



EMC SHALOM INTERNACIONAL

PARASHAH 38 KORACH | BAMIDBAR (NUMBERS) 16:1-18:32

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Aliyot of the Torah:

1. 16:1-13
2. 16:14-19
3. 16:20-43 (16:20 – 17:8 versión hebrea)
4. 16:44-50 (17:9-15 heb.)
5. 17:1-9 (17:16-24 heb.)
6. 17:10 – 18:20 (17:25 – 18:20 heb.)
7. 18:21-32
8. Maftir: 18:30-32

Haftarah: Shmuel Alef/1 Samuel 11:14-12:22

The Apostolic Writings: Yohanan/John 9:1-10:42

Korach means without hair (bald)

First Aliyah 16:1-13

16:1-2 “Now Korah, the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On, the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men: and they rose up before Moshe, with certain of the children of Yisrael, two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown.” –We must note that the situation of conflict created by the gossiping and discontent of the people was the seed of this rebellion against Moshe and Aharon. Koraj, a descendant of Levi, becomes the head of the uprising against Moshe. They were frustrated at the fact that they would not enter the Promised Land and this led to desperation and impatience; they challenged and questioned Moshe’s leadership. “YAHWEH is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any

should perish, but that all should come to repentance (**Kefa Bet/2 Peter 3:9**).”

Other motives involved were jealousy, resentment and rancor. Koraj had the birthright of his family, however, this position was given to his cousin Elitsafan. This time, the rebelliousness escalated from mere criticism and complaints to an open confrontation. He tried to seize authority over the principals of the people, men of prestige, in order to lure them to depose Moshe.

This is an example of how corrosive envy and lashon harah can be. Yirmiyahu the prophet said: “They are all grievous revolters, walking with slanders: they are brass and iron; they are all corrupters (**Yirmiyahu/Jeremiah 6:28**).” The Scriptures say in **Mishle/Proverbs 6:16-19**: “These six things doth YAHWEH hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: a proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, an heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, a false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.”; “Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth (**Mishle/Proverbs 26:20**).”

Rab Shaul warns: “Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of Yahweh? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, **nor revilers**, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of Yahweh (**Korintyim Alef/1 Corinthians 6:9-10**).”

And they rose up before Moshe... The Hebrew word for “before” is פָּנִים “pânîym”

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H6440 this is a word with numerous meanings like opposition, to be against and it is connected to idolatry. Therefore, they were turning their backs from Moshe and from Yahweh Himself. This opened a door to break the first commandment: “I am YAHWEH thy Elohim, which have brought thee out of the land of Mitzrayim, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me (**Shemot/Exodus 20:2-3**).”

Two hundred and fifty leaders of Yisrael were partakers of the sin of slandering advanced by Koraj who may have been following his own agendas. We dare say that this number of leaders could have established a Sanhedrin only twenty people short in every tribe excepting the tribe of Levi.

16:3 “And they gathered themselves together against Moshe and against Aharon, and said unto them, ‘Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and YAHWEH is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of YAHWEH?’” –The idea that we are all equal is not altogether true. Though we all are equally precious to Yahweh, we are all different. The pretense that anyone can do what the person next to him does is not always true. The allegations of the rouge leaders was that since they were part of the congregation that was holy, consecrated, then they could also take the position of Moshe and Aharon.

The idea that we are all equals and therefore, we can do what was commissioned to others is a rebellious and disobedient attitude. Opposing the leaders ordained by Yahweh is like being in opposition to Yahweh Himself. “For rebellion is

as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of YAHWEH, he hath also rejected thee from being king (**Shmuel Alef/1 Samuel 15:23**).”

Not only did Koraj start a defamatory campaign riddled with lies but also he managed to win the favor of many through manipulation and soft words and flattering. They were trying to elevate the people’s spiritual level to that of Moshe and Aharon. Actually, they were calling evil good. “Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! (**Yeshayahu/Isaiah 5:20**).”

16:4-5 “And when Moses heard it, he fell upon his face: and he spake unto Korah and unto all his company, saying, ‘Even tomorrow YAHWEH will shew who are his, and who is holy; and will cause him to come near unto him: even him whom he hath chosen will he cause to come near unto him’.” –The difference between a leader ordained by Yahweh and a leader appointed by men is humility and love. The attitude of a leader appointed by men is to react in order to defend his position by any means possible. A leader ordained by Yahweh will deliver the opposition in the hands of who has ordained him, that is, Yahweh. also, there is this conviction: in the same way he had been ordained, he could also be removed.

