



מגיע לי?

This D'var Torah was based on a parsha learning session I ran with the incredible Yachad Beit Shemesh chapter.

We began with a true story that occurred some years ago in Eretz Yisrael.

Right after Rosh Hashanah in Bnei Brak, thousands of families were waiting at crowded bus stops to return home. The stop for the 402 express bus to Jerusalem was especially packed with exhausted parents, seniors, and crying children.

After a long wait, a bus finally arrived—but instead of the expected 402, it was bus 318 heading to Rechovot.

The crowd immediately became distressed. They pleaded with the driver to help them get to Jerusalem, explaining how long they had been waiting and how difficult the situation was. The driver repeatedly explained that Jerusalem was not his route.

As the pressure mounted, especially from families with crying babies, the driver eventually agreed. He announced that they would,



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in fact, be going to Jerusalem.

The passengers erupted in gratitude. They thanked him, praised him, and showered him with blessings. To them, he had gone far beyond what they expected.

Just before arriving, one passenger approached the driver and asked how he could risk his job by changing routes so easily.

The driver smiled and revealed that nothing had been spontaneous. The entire situation had been planned by supervisors who had offered the difficult route to any driver willing to take it.

He had volunteered, knowing something very fundamental about human nature:

When people feel they are receiving more than they had expected, complaints turn into gratitude.

Knowing that, he made a clever change right before turning into the crowded bus stop by switching his destination head number to one that was going in the opposite direction, so as to seem that the bus was never intended to be on route to Yerushalayim—turning expectation into gratitude with one small

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change of numbers.

After sharing the story, the group paused to reflect on what had just taken place. What stood out was how quickly the emotional experience shifted — from frustration and entitlement to appreciation.

We described it almost as an emotional “yo-yo” between two inner positions: “I deserve this” and “I am grateful for this.”

What was most striking is that nothing in the external reality actually changed. The bus was still the bus, the seats were the same, the road was the same, and the destination remained unchanged.

The only thing that shifted was expectation — and that shift changed everything.

From here, we began to connect the idea to Parshat Korach.

Korach challenges Moshe and Aharon, declaring:

“Ki kol ha’eidah kulam kedoshim” — “The entire nation is holy” (Bamidbar 16:3).

In our discussion, we noted how Korach’s claim can initially sound familiar. It echoes phrases that we tend to use quite frequently, such as:

“I deserve this.”- “מגיע לי?”

“Why them and not me?” - “למה מגיע להם?”
“לא אני?”

“Aren’t we all equal?”- “זה לא שווה!?!?”

This is what makes Korach’s argument so powerful — it doesn’t come from nowhere. It comes from a very human place: comparison, sensitivity to fairness, and a sense of entitlement.

However, Rashi explains that Korach was driven by jealousy — “עינו הטעתו” — his perception became distorted. Instead of seeing his own role clearly, he became consumed by what others had.

Korach was not insignificant. He was a

Levi. He carried the Aron. He held a unique and elevated role within Klal Yisrael as well as being one of the richest men at the time (תנחומא (קרח ב’).

And yet, it was not enough for him.

In the group discussion, we contrasted this with the teaching in Pirkei Avot:

“איזהו עשיר? השמח בחלקו”

“Who is wealthy? One who is happy with his portion.” (Pirkei Avot 4:1)

Chazal redefine wealth not as accumulation, but as inner satisfaction. A person can have much and still feel empty, while another can have less and feel deeply full.

The difference lies not in circumstance, but in perspective.

We then focused on the idea of חלקו — each person’s unique portion in life.

Hashem gives every individual a distinct set of kocho, challenges, opportunities, and circumstances that form their personal mission. No two people are given the same path, because no two people are meant to fulfill the same role.

Hashem created only one version of each person.

Which means that what I was given is not random — and what someone else was given is not mine to compare to.

Korach’s struggle, in a sense, was not a lack of greatness, but a loss of perspective of seeing his own portion clearly.

Our main takeaway was that to be truly ‘שמח’ you have to really appreciate your ‘חלקו’ and then you realize how special you are! ■

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repairs

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