

KOIL MEVASSER

KAHAL JOSEPH CONGREGATION • 10505 SANTA MONICA BOULEVARD, LOS ANGELES, CA 90025 • 310.474.0559 • WWW.KAHALJOSEPH.COM

PARASHA KORACH

Don't Confuse Me with the Facts

*Rabbi Benarroch
SEC Jerusalem*

Last week's Torah portion ended with the well known command of "Tzitzit". Jewish law requires that fringes (*Tzitzit*) be tied to all four cornered garments, with one string from those fringes being of a blue dye called "*Tehelet*". Regarding the obligation of "Tzitzit" the Torah states that the fringes will help us not to, "*Stray after our hearts and after our eyes*" (*Bamidbar 15:29*).

Commenting on the order of the verse our Rabbis question why straying after the heart is mentioned before straying after the eyes. After all isn't the order of events leading up to a person sinning first and foremost straying after the eyes? There is a well known parable of the Rabbis that sates, "*First the eyes see, then the heart desires, and then the limbs carry out the sin*". Here the Rabbis clearly state that it is the eyes that start the ball rolling. It is much like a person who cheats on their diet. The site of a delicious piece of creamy chocolate cake



is what gets the ball rolling. Once the eyes see the cake then desire for the cake sets in, and then out of weakness the person eats the piece of cake to the last crumb. Why then does the verse regarding "Tzitzit" mention the heart (desire) before the eyes?

The answer has to do with a deep rooted part of human behavior. The heart not only represents our desires, it also represents our attitudes. The heart is associated with negative traits such as jealousy, anger, and hatred, and it is associated with positive traits like love and kindness. We all know how our attitudes have a way of affecting what we see. A person who is filled with love sees a crying child in a very different way than a person who is filled with hate. Two people can see the

Prayer Schedule

SHABBAT

PARASHAT KORACH & ROSH HODESH

Friday, June 11th

Minhah & Arbit 7:00 pm
Candle Lighting 7:46 pm

Saturday, June 12th

Shaharit 8:30 am
Tehillim Reading 6:00 pm
Minhah & Arbit 6:45 pm
Motzei Shabbat 8:27 pm

WEEKDAYS

Sunday, June 13th

Shaharit 7:30 am

Talmud Torah

Awards Ceremony

10:00 am

Monday through Thursday

June 14-17

Shaharit 6:30 am

PARASHAT HUUKAT

Friday, June 18th

Minhah & Arbit 7:00 pm
Candle Lighting 7:48 pm

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exact same events in the exact same way but come to very different conclusions about what they saw. Their attitudes will in a very significant way influence what they see. It is for this reason that the commandment of "Tzitzit" places the heart before the eyes.

With this in mind we can perhaps understand a very strange passage in this week's Torah portion entitled "Korah". The portion begins with a challenge to Moses leadership by his cousin "Korah". Joining "Korah's" bandwagon are "Datan" and "Abiram" and an additional two hundred and fifty men. In the end G-d clearly sides with Moses and his brother Aharon the High Priest. The ground miraculously opens and swallows "Korah" and his people, and a fire comes from heaven and devours the two hundred and fifty men.

Without a doubt these events should have silenced all of Moses and Aharon's critics. This episode should have once and for all proved beyond and shadow of a doubt that Moses and Aharon were G-d's chosen leaders of the Jewish nation. This episode should have clearly shown that "Korah" was in the wrong as were the two hundred and fifty men who joined

him. The sight of the ground opening and "fire coming out from the Lord and burning the two hundred and fifty men" (*Bamidbar 16:35*) should have made it clear to everyone that G-d was on Moses side and that "Korah" and his men were in the wrong.

Yet nothing of the sort happens. The aftermath of that story is puzzling. A few verses later we read the following, "But on the next day the congregation of the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aharon saying you have killed the people of the Lord" (*Bamidbar 17:6*). The result of this new mutiny is disastrous. G-d is once again infuriated, a plague ensues killing 14,700 people.

How could these complaints even get started? Didn't everyone see with absolute clarity that G-d had punished Korah and his group? How could they say "you have killed the people of the Lord"? Did those people not bring on their own deaths with their clear provocation of Moses and Aharon? How could they have witnessed the miraculous opening of the ground and fire descending from G-d and still hold on to their version of the story?

