

Perceptions • Tammuz 2, 5785 • June 28, 2025 • Issue #2102

Korach

The name alone makes me uncomfortable. It's not just what Korach did, because there have been many rebellions against the Torah leadership throughout the ages. It is also about who he was and what he became. A hot topic is the Erev Rav, the Mixed Multitude. They're the fire-starters in the *Chumash* ever since Moshe *Rabbeinu* took them out of Egypt with the Jewish People. There's not really much positive to say about them, and anyone since who has made life difficult for the Jewish nation has often been labeled with their name.

But the truth is, we're pretty good at producing our own worst enemies. Last week's parsha previewed that, and this week's *parsha* is its follow-up. The Gemora says that one of the most arrogant groups of people are Jews who do not learn Torah. These *parshios* make it clear that not learning is not a prerequisite. We have been shown that a person can be a *talmid chacham* and still fit the bill, sometimes *because* of what they know.

The Gemora also explains that arrogant people on the scale of Korach and the spies don't come out of nowhere. One of the main sources of their souls are the 974 Generations that existed (briefly) prior to Creation. The Leshem explains that these "beings" were not humans and they did not live in a world anything like ours. Contrary to what many have mistakenly thought, these 974 generations were not an earlier version of our Creation. They were just a spiritual mechanism to actualize the reality of evil so we could have free will in our world.

Does any of this really make a difference? Perhaps it does between God and the Korachs of history when it comes to passing judgment on their level of culpability. But down here, the damage is the damage no matter what the reason for it. If someone is injured because someone accidentally pulled a trigger, they bleed the same way. And "Just following orders" does not usually get a person off the moral hook.

Is it a coincidence then that his name was *Korach*, which is similar to the word *kerach*—ice? It was a testament to the kind of person he was, that he had a frigid personality, the kind that results when a person is arrogant. Like a person over-exposed to the cold, his spiritual circulation stopped and he spiritually gangrened, a lot like the left in this country and the leadership of Iran.

Iran is getting pummeled. And they will get even more pummeled in the days to come because their arrogance, which got them into this trouble in the first place, is so out of control. America has now joined the war. Logic dictates that Iran step down and lick their wounds. It also dictates that Hamas give back the remaining hostages and get out of the war as soon as they can. Arrogance dictates a do-or-die strategy.

Similarly, the left in this country is taking steps to get their way at great risk to the security of the country. Nothing to do with truth or falsehood, right or wrong. . . just use their power and position to get the man in their way out of it. Its leaders have been caught being hypocritical, but they don't feel the need to defend themselves because it is not about being moral, only about being in power.

And last week's *parsha* and this week's as well remind us that this is not a new problem, but that it has been a thorn in God's side, so-to-speak, for millennia now. . . on that He seems to have put there Himself. . . for our good. . . somehow. Yes, it makes bad worse, but it also makes good, better. As Chazal say, when *Malchus Edom* (Western society today) claims to be *kosher* when it is really *treif*, Moshiach will finally come. When the world turns upside down and right becomes wrong and vice versa, get your *Shabbos* best ready so it will be ready to greet him.

That's why the final war, the GR'A said, is against the Erev Rav and is the worst of all. He says that you either fight against them or are on their side, even if you think you are neutral. It's easy to fight a self-professed enemy who does nothing to hide it, like Hamas and Iran. It is far trickier to defend yourself against an enemy who claims to be on your side while stabbing you in the back. It just confuses too many people into thinking the wrong way and doing the wrong thing.

The spies got straightened out in the same *parsha* last week, as did Korach and his assembly. It was also perfectly clear who did it, even though many still challenged Moshe *Rabbeinu* after the earth closed its mouth once again. What arrogance won't make people do!

I can't speak for everyone, but I think most of us can agree that we have witnessed how we ourselves have stood up for things we have said or done already knowing that we were wrong. We should have admitted our mistakes and perhaps even apologized, but something inside of us just wouldn't let us. . . hoping that somehow we

could save face, all the while destroying more of it. I have personally been awed by just how far people will go to protect themselves, and at what cost. And from hereon in, it will be our ability to humble ourselves before the truth that may actually save our lives, and our portion in the World to Come. It's war alright, but it is also a test of character to see who we really are and what we really believe.

UPCOMING SEMINAR: Unlock the Gates: We are told that the Gates of Prayer are closed. This is a class about opening them up again. July 7, 2025, 8:30 p.m. Israel time. Registration [here](#):

Good *Shabbos*,
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