



A collection of Torah thoughts produced by Kollel Menachem

פרשת קרח  
תמוז תש"פ

### CHARIDY CAMPAIGN A GREAT SUCCESS

On Gimmel Tammuz, Kollel ran our first Charidy crowd-funding campaign which, with the help of Hashem, was a great success and we are incredibly grateful to our community for your support.

With the generosity and support of over 450 donors, we were able to raise close to \$174,000 for the Kollel, to support the learning of our Yungeleit and our activities of spreading Torah and Chassidus throughout the community.

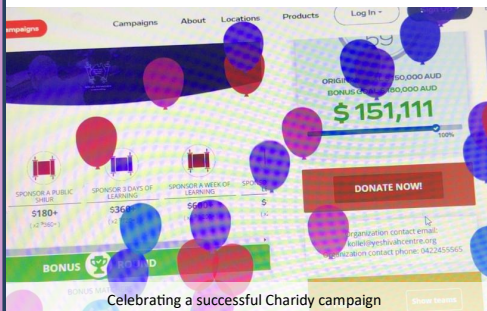
We would like to thank everyone who contributed to the campaign, to partner with us in the success of the Rebbe's Kollel down-under.

We are deeply grateful to our matchers for their strong friendship and support and to the community members who got on board by making calls and sending texts.

Gimmel Tammuz was an auspicious day for our campaign. The Rebbe was the Meyased of the Kollel and the Kollel proudly carries the Rebbe's name.

The campaign ended a few hours into Daled Tammuz, the Yartzeit of Rabbi Y. D. Groner. The Rebbe described Rabbi Groner as the living spirit רוח 'חי' behind the initiative of establishing the first Kollel in Australia. For over 30 years, the Kollel was Rabbi Groner's 'baby'.

We are sure that the Rebbe and his Shaliach, have much nachas in seeing how the community have given so generously to partner in actualising their vision in establishing the Kollel.



Celebrating a successful Charidy campaign

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## Korach the cause of baldness

The Gemara connects the name Korach with the word קרחה, meaning a bald-spot. Through his rebellion, Korach sought to make a bald-spot in the Jewish people.

Our sages are not just making a cute play on words. In Jewish thought, a name has significance and encapsulates the nature of its bearer. If they compare Korach to a bald-spot, it is because a bald-spot embodies who Korach was and what he was trying to do. So what is the connection between Korach and Korcha?

The opening words of the Parsha are ויקח קרח, "and Korach took". What did Korach take? We don't find any mention in the Torah of Korach taking anything. The Meforshim explain what Korach took was himself - he separated himself to the side.

Korach is about separation. Korach sought to create divisiveness and separation in a literal sense. Chassidus explains, that there was a deeper form of separation that he was trying to create.

The Targum translates these words as ואתפלג קרח, meaning "and Korach separated". The great Chassidic master, the Noam Elimelech of Lizhensk, explains that this is similar to the separation that took place of the second day of Creation. This was the creation of the firmament that separated between the upper and lower waters.

Kabbalistically, the upper waters represent G-dliness and spiritual pleasures - open G-dly revelation. The lower waters represent physicality and the material pleasures of the world.

Hashem created the worlds through a process of Tzimtzum, a contraction and concealment of the Divine light. This concealment is what would ultimately allow a finite, physical world to come into being.

The word Olam (world) is related to the word העלם, the concealment of G-dliness through which it was created. And so the worlds, like the lower waters, seem to be separated from their spiritual source by a divide.

But the Divine intention was not that the worlds remain a place of concealment, separated from G-dliness. Hashem separated the lower worlds so that through our Avodah, they could be reconnected with their G-dly source in a deeper, more powerful way than before.

So the separation was not a true separation, or one that Hashem desired to remain in place. Hashem wanted us to bridge this separation and to reveal G-dliness within the world.

But Korach separated. Korach wanted to perpetuate this separation. He saw physicality, not as a vehicle for connecting to Hashem, but as an end to itself. Korach viewed the world as existing completely independently of a spiritual or G-dly purpose.

This is the metaphor of baldness.

Hair is part of the body. Our hair grows because it too receives nourishment and vitality from the body, which ultimately comes from the brain. But unlike other parts of the body, the level of vitality in our hair is so minimal that we can cut it and feel no pain.

In Kabbalah, hairs are used as a metaphor for the contracted light of Hashem that is the source of Creation. Like the vitality of our hair, the Divine light within the world is so concealed that it is barely noticeable.

But despite the contraction and concealment, like the hairs or our head, the worlds are still connected to their G-dly source. Even though it is not revealed and tangible, it is still the truth of reality and it is for use to reveal.

Like a bald spot, Korach wanted to uproot the hairs completely, so that they would exist independently of any deeper source. Korach wanted to completely separate physicality from its G-dly source and G-dly purpose, worshipping worldliness as a value in its own right.

In our own personal lives, we have the same inner struggle. The upper waters are the spiritual aspects of our lives; davening, learning, Shabbos etc.

When it comes to our mundane activities; our 'lower waters' of work, eating, recreation and socialising, Korach tries to tell us that there is a separation; that these are not G-d's domain.

But in truth, these parts of our lives are not truly separate. Like our Torah and Mitzvos, how we engage in the world is a vehicle for an even more powerful connection to Hashem.

Korach wants to make you pull your hair out. Let's keep our roots firmly in place.

# The weekly Halacha analysis

## Disturbing the davening of others

Rabbi Yonason Johnson

In Orach Chayim Siman 102, the Shulchan Oruch discusses two halachos which relate to our conduct when in the presence of someone else who is davening Shemoneh Esrei:

1. One is not allowed to sit within 4 amos (approximately 2 metres) of someone who is davening Shemoneh Esrei.
2. One is not allowed to walk past in front of a person who is davening Shemoneh Esrei.