Moshe’s meekness is the key of his calling. He did not engage in disputes to defend his leadership nor did he try to defend himself of their allegations. By standing undisturbed by the pressure exerted by this rogue faction, he showed the stability of his ministry recognizing the special character of the election of the

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people at the same time. Yahweh removes leaders and sets up leaders. “And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding (**Daniel/Daniel 2:21**).”; “For do I now persuade men, or Elohim? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Mashiaj (**Galtyim/Galatians 1:10**).”

Koraj was a close relative of Moshe. Hasatan was aiming at making Moshe’s self-esteem crumble. Yeshua warned us about this: “Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household (**Matityahu/Matthew 10:34-36**).”

The criticism and the challenges to the authority affect us more when it comes from within the group of family and friends than when it is an external attack.

16:9-10 “Seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that the Elohim of Yisrael hath separated you from the congregation of Yisrael, to bring you near to himself to do the service of the tabernacle of YAHWEH, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto them? And he hath brought thee near to him, and all thy brethren the sons of Levi with thee: and seek ye the priesthood also?” –There was yet a hidden reason for these men to start the rebellion: they could not care less for the congregation; their real agenda was to attain a position of influence over them. They were being motivated by personal gain not the wellbeing of the

congregation. These persons had the favor of Yahweh since they served in the service of the Mishkan (Tabernacle) holding priestly authority on the congregation. They neglected such privilege and coveted to have a greater benefit from the people.

Yeshua makes a comparison between these two attitudes when referring to the good shepherd. There is a remarkable difference between the hireling and the good shepherd. The hireling is only interested in whatever benefits he can get from the flock while the good shepherd only cares for the flock. “I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep (**Matityahu/Matthew 10:11-15**).”

Today, in fact, this privilege is not just for the tribe of Levi –that is, to minister unto Yahweh as kohanim (priests). Any person can separate from the silliness of this world and serve Elohim in righteousness. This man has the highest degree of holiness and Yahweh shall give him the inheritance forever. All his needs shall be met in the same way Yahweh had ordered that the kohanim and Levites be provided with abundant vestures. David is an outstanding example of this. He was not a Kohen nor a Levite but he said: “YAHWEH is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot (**Tehilim/Psalms 16:5**).”

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16:11 “For which cause both thou and all thy company are gathered together against YAHWEH: and what is Aharon, that ye murmur against him?” –Moshe’s refutation stated the real goals of the rebellion of this presumptuous manipulator –whose name is written forever on a list of persons who attempted to challenge Yahweh.

He who gossips against a servant of Yahweh, he gossips against Yahweh Himself. King David gave us a confirmation concerning this issue. “And David said to Abishai, ‘Destroy him not: for who can stretch forth his hand against YAHWEH’S anointed, and be guiltless? David said furthermore, ‘As YAHWEH liveth, YAHWEH shall smite him; or his day shall come to die; or he shall descend into battle, and perish’. YAHWEH forbid that I should stretch forth mine hand against YAHWEH ‘S anointed: but, I pray thee, take thou now the spear that is at his bolster, and the cruse of water, and let us go (**Shmuel Alef/1 Samuel 26:9-11**).”

16:13 “Is it a small thing that thou hast brought us up out of a land that floweth with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, except thou make thyself altogether a prince over us?” –The sentence that they should not see the Promised Land gave them the excuse they needed to start the revolt. They did not even remember the horrors that they had lived in Mitzrayim. They blamed Moshe and his leadership for what they were going through. This is a classical attitude of those are at fault: blaming others of their circumstances. Another blunder, they equated the land of bondage to the land of the promise.

At Remez level –the second level of PARDES, the allegoric level, Mitzrayim represented the

world, sin, and corruption whereas, Eretz Yisrael represented the promise of blessing and the Kingdom. “And even as they did not like to retain Elohim in their knowledge, Elohim gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient (**Romanyim/Romans 1:28**).” In other words, their sinful attitude blinded their understanding.

Second Aliyah 16:14-19

16:15 “And Moses was very wroth, and said unto YAHWEH, ‘Respect not thou their offering: I have not taken one ass from them, neither have I hurt one of them.’ – Moshe’s plead unto Yahweh is based on two ideas. First, he asked Yahweh to disregard their profane offering because this may have caused the Shejinah (Divine Presence) to abandon the congregation or the death of many of the people as a consequence of such an offense. Second, he needed to pour out his heart to Yahweh because his integrity of being challenged and doubted.

