided to find out for himself. He went over to the boy and began a conversation, slowly drawing him into the Gemara's discussion. He found the boy to be very clever, even at a higher level than the other boys.

The substitute discussed the matter with the regular *melamed* and the secret came out. Avrohom Yitzchok was sent to learn by a different *melamed* and became a great Talmid Chochom and Posek!

The Happy Home

When marrying and building a home together, husband and wife must set for themselves aspirations and decide together to use those gifts with which Hashem endowed them and not to aspire to achieve that which they see by others. Many marriages are torn when husband or wife set their eyes elsewhere and yearn for that which is not rightfully theirs, be it possessions, glamour or features they find in members of the opposite gender which their spouse does not possess.

All of this type of seeking leads to jealousy and erodes the very foundation of the home. Being satisfied with your lot in life is the foundation of happy living and marital harmony.

Shabbat Shalom,
Mordechai Malka