

# פרשת קרח

גליון 37

ה' תמוז תש"פ

## מאת ר' ש. קאפלן שליט"א

לוי *the son of קרח, the son of יצהר, the son of קהת, the son of לוי...* (ט"ז, א') *separated himself.* teaches, "לקח את עצמו לצד אחד", *He took himself off to one side,* "לעורר על הכהונה", *to be separate from the assembly,* "להיות נחלק מתוך העדה", *by raising objections regarding the כהונה.*

Every year, when we learn the פרשה of קרח, we try to understand what exactly was the טענה – the claim he had against רבינו משה and what we can learn from this.

The תורה continues, "ויקומו לפני משה ואנשים מבני ישראל חמישים ומאתים..." (פסוק ב'), *They arose before משה with men of ישראל, two hundred and fifty [of them],* "נשיאי עדה קראי", *princes of assembly, those summoned for "מועד", men of renown.*

נשיאים – these were the "נשיאי העדה" – מובחרים שבעדה, teaches, (דף ק"י) in גמרא The "קראי מועד" – שהיה יודעים לעבר שנה ולקבוע החדשים, עדה – the ones who were the elite of the עדה, these refer to the ones who knew when to create an leap year and establish the months of the year, "אנשי שם" – שהיה להם "We must work on this lifetime עבודה of being מבטל ourselves for those who know better."

these refer to the famous people of ישראל כלל that were known about around the world.

We can understand why קרח took on his side the "נשיאי העדה", the prestigious and respected נשיאים and we can understand why קרח took with him to fight against מרע"ה – the "אנשי שם", famous people within ישראל כלל. But what was the significance with taking the "קראי מועד" – those that established the yearly and monthly calendar? Why does he need those people to join with him to fight against מרע"ה?

קרח seemed to be חולק regarding the כהונה ה', "מדוע תתנשאו בקהל ה'", "why have you appointed your brother אהרן as the גדול for ישראל כלל?" He was claiming that מרע"ה himself chose his brother אהרן to serve as the גדול.

However, if we look in (ט', כ"ג) פרשת שמיני, the תורה describes to us what happened when "ויבא משה ואהרן אל אהל מועד ויצאו ויברכו את העם, כהן גדול was appointed to be the גדול, כהן אהרן הכהן

"אהל מועד and אהרן came to the מועד, וירא כבוד ה' אל כל העם" *and they went out and they blessed the people – and the glory of Hashem appeared to the entire nation!*

there brings from חז"ל, that during the שבועת ימי המילואים when מרע"ה was setting up the משכן, "לא שרתה בו שכינה", *the שכינה had not descended to ישראל*, "משה רבינו! כל, משה and כלל ישראל were embarrassed and they said to משה, our master! All the trouble we went through that the שכינה should rest among us, and that we should know that the sin of the עגל was atoned for on our behalf! Now we see that it's all for nothing – the שכינה hasn't come!" *Therefore, he said to them, תעשו, וירא אליכם כבוד ה'* *This is the thing that Hashem has commanded you to do, the glory of Hashem will appear to you then, אהרן, my brother, is worthier and more important than I, שער ידי קרבנותיו ועבודתו תשרה שכינה בהם, ותדעו שהמקום בחר בו, and you will know that הקב"ה has chosen him.*

The תורה writes, "וירד מעשות החטאת והעלה והשלמים", *אהרן הכהן offered up the קרבנות, and then, וירא כבוד ה' אל כל העם – the glory of Hashem appeared to the entire nation!* The entire nation saw with their own eyes that it was the קרבנות of אהרן הכהן which appeased the הקב"ה and brought down the שכינה!

The entire nation saw – קרה included. They all saw that אהרן's קרבנות was the only thing which brought down the שכינה, how after seeing this, does קרה claim against מרע"ה for appointing אהרן as the גדול? They saw it was אהרן who appeased the הקב"ה and made the שכינה descend, proving that Hashem appointed him?

מרע"ה then answers קרה, "את אשר לו", *מרע"ה was telling קרה "in the morning;" explains קרה "גבולות חלק הקב"ה בעולמו" רש"י* – *fixed certain things in His world, there is night and there is day, you cannot change that, it's day when its day and its night when it's night. "So too," said מרע"ה to קרה, "You cannot change the fact that אהרן הכהן is appointed as גדול."*

What sort of response is this? קרה claims, "משה! You decided this all on your own accord..." What response is it then to reply, "...it's clear that he should be appointed..." How exactly does that answer the claim of קרה?

