

Pathways Parashat Vayigash

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Pathways

Crossing the Narrow Bridge with
Rebbe Nachman and his students.
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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 leopard pounces in a sudden and the victim is gone, but the meekness is the foundation of the world" (Pirkei 1:23).

Last week we talked about some benefits of Ahavat Hashem, being "na'ar" to a meekness. This is a good week to talk about a disadvantage, perhaps the disadvantage of being disconnected from meekness.

My chavrusa (Tzvi's study partner) recently reminded me we cannot study Torah, even for *sefirat* (the weekly reading, especially). 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 want from life. The letters, the body of the Torah and how it is individualized, cannot be safely separated from the meekness, the soul and desire to live it as it should be lived, the way the greatest meekness 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 Torah. "I have the letters. I suppose you saw his soul—can know the life from letters outside 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 Torah receive their life, their soul, only via the meekness. The meekness themselves are the positive desire and longing of the meekness, and of an ordinary Tzvi, who want (or at least, want to want) to live up to the Torah's demands. We know that just as we need a teacher, Rebbe Nachman to give us the Torah's letters, the body, we need him for the meekness, the soul, in order to have a Torah that lives.

SIDEPATH

On the service of G-d

Someone once asked Rebbe Nachman why the Netz Shem-Tov held his daughter, Selma, in such high esteem. The Rebbe explained, "My great grandfather adopted his daughter so much because she went about constantly with a heart full of longing for G-d, the source of all holiness. 'What else can I do to please the One Above?'" (Sichot Sepher Chofetz, Vol. 2, p. 172).

Our Sages declare that Korach was a heretic. He was haughty, which is inconsistent with Meekness (Lev. 1, 16-17).

The Difference Between Ahava and Korach