The defense of a servant of Yahweh is Yahweh Himself because He knows the situation and the injustice being made. He shall judge and pass just retribution. “And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday (**Tehilim/Psalms 37:6**).” Rab Shaul said: “Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, ‘Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith Yahweh’ (**Romanyim/Romans 12:19**).”

Third Aliyah 16:20-43 (16:20-17:8 Hebraic version)

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16:24 “Speak unto the congregation, saying, ‘Get you up from about the tabernacle of Korah, Datan, and Aviram’.” – The Torah teaches how to make distinction from good and evil. Also that we must be away from the wicked and the evil. “Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away. For they sleep not, except they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall. For they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence. But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day (**Mishle/Proverbs 4:14-16**).”

16:28-30 “And Moshe said, ‘Hereby ye shall know that YAHWEH hath sent me to do all these works; for I have not done them of mine own mind. If these men die the common death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men; then YAHWEH hath not sent me. But if YAHWEH make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they go down quick into the pit; then ye shall understand that these men have provoked YAHWEH’.” –The announcement of judgement is a confirmation of Moshe’s prophetic role that made evident the elevated connection between Moshe and Yahweh. What was about to happen would become an indelible mark on the mid and heart of the congregation: that Moshe’s leadership had originated in Yahweh’s heart and that he had his full support and that the sentence would be executed by Yahweh Himself. This act would serve to deter the seed of rebellion that had been planted in the people’s heart.

Likewise, the Scriptures has been announcing the Grand Judgement at the end of times. Yeshua shall separate wheat from tare, the sheep from the goats. “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before Yahweh; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works (**Hitgalut/Revelations 20:12**).”

16:31-32 “And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that was under them and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods.” –This passage shows how Yahweh support the authorities He has ordained. A servant who has been ordained by Yahweh Tzevaot does not have to worry about anything and be confident that Yahweh’s purpose in him and the people shall be fulfilled. “What shall we then say to these things? If Yahweh be for us, who can be against us? (**Romanyim/Romans 8:31**).”

Another relevant point worth noting in this passage is that Koraj and his followers and their possessions included took a sense of accursedness and abomination. According to the Scriptures, everything that becomes an abomination must be destroyed. “And there shall cleave nought of the cursed thing to thine hand: that YAHWEH may turn from the fierceness of his anger, and shew thee mercy, and have compassion upon thee, and multiply thee, as he hath sworn unto thy fathers (**Devarim/Deuteronomy 13:17**).”

16:41 “But on the morrow all the congregation of the children of Yisrael

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murmured against Moshe and against Aharon, saying, ‘Ye have killed the people of YAHWEH’. –From this passage, we get to understand how sin produces the highest levels of degradation. In this case it was the lack of confidence in Yahweh and His leaders. The people had a total lack of understanding to assess the magnitude of Yahweh’s decisions and they fell prey to following their own reprobate minds. “And even as they did not like to retain Yahweh in their knowledge, Yahweh gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of Yahweh, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful (Romanyim/Romans 1:28-31).”

Fourth Aliyah 16:44-50 (17:9-15 Hebraic version).

16:46 “And Moshe said unto Aharon, ‘Take a censer, and put fire therein from off the altar, and put on incense, and go quickly unto the congregation, and make an atonement for them: for there is wrath gone out from YAHWEH; the plague is begun.’” – The plague in this passage has nothing to do with the rebellion of Koraj but it was the consequence of the hardness of their hearts. Anyways, if we understand that they were to wander in the wilderness for forty years as a consequence of the evil report of the spies, this was another event that would contribute to the decimation of the congregation and the death of all those that were taken out of Mitzrayim. “But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled

with the glory of YAHWEH. Because all those men which have seen my glory, and my miracles, which I did in Mitzrayim and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice; surely they shall not see the land which I swear unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me see it (**Bemidbar/Numbers 14:21-23**).” Here, we are referring to a people that had been sentenced because of their response to the evil report of the spies. Yahweh was just giving them according to the attitude of their hearts. He was passing judgement by means of these plagues.

16:47-48 “And Aharon took as Moshe commanded, and ran into the midst of the congregation; and, behold, the plague was begun among the people: and he put on incense, and made an atonement for the people. And he stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stayed.” –The Hebrew word for “**plague**” is “**negeph**” נֶגֶף H5063 which means a trip (of the foot); figuratively an infliction (of disease): plague, stumbling. We gather that this plague was a disease. Since gossiping and slandering are contagious, in like manner this disease that stroke the rebellious congregation was also very contagious provoking the death of many.