There is a beautiful מהלך of the ר' יוסף סלנט זצ"ל – באר יוסף: Certainly, together with the rest of אהרן of קרבנות the שכונה – כבוד ה' saw the קרח, כלל ישראל, הבהן.

It was אהרן who brought it down, no doubt about it.

However, טענה's קרח was, "It was you מרע"ה who was given the right to decide who will be the גדול כהן. It was your decision. Then, הקב"ה agreed to your decision, which ultimately caused for the שכונה to descend and reside with כלל ישראל." "כלל ישראל."

He had a complaint, "You're the מלך over here! Why did you go choose your brother to become גדול כהן – why not choose someone else? There's no ראייה from the השכונה which happened as a result of the עבודה of אהרן because הקב"ה simply agreed to your decision!" In order to prove his point of view, he brought with him on his side the קראי "קראי" – those who knew how to establish the year and its חדשים. They were the ones who determined when ראש חודש and the ימים טובים will be, they established the calendar.

He wanted to show מרע"ה that כלל ישראל have the power to determine how הקב"ה acts.

The ראש השנה in משנה tells us clearly that the way כלל ישראל determine when ראש השנה and יום כיפור will be, it is on that day that הקב"ה will sit and judge כלל ישראל.

– יום טוב "מקדש ישראל והזמנים" We say on כלל ישראל goes after the decisions of הקב"ה. "זמנים" is mentioned before "ישראל" because it is us כלל ישראל who affix and establish the זמנים.

The בית דין של מעלה are subservient to the בית דין של מטה.

In the town of Metz – the town of the שאגת אריה, there was a person who wanted to emigrate from there to a different part of France. His father came to him in a dream and said, "Do not leave the town of Metz! For if you leave the town of Metz you are going to die."

He explained to his son, "The שאגת אריה would often disagree in הלכה with all the other פוסקים. The שאגת אריה gives a פסק regarding a certain deficiency in a lung of an animal that it's כשר. All the other פוסקים in France and Europe at the time were of the opinion that an animal with such a fault in the lung was a טריפה animal."

Continued the father to his son, "As long as you live in Metz you will live, however, if you move out of Metz you are going to die. Since the פסקן's שאגת אריה that an animal

with this fault is not a טריפה – but rather it will live, someone in his town who has the same defect in his lung will also live. However, if you move out of Mntz, under the רבנות of other פוסקים – having such a fault in the lungs is considered a טריפה and it will die shortly. You too, who has the same deficiency, will die in accordance to the פסק of the place you will move to.”

What's פסקנד in the בית דין של מטה creates how the בית דין שמעלה will judge the situation, בית דין של מטה determines the מציאות of nature.

The סופר once said, “If I would פסקן that an אשה is no longer an עגונה... immediately, even if the husband is alive, he will die at that moment of the פסק דין.”

בית דין של מטה פסק go according to the פסק of בית דין של מעלה. That is the power of a Rov – the power of a בית דין and the power of a מנהיג – a leader.

תל"ז tell us that if somebody falls into the sea, his wife is forbidden to get married (for perhaps he survived).

The סופר would also say, “If תל"ז would have פסקנד that she is permitted to get married, it wouldn't be possible for a person to fall into the ocean and remain alive.”

If תל"ז that she could get married – that would be an immediate death sentence for her husband who fell into the sea.

It's well known that the ט"ז took his father-in-law the ב"ה to a תורה, because the ב"ה promised that he would feed him with meat during the time he lived in his house, however, the ב"ה provided him with liver. The ט"ז claimed in בית דין, “This was not the agreement... liver is not considered meat...”

The בית דין then פסקנד that liver is considered as meat.

However, the town were shocked, “Did the ט"ז really have to take his father-in-law the ב"ה to a תורה דין because he wasn't providing meat but rather, he was providing liver?”

The ט"ז explained himself, “I wasn't sure if liver is meat or not. I was convinced that my father-in-law was right – it's considered meat. However, I wanted the בית דין של מטה פסקן that it was considered meat, so that when the ב"ה comes to שמים, there will not be any טענות on him that he did not keep or fulfil the obligations that he promised (in case liver is not meat).”

