

Pathways From Parshat Ki Teitzei

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Pathways

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Crossing the Narrow Bridge with Rebbe Nachman and his students.

In and out of the world of Tzitz, Tzitz, Tzitz and Tzitz

KORACH'S MISTAKE: DOTS

By Chay Hagerman

"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 serpent passes in a wilderness and the victim is gone, but the tracks in the sand are the evidence of the world" (Psalms 124:3).

Last week we talked about some benefits of Chassidut (Chassidim, being "happy") in a world. This is a great week to talk about a disadvantage, perhaps the disadvantage, of being disconnected from Chassidim.

My chavrusa (Tzitz study partner) recently reminded me, we cannot study Tzitz, even (or especially) the weekly 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 start from. The letters, the body of the Tzitz and how it is individualized, cannot be safely separated from the outside, the soul and desire to live it as it should be lived, the way the greatest Chassidim live it).

That was Korach's fatal error. He thought the letters, which all Jews and every Jew has equally, were also the soul of the Tzitz. "I have the letters. I—anyone who sees his soul—can know the life these letters contain and how to live it. We are all holy enough. We do not need a teacher!"

But it isn't so. The letters of the holy Tzitz receive their life, their soul, only via the outside. The outside themselves are the positive desire and longing of the Chassidim, and of an ordinary Chassid, who want (or at least, want to want) to live up to the Tzitz's ideals. We know that just as we need a teacher to learn to play an instrument, the body we need him for the outside, the soul, to enter to have a Tzitz Chassidim.

SIDEPATH

On the service of God

Sometimes one asked Rebbe Nachman who the soul of God was. He said his daughter, Tzitz, was it, in such high esteem. The Rebbe explained, "My great-grandfather advised his daughter to reach because she was about constantly with a heart full of longing for God. She always asked herself, 'What can I do to please the One above?' (Shem L'galy, Chassid, Vol. 2, 172).

Our Sages declare that Korach was a heretic. He was happy, which is inconsistent with Chassidim (Sh. 1, 10-1).

The Difference Between Above and Below