### Sitting near someone davening

The rationale for the first halacha (according to the Taz and Alter Rebbe) is that the place in which a person is davening Shemoneh Esrei is holy ground and one may not sit in the presence of the Shechina.

Since a person 'acquires' an area of 4 amos by 4 amos (approximately 2 metres by 2 metres), this rule applies whether sitting in front of, behind or to the side of the one davening.

The Tur records an alternative reason; So that it should not appear as though his friend is accepting Ol Malchus Shamayim (the Kingship of Heaven) by davening while he is sitting idly and doing nothing.

Others suggest that the halacha is so that one cannot hear the requests of the mispallel or watch his outpouring of emotions during davening and thereby cause him to be embarrassed.

If a person is sitting and learning or davening (even saying korbanos), he may sit within 4 amos of someone who is davening Shemoneh Esrei. Saying Tehillim would likewise be allowed. Since he is involved in Divrei Kedusha, it is not an affront to the Shechinah. It also will not appear as though he is not accepting Ol Malchus Shamayim.

Likewise, an elderly or weak person need not stand, since it is self-evident that his not standing is not out of any disrespect. However it is still preferable to sit more than 4 amos away from the mispallel if it is possible.

Sharei Teshuvah records that even if one is sitting in the seat that they have 'bought' in the Shule, they are still required to stand if someone is davening Shemoneh Esrei within 4 amos of them. This is true even if he was sitting there before the other individual began their Shemoneh Esrei. This is because the Shule is a place that is designated for davening.

Conversely if it is not place of davening and he was there first, meikar hadin he need not stand. There is still a Hiddur to stand none the less. In a Beis Medrash, during the times of learning, there is not even a hiddur to stand and disturb one's

learning if someone starts davening there.

If there is a mechitza between them or if the mispallel is in an adjacent room, one may sit within 4 amos since they are considered to be in a different reshush.

A bimah or fixed furniture that is at least 10 tefachim (approx. 80cm) tall, is considered a valid Mechitza for this purpose. Moveable furniture such as shtenders and tables do not suffice.

### Not to walk in front of someone davening

The rationale of the second halacha is so as not to disturb the kavanah of the mispallel.

Even if one has finished their own Shemoneh Esrei, they may not take their 3 steps back if the person behind them has not finished their own Shemoneh Esrei yet.

Because the concern is one of disturbing kavanah, the halacha is limited to walking in front of the one davening. According to the Zohar, quoted by the Alter Rebbe, the sides of the mispallel are also included.

The prohibition also extends to anywhere within the line-of-sight of the mispallel which may be distracting, even if it is more than 4 amos away.

Another difference between these 2 halachos is if there was a mechitza of glass separating between the mispallel and the other individual. In the first halacha, this mechitza would suffice as a separation between them. However, since it is see-through, a glass mechitza would not prevent any movement from disturbing the kavanah of the mispallel.

### The Tefillos of children

There are those who are lenient with the tefillos of a child and allow one to pass by. However the prohibition applies completely with regards to the tefillos of a woman. Poskim suggest that one should be machmir in relation to a child as a matter of Chinuch, so that we do not give any suggestion that their tefillos are less valuable.

It is related that a child was once davening Shemoneh Esrei in the inter-connecting door between Rav Kook's house and his Beis Medrash. Even though it was only a child and the child should not have been davening there, Rav Kook put on his coat and took a much longer route to the Beis Medrash. He did not simply pass in front of the child through the doorway as this would disturb the child's tefillah.

### Other prayers

The Birkei Yosef extends the prohibition of walking in front of one who is davening to one who is reciting Kaddish and the Mishnah Berurah in-

cludes the first posuk of Shema. The Geonim rule that one should not walk in front of the Chazzan at any point during davening.

### Other disturbing activities

Based on the rationale of this second halacha, we see to what extent the Shulchan Oruch is concerned for protecting the kavanah of someone else who is davening.

Therefore, other activities which would disturb are likewise forbidden. This includes talking while others are still davening Shemoneh Esrei.

Furthermore, unlike passing in front of the mispallel, talking in their presence would be ossur even to the sides or behind them. As long as they are in ear-shot of the mispallel, the conversation will be a distraction.

### Possible scope for leniency?

There are those who try to justify the fact that this halacha is some-what ignored, because nowadays no one has proper kavanah anyway. Yeshuos Moshe strongly argues that on the contrary, nowadays we need to be even more careful, because even the slightest distraction will affect the already-weaker kavanah of others.

Others suggest that we can be lenient if the mispallel has their eyes closed or covered by a tallis. However, the Kaf Hachayim says that Chaza"l did not make distinctions in their enactment and therefore we cannot be lenient.

### Exceptions

There are certain situations in which it contemporary Poskim allow one to walk in front of one who is davening;

If there is a Mitzvah which needs to be fulfilled now and cannot be done later for example someone who is called for an Aliyah, a Kohen going to duchen, or in order to hear Kedusha or Borchu. Similarly using the principal 'Kovod Habriyos', if someone needed to go to the bathroom, they could walk in front of someone davening if they are in their way.

Even still, there are Poskim who disagree with these leniencies and one should be machmir if possible.

If someone chooses to daven in a thoroughfare, technically he cannot obstruct someone from passing in front of him. Although the Ketzos Hashulchan suggests that one should find a different route.

By respecting the tefillos of others, may Hashem 'respect' our tefillos with immediate answers to all of our requests, especially our requests for the immediate coming of Moshiach.