There are two implications to Aharon standing between the living and the dead. First, the gossiping has a foul smell onto Yahweh while the incense was a sweet savor onto Yahweh which was as an offering to stop the plague. “For we are unto Yahweh a sweet savor of Mashiaj, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: to the one we are the savor of death unto death; and to the other the savor of life unto life.



And who is sufficient for these things?
(Korintyim Bet/2 Corinthians 2:15-16).”

Second, he was interceding for the life of the congregation. In the same way Yeshua is the mediator. “For there is one Yahweh, and one mediator between Yahweh and men, the man Yeshua HaMashiaj (**Timoteos Alef/1 Timothy 2:5).**”

Fifth Aliyah 17:1-9 (17:16-24 Hebraic version)

17:2 “Speak unto the children of Yisrael, and take of every one of them a rod according to the house of their fathers, of all their princes according to the house of their fathers twelve rods: write thou every man's name upon his rod.” –The depths of the damage to the leadership has three main factors: 1) The questioning of the Torah; 2) The questioning of the leaders; 3) the questioning of the work of the Kehunah (Priest Office).

In the wake of such catastrophic event, Yahweh wanted to heal the people. The leadership needed to be restored too. A healthy leadership means a healthy congregation.

Sixth Aliyah 17:10-18:20 (17:25-18:20 Hebraic version)

18:1 “And YAHWEH said unto Aharon, ‘Thou and thy sons and thy father's house with thee shall bear the iniquity of the sanctuary: and thou and thy sons with thee shall bear the iniquity of your priesthood’.” –This passage shows that Yahweh holds his leaders responsible for any action against the priest office and of the Holy Place wherever they are. There are many Scriptural records

about this. The messages to the Messianic communities in **Hitgalut/Revelations** is an appropriate example because the message is addressed to the leader of the congregation not to the congregation itself. “For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more (**Hilel/Luke 12:48b).**”

18:8-9 “And YAHWEH spake unto Aharon, ‘Behold, I also have given thee the charge of mine heave offerings of all the hallowed things of the children of Yisrael; unto thee have I given them by reason of the anointing, and to thy sons, by an ordinance forever. This shall be thine of the most holy things, reserved from the fire: every oblation of theirs, every meat offering of theirs, and every sin offering of theirs, and every trespass offering of theirs, which they shall render unto me, shall be most holy for thee and for thy sons’.” –When the Kehunah (Priest Office) was established they did not receive any part in the inheritance of the land. Yahweh said: “And YAHWEH spake unto Aharon, ***‘Thou shalt have no inheritance in their land, neither shalt thou have any part among them: I am thy part and thine inheritance among the children of Yisrael (Bemidbar/Numbers 18:20).***” Yahweh’s design is to provide the priest office with the tithes of the congregation.

It is known that today this area of leadership has been plagued with malpractice using it as a means of dishonest gain. It is despicable that people are using the Torah for their dishonest gain. However, despite the fact that there are ministers tarnishing the office with their disobedience, we must still obey the Torah. In

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fact, giving the tithes to the ministers is similar to keeping Shabbat and the Feasts.

18:12-19 “All the best of the oil, and all the best of the wine, and of the wheat, the firstfruits of them which they shall offer unto YAHWEH, them have I given thee. And whatsoever is first ripe in the land, which they shall bring unto YAHWEH, shall be thine; every one that is clean in thine house shall eat of it. Everything devoted in Yisrael shall be thine. Everything that openeth the matrix in all flesh, which they bring unto YAHWEH, whether it be of men or beasts, shall be thine: nevertheless, the firstborn of man shalt thou surely redeem, and the firstling of unclean beasts shalt thou redeem. And those that are to be redeemed from a month old shalt thou redeem, according to thine estimation, for the money of five shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, which is twenty gerahs. But the firstling of a cow, or the firstling of a sheep, or the firstling of a goat, thou shalt not redeem; they are holy: thou shalt sprinkle their blood upon the altar, and shalt burn their fat for an offering made by fire, for a sweet savor unto YAHWEH. And the flesh of them shall be thine, as the wave breast and as the right shoulder are thine. All the heave offerings of the holy things, which the children of Israel offer unto YAHWEH, have I given thee, and thy sons and thy daughters with thee, by a statute forever: it is a covenant of salt for ever before YAHWEH unto thee and to thy seed with thee.” –This passage may provoke a bitter aftertaste in many so called believers but this is the reality that was established by Yahweh in the Torah for the kohanim that He has chosen. We must comply with this ordinance of Yahweh concerning the economic

support of the kohanim. We must remain in total holiness in this issue. This passage also warns the kohanim and ministers alike to be good overseers and administrators of the resources entrusted to them. “As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold Grace of Yahweh (**Kefa Alef/1 Peter 4:10**).” Also, Rab Shaul said: “Even so hath the Adon ordained that they which preach the **Besarot** (Gospel) should live of the **Besarot** (Gospel) (**Korintyim Alef/1 Corinthians 9:14**).”

