

THE COMMUNITY PARSHA SHEET



PARSHAT KORACH

London's Leading Young Professionals Platform and Jewish Communal Centre



RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL
TAL Founder & Director

TO BECOME A LEADER

To become a leader one needs stamina, charisma, to be persistent, powerful and pushy in his drive. One needs to walk over others that step in his path, pushing them aside, and work hard to keep his position. I am of course talking about a leader in the secular world. When one looks at the leaders the nations are producing, be it the ruthless dictators of the middle east where killing is normally involved in their ascent to the top, or the popular politicians of the west, where secrets are hidden from the public eye, yet ruthlessness is rife. To succeed and go for the top one must believe in themselves be haughty and not let anyone get in your way. Not so the Torah way of thinking!

Our greatest leader Moshe Rabenu was chosen by Hashem first and went through no such process. On the contrary Hashem chose him for his Anava – modesty, rather than for his haughtiness. The same is true about Aharon. He was chosen to be the Kohen Hagadol – not because he was the toughest man around, not because he knew how to manipulate people, and promise things he would never deliver on, but rather due to his righteousness and devotion to Hashem.

Yet one man and his cohorts decided to rebel in the wilderness.

Korach and his men, leaders of the assembly, gathered together against Moshe and Aharon. "It is too much for you! For the entire assembly – all of them – are holy and Hashem is among them; why do you exalt yourselves over the congregation of Hashem (Bamidbar 16:3)?"

Although they assailed both Moshe and Aharon, their main complaint was against Aharon. Each of these men envisioned himself in the position of Kohen Gadol (high priest). It was Aharon's post they wished to usurp. And of course, chief among them was Korach, Aharon's cousin.

How would we expect Aharon to respond to such incriminations? Should he defend himself and his appointment? Perhaps he should fight them physically and put the rebels in their place? What should he do?

In the very next verse, the Torah tells us what Aharon did. "Moshe heard and fell on his face."

That's right Moshe fell on his face. What about Aharon? Why did only Moshe fall on his face? And where was Aharon? Sometimes what is not stated rings louder than what is.

The Ramban reveals to us that: "Aharon, with his ethical perfection and sanctity, did not respond at all during this entire altercation. He remained quiet and conceded, as it were, that Korach was of a higher stature than himself. But [Aharon] acted according to the word of

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Moshe, fulfilling the decree of the king."

Aharon did absolutely nothing. He remained statue-like, and did not respond in the least. What about the way he felt, his degradation in public?

On the one hand, Aharon knew that he had been appointed Kohen Gadol by the acting king of Klal Yisrael, Moshe Rabbeinu. As such, he had no recourse but to accept his assignment. Deep down, however, he genuinely considered the possibility – or even the probability – that Korach was more deserving and spiritually suitable than he. Ever the man of peace (Avot 1:12), Aharon was truly a servant of the people and an absolute master over his emotions. Aharon trained himself to remain silent by realizing that he is only human and that there could very likely exist others genuinely greater than he. Why then should he argue? Who says he is

better?

Despite his low profile, Hashem came to his aid and proved without a doubt that he was chosen Kohen Gadol due to his merit and not because of ulterior motives.

Tsadik Katamar Yifrach – "The righteous blossom as the palm tree". The Ari z'l notes that the last letter of these three words spell the name KRH (Korach). He explains that the "Tamar" (literally palm tree) is the opposite of and correction (tikkun) for Korach. The Hebrew word "karah" means "bald". There is a midrash about the frustrations of a man who had two wives, one older and one younger, with the older removing the black hairs (so he look older) from his head and the younger removing the white hairs (so he look younger). In the end he was left completely bald. Kerach can also refer to Ice. Both words have one idea in common: neither provides fertile soil for growth and development. Hair does not grow on a bald head, and grass or flowers

do not emanate from ground covered with ice.

The palm tree represents the opposite to this situation. It with proper nurture will produce lush dates. The Tsadik just like the date tree needs nourishing, he must work endlessly developing himself. Korach wished to usurp Aharon, he was impatient, and he did not go via the right path. He chose a path of ridicule and enticement, in order to get what he desired and therefore failed.

