



# THE CHEVRA

Young Israel of Fair Lawn  
The Morris J. Kraut z'l Torah Center

Joe Smith - President

This Shabbat:

## Shabbat Parashat Korach

30 Sivan 5767; June 15-16, 2007

א' דראש חודש

### First Day of Rosh Chodesh

The Maftir reads the special Haftorah for Shabbos and Rosh Chodesh "השמים כסאי" (Isaiah 66:1-24, repeating verse 23 at the end)

#### Friday

Mincha	7:00 PM
Candle Lighting	8:12 PM

#### Shabbat

Chevra Mishnayos Shiur	8:00 AM
Shacharit	9:00 AM
Sof Zman Keriat Shema:	9:10 AM (Gra"h)

#### Shiur with Rabbi Y. Halpert 7:00 PM

Mincha	8:10 PM
Shabbat Ends	9:22 PM

<b>Sunday</b>	Shacharit	8:30 AM
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<b>Monday – Friday</b>	Shacharit	7:00 AM
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Next Shabbat:

## Shabbat Parashat Chukat

7 Tamuz 5767; June 22-23, 2007

The Haftorah is read from Judges 11:1-33.

#### Friday

Mincha	7:00 PM
Candle Lighting	8:14 PM

#### Shabbat

Chevra Mishnayos Shiur	8:00 AM
Shacharit	9:00 AM
Sof Zman Keriat Shema:	9:11 AM (Gra"h)

#### Shiur Pirkei Avot 7:10 PM

Mincha	8:10 PM
Shabbat Ends	9:24 PM

<b>Sunday</b>	Shacharit	8:30 AM
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<b>Monday – Friday</b>	Shacharit	7:00 AM
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### Mazel Tov

Mazel Tov to **Evelyn** and **Larry Kraut** on the wedding of their daughter **Jennifer** to **Benjamin Hooper** of Toronto, Canada.

Mazel Tov to Benjamin's Parents **Judy** and **Philip Hooper** and the entire Hooper family.

Special Mazel Tov to Jennifer's Grandparents Mrs. **Elaine Kraut** and **Dr. Walter** and **Fern Silver**.

May **Jennifer** and **Benji** build a Bayis Ne'emon B'Yisroel and may the Kraut and Hooper families have much Nachas from them for many years to come. May we celebrate Many Smachot together in the future.

### Mazel Tov

Mazel Tov to **Carol** and **Harvey Granoff** of the birth of their new grandson **Zechariah Elan ben Chaim Dovid HaLevi**.

Mazel Tov to the proud parents Dara and **David Granoff**.

May they see much Nachas from Zechariah Elan for many years to come and may we celebrate many Smachot together in the future.

### Welcome Back !

YIFL welcomes back  
**Rabbi Yehuda Halpert.**

Shabbat Parashat Korach,  
30 Sivan, June 15-16, 2007

The Rabbi's topic will be:

### Ascending to Har Habayit - Religious Obligation or Torah Prohibition

A Kiddush will be served in recognition of Rabbi Halpert.

All are welcome to join us for this special Shabbat  
There is no charge for this program

If you wish to be a sponsor of the Kiddush or Seudah Shelishit, please contact Jack Mermelstein.

### Torah Insights – Harav Shlomo Riskin

### Shabbat Shalom: Parshat Korach Numbers 16:1 – 18:32

Efrat, Israel - "And Korach took..." (Numbers 16:1)

Who is Korach? Usually he is perceived as one of the arch-rebels of all times

within the Jewish camp. From Exodus onward, no one's reputation is as sullied as Korach's - his sin so ignominious that the episode recording his death would be carved into the psyche of the nation forever, the bowels of the earth having swallowed him and his cohorts alive. But exactly how does this unique punishment fit his crime?

From the traditional perspective Korach is the perennial instigator and rabble-rouser, the self-possessed revolutionary. According to the commentaries, the very first word in our portion establishes his character: "Vayikach Korach...Now Korach the son of Izhar, the son of Kohat, the son of Levi, with Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab .... took." [Num. 38:1] The Torah doesn't spell out exactly what he 'took,' the object of the verb distinctly absent, which leads Rashi to quote the Midrash Tanchuma: ". 'And Korach took' --he took himself on one side with the intention of separating himself from the community so that he might raise a protest regarding the priesthood...." [38:1]

Of course, the Korach who inspires his self-serving mutinous rebellion couches his true purpose behind noble and inspiring language: "You take too much upon you, seeing that all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and G-d is among them; wherefore then lift you up yourselves above the assembly of the Lord?" [Numbers 16:3]

Here we have the classic argument of democracy: since we're all equal, we're all carved from the same flesh and blood, why should, you, Moses, lord it over us? Why should you be the holiest of all? Aren't we not all descended from the same grandfathers?! Did we not all together hear G-d's voice at Sinai?

Irregardless of how we want to understand the mutiny of Korach, the majority of commentators agree that the word, 'And he took,' is where the

problem begins. Korach was a taker, either by "taking" in the sense of manipulating the peoples' hearts and minds, or taking himself out of the community, in the sense of arrogating for himself a position of power, while lambasting Moses as being a separatist and chauvinist.

To achieve his goal of power, he was willing to do anything, to make any claims, including posting a democratic ideal, in order to emerge a "leader" and denigrate the laws of Moses.