Therefore, ministers must be sensible in dealing with this issue while they must be responsible in the administration of these resources. “There is treasure to be desired and oil in the dwelling of the wise; but a foolish man spendeth it up (**Mishle/Proverbs 21:20**).”

Seventh Aliyah 18:21-32

18:21 “And, behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Yisrael for an inheritance, for their service which they serve, even the service of the tabernacle of the congregation.” –The Levites had been reserved for the service of Elohim and to instruct the congregation the righteous laws of Elohim for that reason they were not involved in the ordinary business of this world. They did not take part in wars as the rest of the congregation; they were the army of Yahweh, a privilege bestowed to them by Yahweh Himself. They were in charge of safekeeping the Tabernacle and to do the service assigned to them. They were given the **maaser** (tithe) so that they were entirely devoted to their duties and did not pursue any other way to make a living.



18:29 “Out of all your gifts ye shall offer every heave offering of YAHWEH, of all the best thereof, even the hallowed part thereof out of it.” –For the kohanim, the fact that they received the tithes does not exempt them to give the tithes themselves: the tithe of the tithes. We must obey this commandment obediently and with love.

Thou shalt truly tithe. A commentary by Pastor German Loaiza.

Bereshit/Genesis 14:20: “And blessed be the Most High Elohim, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.”

Bereshit/Genesis 28:22: “And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be Elohim's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.”

Bemidbar/Numbers 18:6: “And I, behold, I have taken your brethren the Levites from among the children of Yisrael: to you they are given as a gift for YAHWEH, to do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation.”

Mishle/Proverbs 10:4: “He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich.”

Malaki/Malachi 3:8: “Will a man rob Yahweh? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.”

Ivrim/Hebrews 7:8: “And here men that die receive tithes; but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth.”

Korintyim Alef/1 Corinthians 9:1-14.

MAASER KESAFIM (TO TITHE THE INCREASE)

Devarim/Deuteronomy 14:22-29: “Thou shalt truly tithe all the increase of thy seed, that the field bringeth forth year by year.”

עֵשֶׂר תַּעֲשֶׂה, אֶת כָּל-תְּבוּאֹת זֶרְעֶךָ;
הֵיצֵא הַשָּׂדֶה שָׁנָה שָׁנָה:

ASER TEASER ET KAL TEBUAT ZAREJA JAYOTZEH JASADAJ SHANAH SHANAH

First of all, we must remember that there are different kinds of offerings and different kinds of tithes. There are burnt or ascent offerings (Olah), peace offerings (Shelamim), votive offerings (nedarim), and voluntary offerings (nedabot).

The tithe (**maaser**) is the portion of the agriculture produce that has to be separated and given to the Levites. Tithes are divided into three parts. The first tithe is called “**maaser rishon**”; the second tithe is called “**maaser sheni**”, and the tithe for the poor is called “**maaser ani**”.

The order in which the **maaser** was separated is the following: First, a small portion is separated –usually a two percent- that is called “**terumah**” and it is given to the Kohen. Then the maaser rishon is given to the Levites; the Levites in turn separate a part called “**terumah maaser**” which is given to the Kohen (**Bemidbar/Numbers 18:21**). Second, the “**maaser sheni**” is separated and taken to Yerushalayim to be eaten there. This is done on the first, second, and fifth year of the agricultural cycle of years.



On the third and sixth years, instead of the “maaser sheni”, the “maaser ani” is separated and given to the poor. The maaser of the animals is also separated on these years.

We will now focus on the laws that govern the maaser and how important it is. We will understand the value of giving maaser and the sure payment promised by Yahweh –it is permitted to prove Yahweh with this beautiful mitzvah.

There is security for he who separates the tithe (ten percent).

Rab Jaim MiVoloizin wrote in the name of Gaon of Vilna: “Who makes sure to give a ten percent of his income to tzedakah, the heavens shall assure him no damage; he who gives twenty percent shall be very rich.”

Partners with Yahweh

Jafetz Jaim wrote: “He who separates ten or twenty percent for tzedakah is even better than giving tzedakah without observing these exact percentages, though he gives plenty of tzedakah. The reason is that he who observes these percentages is demonstrating that Yahweh is part of this business and he is partnering with Yahweh in this business. Giving tzedakah without observing these percentages is keeping the great mitzvah but is not partnering with Yahweh. Certainly, we all would like to be partners with Yahweh.”

