

Parasha Meditation Korach

Bamidbar 16:1-18:32

By Rebbetzin Chana Bracha Siegelbaum

Eradicating the Energy of Korach from Within

Introduction

Eradicating the Energy of Korach from Within

This week's parasha is about machloket – Dispute and division between people caused by power-struggle and jealousy. The root of the Hebrew word מחלוקת/ machloket, is חלק/chelek, which means “portion.” Ben Zoma teaches us:

“אִיזְהוּ עֲשִׂיר הַשְּׂמִחָה בְּחֵלְקוֹ” – Who is rich? The person who is happy with his portion.”¹

Why is this simple statement so difficult to fulfill? We all desire to be rich – not having to worry about money – to be blessed with all our needs taken care of. We all yearn to enjoy both physical, emotional and spiritual wealth, yet it is still so difficult to follow the Talmudic recipe for attaining wealth and fulfillment – to be happy with what Hashem is giving us. If we could only learn to count our own blessings rather than looking with envy at the greener grass of our neighbor, we would experience the wealth of personal fulfillment in our lives.

The Strife of Korach: Power-greed and Jealousy

Korach's dispute was spurred by his personal jealousy and greed for power. Korach was jealous because Moshe had appointed Elitzafan son of Uziel, prince instead of him. Therefore, Korach instigated a rebellion against Moshe in order to gain the high status he felt he deserved. Korach's grandfather Kahath had three sons, Amram, Yitzhar and Uziel. Since Moshe and Aharon, the sons of Amram, Kahath's oldest son, already had high positions, Korach the son of Kahath's second son Yitzhar, felt that he was “next in line.”² Little did Korach know that had he not rebelled, he was going to be appointed the prince of the entire tribe of Levi, rather than just the prince of the house of Kahath.³ This teaches us the great harm of jealousy which may cause someone to lose that which originally was coming to him.

Eradicating the Energy of Korach from Within

“Jealousy, lust, and honor-seeking remove a person from of this world.”⁴ How exactly is jealousy generated? The cause of jealousy is when a person feels that he is not receiving what he deserves. In Korach's case, he felt he wasn't receiving the proper amount of honor. If we

¹ Pirkei Avot 4:1. בן זומא אומר... איזוהו עשיר השמחה בחלקו, שצאמר (תהלים כח), יגיע כפיך כי תאכל אשכריה וטוב לך.

² Rashi, Bamidbar 16:1.

³ Rabbi Yitzchak Meir Alter (A.K.A. Chidushei Harim) on Parashat Korach.

⁴ Pirkei Avot 4:21. רבי אלעזר הקפרא אומר, הקנאה והתאווה והקבדו מוציאין את האדם מן העולם (פרקי אבות ד: כא).



Midreshet
B'erot Bat Ayin

Holistic Torah Study for Women

(011-972-2) 995-4945

info@berotbatayin.org

www.berotbatayin.org

were to truly be happy with the portion we receive, then we would never be jealous of others. In order to make peace with our personal allotment in life, and with the people around us, we need to eradicate the energy of Korach from our psyche.

Wealth and Honor Depends on Attitude

The majority of Americans would rather earn less money, as long as they earn more than everyone else.⁵ The innate desire for money isn't to have as much as possible... Rather, our desire is to simply have more than others. I remember when we lived in USA, we felt much poorer than now. Although we lived in a townhouse of two floors, had two cars and two wardrobes of fancy clothes, we had less than the rest of the Jewish community. So we were poor! When we returned to Israel, although we lived in a caravan, we were rich, because our son had a closet full of fancy toys from America! So wealth and honor is relative and depends greatly on our attitude. When we look at what others have, without realizing that Hashem has given us exactly the amount of honor, wealth and possessions that we need in order to fulfill our destiny, we may lose so much more.

