

Interestingly enough, was the פרשה that Zeidy Weiss ע"ה had his עליה for his afuf, as well as myself. So it has a special connection to us. And we're going to discuss two different ענינים, both of which are very fundamental and I think are worthwhile to give over.

So it says וַיִּקַּח קָרַח - Korach took. All the מפרשים ask, what was it that Korach took? Korach wanted to take everything for himself. When a real צדיק serves Hashem, he's happy to be able to share the זכות of doing עבודה. He's happy when others are also doing עבודה alongside him. However, if a person is doing it only for the שכר, he wants everything for himself. Korach wanted to take all of the rights to כהונה; he wanted to have all the rights of the זכות of serving הוא הקדוש ברוך הוא. That's why he rebelled against משה, and that's why he became the paradigm of someone who was a selfish person and ruins everything for everyone. So on the one hand, we consider him as a רשע, yet on the other hand we do know that צדיקים davened for Korach, Zeidy Weiss ע"ה always called him פּעטער קרַח, because he was from שבט לוי, and they davened for him to try to get him out from the גיהנום in which he dug himself into. However, Korach is still in גיהנום, and every ראש חודש he comes up and yells אמת ותורתו אמת.

gave us a very interesting הערה prior to the punishment of Korach. One of the conditions that he mentioned was וַיִּקָּדַת כָּל הָאָדָם יִפְקַד עֲלֵיהֶם - if Korach and his followers die a natural death, that shows that I'm not the אמת and they are correct. So what happened? Of course, we all know there was a tremendous נס, and the earth swallowed them up. But what did משה רבינו mean when he said וַיִּקָּדַת כָּל הָאָדָם יִפְקַד עֲלֵיהֶם - that if they die a natural death, that will serve to undermine my argument?

The Gemara in נדרים says that we see from here a מקור here for ביקור חולים. We know that ביקור חולים is not directly mentioned anywhere in the תורה. It falls under מצוה of גמילות חסדים. We know that מלאכים came to visit אברהם, but it's not directly stated as a מצוה. Still, ביקור חולים is considered a major מצוה with many dimensions. But why is it brought down here, specifically in the context of קרַח?

What is ביקור חולים? If someone gets sick, we go visit him. Who was the first person to get sick? We all know this מדרש, it was יעקב אבינו. Before him, people did not get sick before passing away. יעקב davened for רחמים, that a person should become ill before he dies, so he could prepare, do תשובה, and set things in order. Another aspect is that people who come to visit him should do תשובה as well. But the ספר מלא, quoted in תורה של מעיינו של תורה, brings down that according to the ספרי מוסר, one of the main תפקידים of ביקור חולים is to help the חולה do תשובה. The עדת קרַח were הרבים אֶת הַרְבֵּים, and we know that the Mishna in Pirkei Avos (5:18) says anybody who falls into that category לַעֲשׂוֹת תְּשׁוּבָה. Therefore, it would not be proper for them to get a regular מיתה. That's why Moshe said וַיִּקָּדַת כָּל הָאָדָם יִפְקַד עֲלֵיהֶם - if they're going to get sick and die a natural death, then Hashem not send me. However, if they die suddenly and unnaturally, that's a סימן that they are truly רשעים, truly רבים הרבים ומחטיאי הרבים.

They were not given the opportunity to do תשובה. So, our responsibility is to do תשובה before we get sick. We don't have to get sick. The highest form of תשובה as, R' Avigdor Miller points out, is eating watermelon on a sunny day and spitting out the pits, to do תשובה when everything is going great for us. The lowest form is to wait until someone is sick. Let's try to achieve the highest form of תשובה. We can learn from this פרשה, as we do from every פרשה, the importance of being unselfish and sharing the שכר we can earn with others. As we know, a תלמיד חכם is like a becher overflowing with wine - it spills into all the other little cups. The more we learn, the more we accomplish, and it overflows to benefit everyone around us. May it all be לטובה, and in the זכות of the רבים, and in the זכות of the טובה we do, may we soon see משיח צדקנו. אמן.