The Midrash says: “**aser bishvil shetitasher**”: “Give maaser that it may be well with you, tithe so that you shall never want.” It is true that those who tithe become rich, however, men’s actions provoke poverty. The Midrash says: “Even when

our action may lead us to poverty, by the merits of maaser, we must never lack anything.”

The Gemara recommends to give tzedakah before praying. Why? Because when we help others, we deserve to be helped by Yahweh.

Tithe and you shall have good luck

The Jatam Sofer said something very beautiful.

The verse says: “**Aser teaser...**” (“Thou shalt truly tithe...” **Devarim/Deuteronomy 14:22**). So let us tithe the word “**aser**” –to tithe. We must explain using the numerical values of the Hebrew letters.

א	ב	ג	ד	Teaser
200	300	70	400	Numerical value of Teaser
20	30	7	40	Tithe of numerical value
א	ב	ג	ד	Mazalja. Good Luck.

He who gives maaser shall have good luck.

Proving Yahweh with Tzedakah

From the very beginnings of our studies of Judaism, we learned that we must not expect a reward for keeping the mitzvot. However, we may infer from a conversation between Rab Yohanan and one his nephews, a son of Rish Lakish that this rule might not be as absolute as it seems.

As it is recorded in the Gemara, Rab Yohanan ran into his nephew on one occasion and he asked him: “Tell me, what pasuk are you

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studying at school? The boy replied “**Aser teaser...**” (“Thou shalt truly tithe...” **Devarim/Deuteronomy 14:22**). The son of Rish Lakish explained that it could be translated as “certainly, you must give maaser”, that is, a ten percent of your income –the word “**aser**” in Hebrew means “**ten**”. The boy, then, asked Rab Yohanan “why is it that the verb is repeated twice in the same pasuk saying “Aser teaser... (“Thou shalt truly tithe...”). Even when we may interpret it as an intensification of the command (**Thou shalt truly give maaser**), this intensification must have another meaning. Rab Yohanan, gave him the correct explanation. There is a deeper understanding beyond the simple literal meaning of the text. The text might want to teach: “**aser bishvil shetitasher**” –tithe so that you shall be rich- in other words “give maaser so that you can become rich”.

The boy was very surprised at the explanation and asked Rab Yohanan: “How do you know that this is true? “Go ahead and prove Yahweh with this mitzvah” –replied Rab Yohanan. “Live your life, give maaser and you will see how you will be richer.”

His nephew asked him: “Is it not true that we must not prove Yahweh with a mitzvah? Does it not say the Torah: “**Lo tenasu et YHWH eloheijem**” (“Ye shall not tempt Yahweh your Elohim (**Devarim/Deuteronomy 6:16**).”

This pasuk is explicitly saying that it is forbidden to tempt Yahweh with any mitzvah even a mitzvah which reward in this world is explicitly said in the Torah. We must expect that reward to come but we must never do the mitzvah for the reward. So that if the reward does not come we may question the ways of Yahweh and

repent to have done the mitzvah. Yahweh’s ways are complex and we cannot always see the consequences of what is happening around us.

Rab Yohanan then quoted a pasuk from the prophets that proves that giving tzedakah, we will be blessed by Yahweh with more money. “**Ubjanuni na bezot...**” (“**and prove me now herewith**”).” **Malaki/Malachi 3:10**.

Now, a doubt comes up. Can we put Yahweh to the test by means of tzedakah, or not? Rab Yohanan’s answer is not specific about this. What the pasuk actually speaks about is the reward of wealth by giving maaser. As we have established previously, even when the pasuk refers to a reward for keeping certain mitzvah, it does not mean by default that we can prove or tempt Yahweh by keeping the mitzvah.

The jajamim offered a variety of answers. Some jajamim agree with Rab Yohanan and his nephew were right to conclude that you cannot tempt Yahweh with tzedakah. At least, all conclude that the reward for giving maaser is more wealth. There is only one objection and that is if we can prove Yahweh with this. Experience attests to the fact that we could expect many berajot (blessings) from helping others with our own resources and efforts. May Yahweh bless us with a long life and strength to serve Him with joy and passion.

Although it is true that the Gemara teaches that giving maaser produces wealth, we must not give it with this end in mind only, that is, to receive more as a reward. In any case, the keeping of the mitzvah would have a second intention. This is known as “**mitzvah shelo**

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lishma". Even when at first we may be encouraged to do it, there is a superior level that we must attempt.