Jealousy Causes Bone-loss

Jealousy forms when a person wants more than he has. It can cause us to lose our happiness and our health, as jealousy eats away our bones. King Salomon teaches "...Jealousy is rottenness to our bones."⁶ I was thinking perhaps that jealousy is the underlying emotional cause for the prevalent osteoporosis in our time. Perhaps even more effective than dealing with all the physical causes such as chronic dehydration, medical conditions, and diet, rather than stuffing ourselves with calcium pills, we may be able to prevent osteoporosis by simply practicing overcoming jealousy and becoming happy with our lot in life.

The Secretive Weakness of Jealousy

Without doubt, jealousy harms both ourselves and others, even if it goes on only in the confines of our own minds. It states about Yosef's jealous brothers that "they could not speak with him peacefully."⁷ Rashi explains, "from their discredit we may infer something to their credit: they did not speak one thing with their mouth having another thing quite different in their hearts."⁸ However, in general, jealousy is a secretive weakness. Outwardly we may be friendly, to avoid being perceived as petty and malicious, whereas inwardly we may be thinking spiteful jealous thoughts. Eventually any hidden jealous feelings are bound to emerge to the surface somehow, by a bitter remark or intonation.

Distorted Worldview

If we want to consciously try to better ourselves and grow into our highest potential, indulging in the negative energy of jealousy can be a significant stumbling block to inner progress. Rather than working on ourselves, jealousy will cause us to blame others and exaggerate their bad qualities. Jealousy causes us to see the people around us in distorted

⁵ Survey conducted by Robert Frank, a professor of Economics at Cornell University.

⁶ *Mishley* 14:30. (משלי יד:ל) וְיָרֵקֶב עֲצָמוֹת קִנְיָאָה...

⁷ *Bereishit* 37:4.

⁸ Rashi *ibid*.

ways, “And oft, my jealousy shapes faults that are not.”⁹ Jealousy is hard to get rid of, because we tend to indulge in it without making any effort to root it out. Let us take this opportunity to uproot jealousy before we allow it to damage precious friendship and cause bone-loss G*d forbid!

Meditation:

Make yourself comfortable and enjoy resting in yourself.
Take some deep breaths and relax even more.

1. Imagine a golden circle of light surrounding you. This is your personal domain. Visualize whatever is precious to you inside of this protective circle.
2. Start with the people in your life that you hold dear, then your personal virtues, and then your most precious possessions.
3. Each time you enter a person, a character-trait or a possession inside your visual circle, thank Hashem for bringing these things into your life and personal domain.
4. Now imagine a person whom you may at times feel jealous at.
5. Draw a protective visual circle around the person you feel jealous at. Imagine the things that belong to this person inside of his or her protective circle, whether people, character-traits and/or possessions.
6. Try to send light and blessing to this person and his or her personal domain inside of the circle.
7. Recognize that Hashem has given each of you exactly what you need. Thank Hashem for your blessings. Thank Hashem for the other person’s blessings.
8. Allow yourself to truly recognize the goodness in what the other person has, and rejoice on his or her behalf.
9. Now imagine a larger circle of light encircling both your and the other person’s personal domain respectively. You are together in this all-encompassing protective circle. You are all interconnected in Hashem’s greater oneness.
10. Feel happy for your own and for your friend’s accomplishment! Only when we are together will we reach our mutual goals with love!

⁹William Shakespeare, Othello, Act 3, Scene 3.

Notes:

Jealousy comes from a feeling of separation – the mind tends to build barriers between ourselves and others. When we go beyond the mind and use our hearts of goodwill, we recognize how we are all inter-connected, all part of one cosmic family. When we feel that someone else who has achieved something great is part of our extended family, then we can feel the same joy as if we had done the thing.

