

Parshat Korach

WHEN IMPATIENCE AND ARROGANCE PREVENTS YOU FROM BECOMING A LEADER

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Parshat Korach is the first important political revolt in history and his protagonist, Korach, was a very capable leader of the People of Israel.

The Midrash depicts Korach as a very wealthy and smart person. The first verse of the Parsha says “*Vayikach Korach*” – “And Korach took”, which for the commentators means that Korach “took himself”: He decided to separate from the rest of the Israelites placing himself above all. Korach didn’t want to follow the rules of the people, commanded by God, respecting Moses and Aaron as leaders.

Many of our Sages highlight the fact that due to his great qualities, Korach probably was going to be one of the most important leaders of the people, having a promissory future. He had initiative, commitment towards the Israelites, and many attributes of a natural leader. But what was the problem? He didn’t have patience to wait for the proper time to receive the leadership from the current leaders.

Korach’s failure was to press the transition of leadership in order to achieve greatness. He wanted to receive recognition but not because of his merits, learning from Moses and Aaron, but creating trouble, dividing the Congregation, only because he wanted to be the only leader. His motto was: “Moses time is over... Now it’s our time! ”. He convinced many with that argument, but at the end he failed because leadership is something that you achieve by deeds, not words.

His final is tragic: He was literally “swallowed” by the earth. Why that punishment? Because he didn’t wait with patience for the day to receive the leadership so the earth didn’t wait until the end of his life for his burial.

Korach’s mistake was not being respectful with the current leadership and thinking that because they were “getting old” it was time to make a revolution, instead of receiving the leadership in the proper time. The Torah shows us this week that this can harm the Congregation and in any case it won’t succeed.

Shabbat Shalom!
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