

Follow the Light to Exit the Maze

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There are times when we believe we know best, when we feel that our intellect can guide our actions and that our perception is so clear that the chances of making a mistake is minimal. This attitude flows from our own misunderstanding of reality. No matter how wise one is, it is impossible to successfully traverse the world we are in without the guide, the true Tzaddik.

This was Korach's mistake. He was known to be one of the wisest of all of the Jews, yet he failed to understand that wisdom alone is not enough. The maze of our world is filled with too many pitfalls and stumbling blocks to be navigated alone.

Korach's challenge rests within all of us. This is why he is a tragic figure, because in our world ruled by the forces of Edom, we are taught to believe that wisdom is key. There is some truth to this. However, similar to Acher who entered the PaRDeS only to fall into apostasy, Korach's insistence that his intelligence assured his correctness became his undoing.

The light of the Tzaddik is above our intellectual capacity. One may be an exceptional scholar, but in rejecting the need for the Tzaddik's light as a guide, the scholar becomes enraptured with his own achievements, undoing the purpose of the learning he undertook in the first place, ensuring he remains trapped in his own maze.

The Tzaddik becomes the key to our success, not because he is doing the work for us, but rather because he is lighting up the path already prepared for us in advance. The more we cling to his guidance, the more we can achieve our purpose in this world without being swallowed by the earth below.

(Based on Likutey Halachot Hilchot Umanin Halacha 4.35)