“When one part of my body does something, the other part does not feel miserable, because each knows that it belongs to the same body, and that the entire body is its reality. When I work with my mind, my feet do not feel miserable, because they have established their oneness with my mind....Unless and until we have realized others as our very own, we call them different personalities, different individualities. But if we can see and feel them inside ourselves as members of our own larger family, jealousy will disappear from our life of aspiration.”¹⁰

The Chafetz Chaim¹¹ already explained this principle with the following parable: “If a person walked on the way, and one leg stumbled over the other leg, and caused him to fall to the ground and become hurt, obviously the person is not going to become angry on his leg. For the leg is part of his body, and everything is one even if it is divided into different limbs. In the same manner a person and his friend is really one being, they all derive from the same root.”¹² Meditating on the interconnectedness of all Israel will help us eradicate hatred, resentment and jealousy from our hearts.

¹⁰ Nirbhasa Megee August 7, <[HTTP://WWW.SRICHINMOYBIO.CO.UK/BLOG/CATEGORY/SELF-IMPROVEMENT/](http://www.srichinmoymoybio.co.uk/blog/category/self-improvement/)>

¹¹ Rabbi Yisrael Meir Kagan, Dziafava, 1838 – Radun 1933.

¹² Chafetz Chaim, *Shemirat Halashon, part one, Sha'ar Hatevuna*, chapter 6.



Midreshet
B'erot Bat Ayin

Holistic Torah Study for Women

(011-972-2) 995-4945

info@berotbatayin.org

www.berotbatayin.org

About Us



Rebbetzin Chana Bracha Siegelbaum

Rebbetzin Chana Bracha Siegelbaum, a native of Denmark, is Founder and Director of Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin. She holds a Bachelor of Education in Bible and Jewish Philosophy from Michlala Jerusalem College for Women, and a Masters of Art in Jewish History from Touro College. Chana Bracha also began her practice as a spiritual healer through Emuna, tefila and energy work. For more than two decades Chana Bracha has taught Bible studies with special emphasis on women's issues in Israel and the United States. She creates curricula emphasizing women's

spiritual empowerment through traditional Torah values. Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin located in the Judean Hills of Israel offers a unique program to women of all ages and backgrounds to learn in a holistic Torah study environment that nurtures the mind, body and soul. Intensive textual study of Tanach, Halacha and Chassidut are woven together with creative spiritual expression, and connection with the land of Israel through organic gardening, herbology, Jewish sources of healing and sustainable living. Classes in Jewish mysticism, Chassidism and Jewish meditation are directed at the spiritual thirst so prominent in our times.

*In 2010 Rebbetzin Chana Bracha published her first book, *Women at the Crossroads: A Woman's Perspective on the Weekly Torah Portion*.*

Chana Bracha has a married son and several granddaughters. She lives with her husband and younger son on the land of the Judean hills, Israel.

If you are interested in:

Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin contact info@berotbatayin.org or in Spiritual Healing with Rebbetzin Chana Bracha, please contact her at director@berotbatayin.org

or visit her blog: <http://rebbetzinchanabracha.blogspot.com/2010/11/emunah-healing-for-women.html>

Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin – Holistic Torah Study for Women on the Land of Israel

At Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin, we weave together Torah studies with creative spiritual expression, connecting with the Land of Israel, and healthy, organic lifestyles. In the heart of the Judean Hills, with its serene beauty, our students experience an approach to Judaism that bridges mind, body and soul. Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin is designed as a micro-community within the Village of Bat Ayin where women of all ages and backgrounds engage in intense Torah learning as part of an integrated, participatory approach to Torah living.

Come Learn With Us!

Beginner and advanced levels are offered for women of all ages and religious backgrounds. Whether your interest in Judaism has recently been ignited, or you are seeking a wider perspective, Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin offers the opportunity to improve your learning skills while strengthening your commitment to Judaism within the parameters of Halachah – all while engaging your inner creative spirituality, working the Land, and maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

Support Our School!

You have the unique opportunity to help us continue to build and amplify the light of Torah on the Land of Israel. With your help we can increase our ability to provide women an extraordinary Torah environment where they can build a solid Jewish foundation which will have an impact for generations to come.