Aharon was Ohev Shalom VeRodef Shalom. He kept calm whilst all around him were panicking, he developed himself to earn being the Kohen Gadol. May we strengthen ourselves in our devotion to the Land, Torah and people of Israel and take upon added intention in our observance of G-d's mitzvot. May we too prepare our days in full faith that we merit to greet the Mashiach and see the building of the Third Temple, a binyan adai ad speedily in our days. Amen.



RABBI DAVID BAADANI
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WHEN THE DREAM IS NOT MEANT TO BE

One of the most poignant moments in the Torah is Moshe Rabbeinu's heartfelt plea to enter the Land of Israel. His dream was not driven by personal gain, but by a deep desire to complete his life's mission and to bask in the spiritual sanctity of the Holy Land. Moshe prayed no fewer than 515 times to fulfill this wish, until G-d responded with the words: וְרַב־לֶךְ – "It is enough for you. Do not speak to Me again about this matter."

These words carry a deeper echo. They are the very same phrase

Moshe himself had used during the rebellion of Korach, when he said: וְרַב־לֶכֶם בְּנֵי לֵוִי – "You have gone too far, sons of Levi." In both cases, the phrase "It is enough" serves as a limit—a divine boundary set even on the pursuit of a spiritual aspiration.

This parallel highlights a profound insight. While Moshe and Korach were fundamentally different in their paths, both encountered a moment when G-d said, "This is not your path." The message is not one of rejection, but of redirection. Even noble dreams may not align with one's divinely intended purpose.

For Moshe, the denial of his dream was not a judgment on his worth or his accomplishments. G-d reminds him: "It is enough for you." You

already have enough. You have fulfilled a role that no one else could—guiding the people, receiving the Torah, leading with humility and strength. Your value is not diminished because this one dream remains unfulfilled.

This message speaks to all of us. Sometimes, despite our deepest desires and best efforts, certain dreams remain just out of reach. The challenge is not to view this as failure, but to understand that our lives still hold unique meaning and purpose. G-d's message to Moshe becomes a message to every soul: You are enough. Your mission is sacred. Even when one dream remains unfulfilled, your impact is irreplaceable.



HALACHOT BY RABBI ELI MANSOUR

When Does Speaking Between the Arm and Head Tefillin Require Repeating the Beracha?

A fundamental rule in Halacha is that one should not interrupt between related stages of a single Misva. With regard to Tefillin, once a person recites the Beracha of "**Lehani'ah Tefillin**" and places the **Shel Yad**, he must immediately proceed to place the Shel Rosh, without any interruptions in between.

Any unnecessary pause – especially **speech** – is considered a Hefsek (interruption), and in certain cases, it invalidates the initial Beracha.

This is the ruling of **Maran in the Shulhan Aruch** (O.H. 25:9), which states:

"One should not speak between the donning of the Shel Yad and the Shel Rosh. If he did speak, he must recite another Beracha on the Shel Rosh."

This ruling is rooted in the Gemara (Menahot 36a), which teaches that both Tefillin are part of one extended Misva. The Beracha on the Shel Yad is intended to **cover both the arm and head Tefillin**—provided no interruption occurs. Speaking, therefore, severs this connection and requires a new Beracha.

What Type of Speech Counts as an Interruption?

Not all speech is treated equally. Halacha distinguishes between:

- **Speech unrelated to the Misva** (e.g., "How are you today?" or "Did the Yankees win?") – This is considered a clear Hefsek. One must **repeat the Beracha**, saying "**Al Misvat Tefillin**" before placing the Shel Rosh.

- **Speech related to the Misva** (e.g., "Pass me my Tefillin Shel Rosh," or "I need to adjust the knot") – This is **discouraged**, but it is not considered a full interruption. **A new Beracha is not required**, though one should avoid such speech whenever possible.

The *Ben Ish Hai* (Parashat Vayera, 7) writes strongly against any talking, even related to the Misva, and encourages placing both Tefillin with total focus and silence. Nonetheless, he rules that speech about the Tefillin does not invalidate the Beracha.