Our portion follows immediately the commandment to wear tzitzit, ritual fringes to be worn on four cornered garments, the conclusion of last week's portion [Num. 15:37-41] of Shlach. Rashi connects these two segments, tzitzit and Korach's rebellion, by quoting the Midrash: "Then they came and stood before Moses and said to him, 'Is a garment that is entirely blue subject to the law of tzitzit or is it exempt? He replied to them: It is subject to that law.' Whereupon they began to jeer at him: Is this possible? A robe of any different colored material requires only one thread of blue attached to it in order for it to be exempt from the law of ritual fringes. Does it not then follow logically that a garment which is entirely blue ought automatically be exempted from the law of tzitzit!?" (16:1)

Here we see how the plain meaning of the text is magnificently illuminated by the Midrash. Ostensibly, Korach's argument appeals to the democratic spirit: I understand the necessity of a single blue fringe - Moses - bestowing his royal-blue kingship upon the entire nation of commoners (the white garment, the many regular white fringes, made from the white wool of white sheep); but if all the people are "blue-blooded royalty", if the entire nation stood at Sinai, heard the Divine charge, entered the Divine covenant, what is the necessity for a single blue fringe, a solitary regal Moses, to stand isolated, separate and above a wholly

royal nation, an entire kingdom of priest-teachers?

Similar to this is the argument of the house filled with Bible Scrolls: I understand that a house devoid of any eternal verses of G-d's Word requires a mezuzah consisting of the Biblical portion of the Shema to make it worthy of habitation; but a house already completely filled with Biblical Scrolls, the House of Israel after the Revelation at Sinai in which every individual became filled to surfeit with G-d's words, certainly ought not require a separate G-d inspired individual like Moses, a distinct representative of one small portion of Biblical parchment, to establish its worthiness?!

What Korah failed to understand was that every individual did not reach the same spiritual level as every other individual at Sinai; much the opposite, each person understood from the Divine sound (Kol) only as much as his previous spiritual, intellectual and ethical development would allow him to understand. Indeed, it was only Moses, whose active intellect had already achieved the ability to "kiss" the Active Intellect of the Divine before Sinai, who truly evoked from the Divine Kol (sound) precisely that which G-d wished to communicate. (Maimonides, Guide for the Perplexed). Every Jew has the potential to be a leading member of the Kingdom of Priest-Teachers, to become a second Moses in his/her own right; whether or not he/she achieves such a royal status, depends upon the degree of hard work each individual expends in pursuit of spiritual excellence. The Bible does not tell us that every Jew is holy; it rather commands each Jew to become holy!

But Korah was not even himself serious about his argument. He was only using democracy to "take (or rather grab) what he thought was his rightful place of leadership given his ancestry (yichus). And G-d punishes this "taker" by having the earth swallow him up. After all, every human being

was created from the dust of the earth, so only the earth has the inherent right to "take" each and every one of us!

**By Shlomo Riskin**

**Shabbat Shalom**

Shlomo Riskin

Chancellor Ohr Torah Stone

Chief Rabbi - Efrat Israel

## **Chodesh Tammuz – The Month of Tammuz**

*"And He brought me to the entrance at the Gate of the House of the L-rd which was at the north; and there were there women sitting, bewailing the Tammuz" (Yechezkel 8:14)*

### Name of the Month

"Tammuz" is the Babylonian name of this month, as are all of the "official" names of the months in the Hebrew Calendar. In the Bible, however, the month is referred to as "the Fourth Month," with reference to Nisan, the First Month.

### Biblical Significance of the Month

As mentioned above, the name which "came up" from Babylon with the Jewish People was Tammuz. In this case, consideration of the use of the name in Yechezkel would make it appropriate to say that the name "Tammuz" brought down the Jewish People. The verse in Yechezkel cited above speaks of the worship of a Babylonian idol, known as "Tammuz." And it seems most odd, at first glance, that this name would be chosen as the name of a Hebrew month.

However, in the context of the month that we are dealing with, a month of tragedies which would lead to still greater tragedies, the appropriateness of the name becomes clear. The Prophet

Yechezkel was being shown by G-d the reasons for His great Anger against the Jewish People, namely, the various forms of idol-worship which had been adopted by them to replace the Divine Service. This behavior would result, if the Jewish People would not repent, in the Destruction of the Once-Holy, but now desecrated, Temple.

### Earlier Biblical Significance

We read in the Book of Yehoshua (10:11-14) of the Battle of Yehoshua and the People of Israel against the five kings of the Emorite Nation. In the Biblical account, we find mention of "great stones" thrown, as it were, by G-d, upon the Emorites. This could refer to hail, as the verse itself mentions (Yehoshua 10:11).

But in light of the great astronomical miracle detailed in the following verses (12-14), in which the sun and the moon are pictured as having not advanced, until the People of Israel had achieved complete victory, there is here the suggestion of a tremendous suspension of the paths in Heaven, perhaps caused by a contact of the Solar System with an intense meteor, or asteroid, shower.

Whatever the case, according to Jewish tradition, this great miracle is supposed to have occurred on the third of Tammuz.

### Zodiac Sign of the Month

The "sign" of the month is "Sartan," "Cancer," or "The Crab," because a constellation which is observed at this time of year has the appearance of a crab. Also, the season is summer, and the hot weather of summer causes crabs to multiply in the water.

Crabs pinch and hurt, and this month was basically a time in which the Jewish People were hurt.

**SHABBAT SHALOM**