



TORAH 4 TEENS

BY TEENS

NCSU ISRAEL



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Leadership: The Path to Fame or a Life of Burden?

In Parshat Korach Hashem speaks to Aharon, appointing him and his sons as the Kohanim in the Mikdash. There, He clearly instructs: “You, your sons, and the House of your Father with you shall bear the iniquity of the Mikdash; and you and your sons with you shall bear the iniquity of your priesthood” (18:1). Why is it specified so many times who Hashem is speaking to? Wouldn’t it have been clear enough that He is referring to the Kohanim, having mentioned so at the beginning of the Passuk? Rashi says that this language comes to exclude the Leviim, who might be part of the same tribe and even play a role in the services relating to the Mikdash, but who shall be warned not to confuse themselves for Kohanim and get involved in what’s happening on the inside. Rashi’s explanation seems to portray the Kohanim as an elite group who enjoy privileges of closeness to the Sanctuary and its holiness that the rest of the nation, and even their close cousins, are deprived of.

On the other hand, Rav Hirsch brings forth a different explanation. In the

second part of the pasuk we see the word “iniquity” mentioned twice in reference to the Kohanim’s work. Rav Hirsch explains that since the priests were put in this position, they alone can be punished for ‘messing up’ on the job. The Leviim on the other hand, who don’t share in the same prerogative, can’t be prosecuted for misstepping. The phrase “with great power, comes great responsibility” fits perfectly. This second type of leadership seems to be a lot more appropriate to the Jewish system. Yes, the Kohanim are the only ones allowed, by birth, to execute the services in the Mikdash, the focal point of our religious practice. However, they are not chosen to be above the people, rather they have been given the great responsibility to carry out our religious duties on behalf of the nation. May we all be inspired to see the responsibilities we carry in our lives and remember the great humility that comes with serving Hashem. ■



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True Leadership

Parshat Korach begins with the story of a rebellion against Moshe and Aharon staged by Korach, their first cousin, along with 250 other men. They claim that Moshe and Aharon are hoarding all the power, and want to know why they’re not

able to receive the Kehuna as well. Moshe proposes a test that will decide who is worthy of the Kehuna. Hashem becomes angry with Korach and his men, and causes the ground to open and swallow them up.

"והאיש משה ענו מאד מכל האדם אשר על פני האדמה" (במדבר יב, ג)

These are the words used to describe Moshe Rabbeinu. If Moshe was such a humble man, why would he seek to put himself above others, such as Korach and his men had suggested? Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks explains that in the eyes of Korach and his men, power was the ultimate goal. Jewish law is not like that, it cannot be like that. Even someone who has been appointed to serve in a position of power, is seen as an equal to those around him in the eyes of Hashem. A true leader is one who serves those around him, not the other way around. This is what Moshe understood, unlike Korach and his men.

I think we can learn from this description of what a true leader looks like, and apply it to our own lives. Leadership is a wonderful quality to have, however, we must always remember to stay humble, and remember who really is in charge. ■

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