

Pathways From Parshat Ki Tavo

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Pathways

Crossing the Narrow Bridge with
Rebbe Nachman and his students.

By author/illustrator Talya Korach Chertok and Moshelel

KORACH'S MISTAKE: DOTS

By Our Rebbe's

"The earth opened its mouth, swallowing them and their households, along with all the men who were with Korach, and their property" (Numbers 16:32).

"A lampet passes in a sudden and the victim is gone, but the tsaddik is the foundation of the world" (Pirkei 12:2).

Less words we talked about some benefits of tikunim (tsaddik being "basic") to a tsaddik. This is a good word to talk about a disadvantage, perhaps the disadvantage of being disconnected from tsaddikim.

My chavrusa (Tzavah study partner) recently reminded me we cannot study Torah even (or especially) the merely reading superficially. We must realize there is much more than what meets the eye. We must

conclusions you reach depend very much on what it is you read from this. The letters, the body of the Torah and how it is individualized, cannot be safely separated from the tsaddik, the soul and inner to the it as it should be lived, the way the greatest tsaddikim live it.

That was Korach's fatal error. He thought the letters, which all Jews and every Jew has equally seen also (the soul of the Torah, "I love the letters, I approve who sees his soul"—can know the life force before outside and love to live it. We are all holy enough. We do not need a tsaddik!"

But it isn't so. The letters of the holy Torah receive their life, their soul, only via the tsaddik. The tsaddik themselves are the positive center and bridge of the tsaddikim, and of an ordinary Yidke, who want (or at least, want to want) to live up to the Torah's ideals. We know that just as we need a Shochet Hakodesh to give us the Torah's letters, the body, we need him for the tsaddik, the soul, in order to have a Torah that lives.

SIDEPATH

On the service of G-d

Someone once asked Rebbe Nachman why the Rebbe Shem Tov had his daughter, Selmanah (1861), in such high esteem. The Rebbe explained, "My great-grandfather married his daughter so much because she went about constantly with a heart full of longing to G-d. She always asked herself, 'What else can I do to please the One above?'" (Sichle Sepher Chofetz, Vol. 2, 172).

Our Sages declare that Korach was a heretic. He was lengthy, which is inconsistent with Midray (M.T. 1, 104).

The Difference Between Ahava and Korach