The **Mishna Berura** (25:36) clarifies that even a brief word or short phrase—if not directly related to Tefillin—is sufficient to be called a Hefsek and require a new Beracha.

What About Gestures, Movement, or Sounds?

Actions such as **gesturing, nodding, or pointing are not considered interruptions**, since the mouth remains silent and the Beracha is not disconnected from the Misva. Similarly, **clearing the throat** or making an involuntary sound does not constitute a Hefsek.

Even so, some opinions advise avoiding all forms of distraction – verbal or physical – between Shel Yad and Shel Rosh in order to maintain the full sanctity of the process.

What If One Began Another Beracha by Mistake?

Another case that often arises is when someone begins saying a Beracha by habit or mistake. For example, after placing the Shel Yad, he begins, "Baruch Ata..." thinking he needs to recite a Beracha before the Shel Rosh.

- If he says "**Baruch Ata...**" but stops before saying **Hashem's Name**, he should **immediately stop** and **not complete the Beracha**. This is not considered a Hefsek.
- If he says "**Baruch Ata Hashem...**" but realizes the mistake mid-sentence, he should conclude the phrase with "**Lamdeni Hukecha**", a verse from Tehillim (119:12), which turns the phrase into a pasuk and avoids a Beracha Levatala.
- If he completes a full, unrelated Beracha—such as "**Shehakol**" or "**Asher Yasar**" – he has certainly interrupted and must **repeat the Beracha for Tefillin**.

This case is discussed in the *Ben Ish Hai* and the *Mishna Berura*, and the solution of "Lamdeni Hukecha" is accepted by both Ashkenazim and Sephardim.

Summary:

- **No speech is allowed** between Tefillin Shel Yad and Shel Rosh.
- If one **speaks unrelated words**, he must **repeat the Beracha**, saying "**Al Misvat Tefillin**" for the Shel Rosh.
- If the speech is **related to the Misva**, no new Beracha is needed, but it is still discouraged.
- **Gestures or movements** are not considered interruptions.
- If one **starts a Beracha by mistake**, he should either stop immediately or redirect it to a pasuk if Hashem's Name was already mentioned.

Remaining silent between the two Tefillin ensures a smooth and spiritually complete fulfillment of this daily Misva.



WEEKLY PARSHA OVERVIEW

Parshat Korach

Korach, Datan and Aviram, and 250 leaders of Israel rebel against the authority of Moshe and Aharon. The rebellion results in their being swallowed by the earth. Many resent their death and blame Moshe. G-d's "anger" is manifest by a plague that besets the nation, and many thousands perish. Moshe intercedes once again for the people. He instructs Aharon to atone for

them and the plague stops.

Then, G-d commands that staffs, each inscribed with the name of one of the tribes, be placed in the Mishkan. In the morning, the staff of Levi, bearing Aharon's name, sprouts, buds, blossoms and yields ripe almonds. This provides Divine confirmation that Levi's tribe is chosen for priesthood and verifies Aharon's position as Kohen Gadol, High Priest. The specific

duties of the levi'im and kohanim are stated. The kohanim were not to be landowners, but were to receive their sustenance from the tithes and other mandated gifts brought by the people. Also taught in this week's Torah portion are the laws of the first fruits, redemption of the firstborn and various laws of offerings.

Rabbi Sinclair,
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Q

1. Why did Datan and Aviram join Korach?
2. Why is Yaakov's name not mentioned in Korach's genealogy?
3. What motivated Korach to rebel?
4. What did Korach and company do when Moshe said that a techelet garment needs tzizit?
5. What warning did Moshe give the rebels regarding the offering of the incense?

A

1. 16:1 - Because they were his neighbors.
2. 16:1 - Yaakov prayed that his name not be mentioned in connection with Korach's rebellion (Bereishet 49:6).
3. 16:1 - Korach was jealous that Elizafan ben Uziel was appointed as leader of the family of Kehat instead of himself.
4. 16:1 - They laughed.
5. 16:6 - Only one person would survive.

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