

Torah Tidbits This 'n That

Phil's page



It's All Mostly in the Telling

When did the Korach rebellion take place? Commentaries have different opinions about that question. Since the Torah does not date the event, there are different ways to see things. Some say, before Cheit HaMeraglim, shortly after Cheit HaEigel. Others say, just as it is presented in the Torah. Others posit that it was a while afterwards. Some count it among the ten things that angered G-d, as He pointed out to Moshe after the Sin of the Spies. Others don't.

Who were the 250 people that offered incense in Korach's failed attempt to make his point. Some say they were all Leviyim. Others say they were leaders from all tribes. Others say they were firstborns who resented their loss of their special role in Jewish Life; exactly what that was is also debated.

With all those differing opinions, one thing is for certain: G-d chose to tell us about Korach's rebellion right after the Sin of the Spies. And that gives us our respective, almost regardless of when things actually took place.

The decree on the adult male population

of Dor HaMidbar was devastating for the more than 600,000 people who were to die out, and devastating too, to the rest of the people - perhaps another two million or so.

Korach (and all further Korach-like personalities) seize their opportunities to rebel against G-d (it really wasn't just against Aharon and/or Moshe) when the people's spirits are low.

The section of the Torah from mid-B'ha-alot'cha through Parshat Korach is a very sad one, indeed. We are told of this all - and the specific way and sequence in which we are told - in order to wake us up the challenges that the people faced BAZ'MAN HAHEIM U'VIZMAN HAZEH - then and in our time.

People are entitled to be hungry and thirsty. But they are not entitled to complain so bitterly to G-d and with such disrespect. People are entitled to explore how best to prepare for and then make Aliya. They are not entitled to choose yes or no. They might, but they are not entitled to. People can question authority, but with respect and patience - not with rebellion. That's not the way it works with G-d.

While we seek our needs and develop our society, the most important factor is trust, faith, belief, and confidence in our infinite G-d, when we are so finite. We need to work and live within the parameters of HANISTAROT LASHEM... that which is hidden, is G-d's to know.

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