The "**tosafot**" explains that the term "**bishvil**" (so that) means to give with the following intent: "I would like to be rich so that I may continue to give more and more every time. I would like to do good with the money I have. If Yahweh does not chose that I get rich, I may not be worthy. So I will try to do my best to keep his instructions so that I could be worthy of wealth."

Mishle/Proverbs 19:17: "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto YAHWEH; and that which he hath given will he pay him again."

The tithe is the protection of your substance (possessions)

The maaser: a good investment.

Rab Eliahu Lopian used to say: "The person who gives tzedakah shall receive many berajot in the future. Yahweh plants that tzedakah; and as a fruit tree that springs from one seed to become a big tree; this is true of the tzedakah. This is what we say in our **Tefilah** (prayers): "**zorea tzedakot matzmiaj yeshuot bore refuot**" (The sower of tzedakot makes salvations to grow and creates many healings). If a man plants a tree, it will have limits but when Yahweh plants a tzedakah, it shall have no limits and the return will be huge.

Jafetz Jaim's wife once said that when their little children got sick, she would not take them to the doctor's. Instead, Jafetz Jaim ordered her to give some money as tzedakah for the poor, then

he would pray for their healing and in fact they healed.

The same happened with Staipeler (Rab Yisrael Kanievsky), when there was any problem, he would immediately give tzedakah in order to solve the problem and he suggested that everyone to do the same. On a certain occasion, someone came to ask for a tzedakah for a woman that was giving birth who was in a very complicated situation. He did not know that woman, but at age 81, he stood up to search for some coins as tzedakah for the woman to be well. And so she was.

Tithe so that problems do not come your way

A person had a terrible financial problem with a huge sum of money. He sent a message to Staipeler (Rab Yisrael Kanievsky) asking for an advice clarifying that he had always given maaser correctly. When Staipeler heard that he had been faithful giving maaser, he said: "If you always give maaser, you are not in harm's way." Seven years of problems passed and eventually nothing happened to that man, as Staipeler had said, thanks to the maaser.

If I cannot make ends meet, how can I give maaser?

Many people come to the jajamim for advice so that they have a good sustenance because they can barely live with what they have at the moment. The jajamim recommend that they give maaser as instructed so that they can do better.

Logics screams: How come can they give maaser if they do not have enough? The answer is in this parable.

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There is this man who goes to the post office to send a parcel to a far region of the country. He only had two stamps to pay for the parcel. The clerk at the post office told him that the parcel was too heavy and it required three stamps to send it to its destination. This did not make any sense to him because whether it is heavier had nothing to do with reaching its destination. The answer is that it is the stamps that make the parcel be transported to its destination. Tzedakah works in the same way. The more it is spent in tzedakah, increasing from ten percent to twenty percent the faster the berajot shall come even if it defies logic.

Even in difficult times, we must help the poor and give maaser

The Gemara says about helping the poor in a time of difficulties is written: “**az tikra vaHaShem yaane**” (Then, you shall cry onto Elohim and He shall answer). A question is in place, is there any poor person who has no time of difficulties as the verse says? This is the idea we try to convey, “difficult times” is not referring to the poor but to the person who helps, who does so despite being in a difficult time. The verse refers to him by saying “Then, you shall cry onto Elohim and He shall answer”. It is written in **Tehilim/Psalms 41:1-2**: “ashre maskil el dal beyom raa yemaletu HaShem” (“Blessed is he that considers the poor: YAHWEH will deliver him in time of trouble. YAHWEH will preserve him...”). So, we are not talking a time of trouble for the poor but of the one helping the poor. If he helps the poor, Yahweh shall help him.

Give tzedakah right away, now without tarrying

One of the talmidim of Jafetz Jaim visited him to ask for advice in a series of matters. Jafetz

Jaim asked him if he gave tzedakah. The man replied that he did not and said: “I have been thinking that when Yahweh sends me wealth and I am rich, I will give plenty of Tzedakah. Right now I am broke, I cannot give tzedakah.

Conclusions

The previous parashah ended with the subject of tzitziyot. This parashah begins with the rebellion of Koraj. “**qôrach**” קָרַח H7141 comes from H7139 (“**qârach**” קָרַח H7139 means to depilate, to make (self) bald.) and also means **ice**. According to the Jumash, this rebellious man questioned Moshe as a leader by questioning the commandment as if they were Moshe’s invention.