Dear friends it all goes back to the eyes and the heart. I suggest that their hearts were filled with hatred and jealousy and as a

result what they saw made very little difference. Their minds were made up regarding their attitude towards Moses and Aharon. The last thing that they wanted was to be confused by the facts. There was very little that Moses and Aharon could have done to sway those people to their side. Unless their attitudes would change the facts on the ground would mean very little. In the end they all paid dearly for their negative and destructive attitudes.

It is for this reason that Judaism places great importance on character development. One of the 613 commandments is not to hate. In Rabbinic literature there is a tremendous amount of emphasis on the importance of removing negative attitudes. Jealousy, hatred, and anger are considered impediments to spiritual achievement. A day must not go by in our lives where we are not working towards proper moral behavior. We may falter at times, but the battle must always continue. This is the only way to achieve real "Tikkun Olam".

This message may also allow us to understand the events of the past week regarding Israel. Do the videos not show clearly the Israeli soldiers being attacked? Is it not clear to everyone that many of the passengers

on the "Mavi Maramara" were Islamic extremists connected to terror groups whose intentions from the outset were violent? Do the videos, pictures, and first hand accounts not show clearly that the soldiers had no choice but to act in self defense? Don't the pictures tell it all?

The answer, regrettably, is no. When it comes to Israel and the Jewish people nothing seems to be clear cut. We are the only country in the world that has to constantly apologize for defending itself. There is no other people or country that has been the brunt of people's hatred more than the Jewish people. In fact we live in a sea of hate that surrounds us and if given the opportunity would wipe us off the face of the map. The first step to peace is to remove that hatred, because attitudes really are everything.

Calling All Grads!

Please let us know the names of your graduating children or grandchildren. On June 19th, at our special Graduates' Shabbat, we would like to honor all our graduates!

Send information to dafna@kahaljoseph.org by June 13th.

In Memoriam

It is customary to light a memorial candle in the evening and to donate tzedakah. Family members are encouraged to attend prayer services in honor of loved ones.

Shabbat / 30 Sivan
Ester bat Sofi

Sunday / 1 Tammuz
Selina Jacobs
Ezra Yaacov Kemara
Moshe ben Abdullah
Lulu bat Siman
Abraham ben Isser Pos-
mentier*
Yitzhak ben Haim

Monday/ 2 Tammuz
Isaac Amron
Eugene Cornateanu
Simha bat Lulu*
Meir ben Ezra Nathan

Tuesday / 3 Tammuz
Yosef ben Aharon Moshe*
Habib ben Mordecai Rokh-
sar

Wednesday / 4 Tammuz
Aharon Shaul Levi*

Names with asterisks are missing family members' information. To update, please call the office at 310.474.0559.

Parasha Korach

Parasha pages 639-648

Haftara pages 944-947

Community News

SHABBAT KIDDUSH

is sponsored in honor of
Sean Victory's Bar Mitzvah

by his parents
Mahtab & Dany Victory

Mazal Tov
to his parents, grandparents,
and entire family.

Refuah Shlemah

Please include these individuals in your prayers for healing:
Yonatan ben Alizah • Mazal Tov bat Sulha Mitana • Matilda Louisa • Yaheskel ben Regina • Ayala bat Naomi • Khayah Noa bat Sara • Haim ben Mordechai • Prina bat Esther • Yosi ben Esther • Victor ben Latif • Ramah Regina bat Farha • Aziza bat Sara • Merna bat Marsel • Judith bat Malka • Ofek ben Yochai • Efrayim Zev ben Fayga • Sulha Matana bat Mozelle

Norma & Sam Dabby Talmud Torah

KJ's Religious School

Now Registering
for 2010-2011

*Early Bird Savings \$325
Deadline—June 15, 2010*

Call 310.474.0559 or e-mail
molly@kahaljoseph.org

MITZVOT on SHABBAT

We now offer for donation the following Mitzvot on Shabbat: **1. *Petichat Hechal*** The opening of the ark where the Torahs are kept; **2. *Carrying of the Sefer Torah and Sefer Haftara***; **3. *Hakamat Sefer*** The lifting and showing of the Torah; **4. *Mashlim**** The seventh aliya to the Torah who recites Kaddish; **5. *Maftir**** The last aliya to the Torah which includes the reading of the Haftara (which will be read by the clergy unless member reading has been preapproved)

Since we count on your donations to the synagogue to keep our membership fees as low as they are, we suggest a minimum donation for all those who are called to the Torah of \$126 or multiples of \$18 or \$26. We appreciate your support. *Paid members may call the office to book the Mashlim or Maftir in advance, in memory of a departed relative. You will receive confirmation before Shabbat if you will receive the aliya or if there is a conflict. The member may also reserve any other aliya in advance by calling the office. Non-members interested in reserving aliyot should contact Sarah in the office for availability at 310.474.0559, 11 am-4 pm, Mon-Thurs.