Koraj also broke the commandment about the tzitziyot (“**tsiytsith**” צִיִּצִית H6734 means a floral or wing-like projection, that is, a fore lock of hair, a tassel: fringe, lock.). In **Yejezqel/Ezequiel 8:3**, it refers to a hair lock.

I think there is a pun involving the name of this man and his rebellion. Since Koraj means without hair or fringes or without hair locks, he rebelled against the tzitziyot: the fringes in all the Yisraelites’ garments. Some other details of his rebellion explicitly corroborates that he was against this particular commandment.

“And it came to pass, that on the morrow Moshe went into the tabernacle of witness; and, behold, the rod of Aharon for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed

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blossoms, and yielded almonds (**Bemidbar/Numbers 17:8**)."

The phrase "**and bloomed blossoms**" is "**tzit**" H6731 in Hebrew and it is repeated twice, so when read in the original Hebrew language it would say: The Aharon's rod had brought forth tzitzit. In **Malaki/Malachi 4:2** there is a prophesy that the mantle of Mashiaj would bring healing.

In the Hebrew text of **Bemidbar/Numbers 15:39**, it says "**that ye may look upon it**"; the jajamim say that this is literally a reference to Elohim. When we keep this mitzvah, we are in the position to see Elohim working in this world. Koraj failed to see Yahweh through Moshe because he neglected this commandment.

The end of the parashah tell us of what the Levites were given: their portion and privileges.

We must obey in order to partake in the privileges of obedience.

In this parashah, we find the commandments three-hundred eighty-eighth to the three-hundred ninety-sixth:

- 388. Precept to guard the Tabernacle. **Bemidbar 18:4.**
- 389. Prohibition for the kohanim to do the work of the Levites and the Levites to do the work of the kohanim. **Bemidbar 18:3.**
- 390. Prohibition for someone who is not a kohen to enter the Sanctuary. **Bemidbar 18:4.**
- 391. Prohibition to forsake the charge of the sanctuary and the altar. **Bemidbar 18:5.**
- 392. Precept to redeem the firstborn of man. **Bemidbar 18:15.**

- 393. Prohibition to redeem a clean domestic animal. **Bemidbar 18:15.**
- 394. Precept of the work of the Levites in the sanctuary. **Bemidbar 18:23.**
- 395. Precept to give the tithe to the Levites. **Bemidbar 18:24.**
- 396. Precept for the Levites to give the tithe of the tithes. **Bemidbar 18:26.**

End of the Parasha

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Most of the commentaries in this parashah are by Dr, Ketriel Blad, a man of Yahweh, who has been gifted with great wisdom and insight concerning the concepts of the Mishkan and the related offerings. We are grateful to be able to use his wisdom and we honor his sapience.

The commentaries are in accordance with the established doctrine of EMC SHALOM INTERNACIONAL as a ministry of the Hebrew Roots. The four pillars we adhere to and put forward in preaching –The Only Gospel- is the same message the first emissaries preached with one purpose: The Restoration of the Kingdom of Yisrael. **Maaseh Shelujim/Acts 1:6** and to address the diaspora of the House of Yisrael as written in **Yaaqov/James 1:1; Kefa Alef/1 Peter 1:1**. "ALL THE LOST HOUSE OF EFRAYIM." Rab Shaul (Apostle Paul), the emissary to the Gentiles, was well aware that the main focus of his preaching was the dispersed twelve tribes of Yisrael known as "the

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lost sheep of the House of Yisrael" (Mello Ha Goyim), "the just among the nations." This is fulfillment of that same promise made of YAHWEH unto our fathers unto which promise our **twelve tribes**, instantly serving YAHWEH day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews (**Maaseh Shelujim/Acts 26:6-7**)."

PS: This document is discussed on a weekly basis in our internet classes every Shabbat from 09:00AM to 12:00PM through



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It is our wish that this material can further bless you and your loved ones in the comprehension of the Scriptures at a higher level. Leaving behind today's subjective and almost mystic message and pressing for the mark towards an objective message characterized by a better linguistic and idiomatic clarity set in the correct cultural context. Thus, allowing us to have a solid interpretation of the biblical texts.

All believers in the Elohim of the Bible have a common denominator and a single desire. And it is to establish a "revival" so powerful that it brings the presence of the King of kings and establishes his Kingdom once and for all; but the only thing that will bring this to the congregation of the saints of Yisrael is "THE BIBLE HISTORY" to return to the foundation and initial form of the Hebrew FAITH. And this document, as well as the Torah class of each Shabbat is exactly that; to know the spiritual history of a "YISRAEL" people and to live as if we were the continuation and conclusion of this beautiful love story.

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