Newsletter Notices

If you have information regarding life events such as births, bar/bat mitzvahs, graduations, weddings, anniversaries or passings, call the synagogue office at 310.474.0559 by noon on Wednesday .

Rav Mordechai Eliyahu, z"l former Sephardic Chief Rabbi of Israel Passes Away on June 7, 2010

It is with great sadness that we report the passing of Rav Mordechai Eliyahu zt"l, former Sefardic Chief Rabbi of Israel, on June 7, 2010. Rav Eliyahu served as Chief Rabbi of Israel from 1983 to 1993 and was one of the leaders of the religious Zionist community in Eretz Yisroel. Rav Eliyahu had been in critical condition at Shaarei Tzedek Medical Center in Yerushalayim where he had been hospitalized for nearly a year. He was 81.

Rav Eliyahu was born in 1929 in the Old City of Yerushalayim to his parents, Rav Salman and Mazal Eliyahu. His mother was a granddaughter of the famed Ben Ish Chai and a sister of Rav Yehudah Tzadka. His father, a rof and mekubal who had immigrated to Eretz Yisroel from Baghdad, was niftar when Rav Eliyahu was just a child.

Rav Eliyahu proceeded to learn under a number of notable gedolei Torah, including the Chazon Ish, the Baba Sali, and Rav Ezra Atia, rosh yeshiva of Yeshivat Porat Yosef, and was recognized for his diligence and deep understanding of Torah. In 1960, Rav Eliyahu became the youngest person ever elected as a dayan in Israel. He served as the Chief Rabbi of Beer Sheva for four years, and was then elected to the Rabbanut Hareishit (Supreme Rabbinical Court) in Yerushalayim, a position he continued to hold during his term as Chief Rabbi of Israel.

Rav Eliyahu worked throughout his life for the preservation of the Iraqi mesorah of his father and published a siddur, Kol Eliyahu, with his minhagim. During Rav Eliyahu's term as Chief Rabbi, one of his focuses was on attempting to reach out to secular Israeli Jews, giving them a better understanding of Jewish customs and their importance. He traveled extensively throughout Israel and the world, emphasizing the importance of Jewish education, shemiras Shabbos, taharas hamishpacha and fighting assimilation. Rav Eliyahu used to go to secular environments in order to connect with other Jews, occasionally lecturing in secular moshavim and kibbutzim. Rav Eliyahu headed Keren Moreshet, a network of Torah institutions across the country. He also headed the Darchei Horaah L'Rabbonim, training avreichim for rabbonum and dayanus.

The Binyamin Citizens Committee expressed their bitter grief over the death of Eliyahu. "The rabbi was the pillar of fire leading the settlers of Judea and Samaria, encouraging them in their difficult times and acting to their benefit." The Jewish Community of Hebron released a statement mourning the loss of Eliyahu, who was "a true leader of the Jewish people in Eretz Yisrael and a staunch friend of Hebron's Jewish community. . . The rabbi was always available to help and show support in every way possible," the statement continued. "His death is a tremendous loss to the Jewish people and will be especially felt by Hebron's Jewish residents, over the decades."

Last Passover, Eliyahu underwent bypass surgery, following which he suffered a stroke. In August he was admitted to Shaarei Zedek again, and remained hospitalized since. Thousands around the globe had been praying for Rav Eliyahu's recovery over the past year as he battled illness.

Rav Eliyahu is survived by his wife, Rabbanit Tzivya Eliyahu and four children, including Rav Shmuel Eliyahu, Chief Rabbi of Tzefas, and Rav Yosef Eliyahu, rosh kollel of Darchei Horaah L'Rabbonim in Yerushalayim. *Yehi zichro baruh*