He wanted בית דין של מעלה to determine how בית דין של מטה will treat liver!

This is why קרח took with him the קראי מועד. This was the message he was expressing to מרע"ה. He was telling מרע"ה, "You chose אהרן and הקב"ה agreed, because that is our power – בית דין של מעלה will automatically agree with the decisions of מטה! The fact the שכניה rested when אהרן offered up his קרבנות is no proof that he should be the chosen one. That's no חידוש, הקב"ה simply goes according to your decisions. It's your decision that הקב"ה will listen and agree to, but you didn't have to choose אהרן your brother to be appointed as כהן גדול!?"

מרע"ה then answered קרח, "בקר ויודע ה' את אשר לו" – There are certain things that are decided by הקב"ה that are not in our hands. We can't change the day to night, and nor can we change the night today. there are certain things that we are incapable of controlling.

Said מרע"ה, "קרח! You're making a great mistake! When הקב"ה created night and day, it is stated *"ויבדל בין אור ובין חושך"* – *separated between the light and dark*, וכשם *"שהבדיל בין אור ובין חושך, כך הבדיל ישראל מן האומות"* – just like *הקב"ה separated between light and darkness*, כלל ישראל are separated from the other nations of the world – איד cannot become a גוי. That's not in the hands of בית דין. Even בית דין can't make a איד into a גוי – it's simply not in our control, those are one of the things that only בית דין של מעלה can determine.

When אהרן הכהן became the כהן גדול it is stated, *"ויבדל אהרן להקדישו..."* – אהרן was separated by הקב"ה to serve הקב"ה and preform the עבודה! This was something which is only in the control of הקב"ה. אהרן הכהן was made into the כהן גדול by the רבש"ע and NOT by my decision."

This was the מחלוקת between מרע"ה and קרח.

If קרח was punished, obviously he was meant to see things the way מרע"ה saw things. It should have been clear to him like day that not everything gets decided by בית דין של מעלה. There are certain things beyond the role of כלל ישראל.

חז"ל teach us that קרח did not see the truth – the truth that this was the decision of the רבש"ע, because *"נתקנא באליצפן בן עוזיאל"* – *he was jealous regarding the appointment of the אליצפן בן עוזיאל*.

The משנה in (ה', י"ז) teaches, "איזהו מחלוקת שאינה לשם שמים? מחלוקת קרח ועדתו", *What is a מחלוקת which is not לשם שמים? The מחלוקת of קרח and his people.* קרח didn't know this משנה. On the contrary, קרח was convinced that his intentions were only לשם שמים. He was convinced that he was going to win.

This jealousy he had within, this כח of having a נגיעה makes a person blind from the eternal truth.

Someone asked קרח "Why didn't קרח realize that what he was doing was wrong, from the fact that the מן did not fall the next morning outside his tent – like it used to?"

ר' חיים קניבסקי שליט"א explained, "With a נגיעה – with the כח of מחלוקת, קרח thought and felt that it fell far away because he wasn't fighting strong enough against מרע"ה"

When things go wrong to people with נגיעות, they don't take it as a sign that הקב"ה is upset with their behaviour. Rather, they twist it and use it as a sign that they are not fighting strong enough!

When a person has a נגיעה everything gets twisted around.

קרח of מחלוקת און saved און בן פלח from joining in with the מחלוקת of חז"ל. Cleverly, when they came to pick him up, she uncovered her hair which caused them all to run away.

Said the Manchester זצ"ל ראש ישיבה, "When they saw her uncover her hair they ran away! They were tremendously צניעות on מקפיד! These weren't simple people trying to make a fight. They were שומר every word of תורה until its fullest. They ran a mile – they didn't want to see the hair of an אשה uncovered."

They were מדקדק on everything, however, at the same time it is possible to go against מצוה and be חולק on the מלך. A person can be extremely frum – מדקדק in every מצוה, however, with a נגיעה he can become totally blind and no longer see the truth.

The Alter of Kelm זצ"ל would say, "אויס ונורא – it's a tremendous fear... Who is going to tell us if our actions are right or not?"

When a person has a נגיעה he doesn't even realize he has a crooked נגיעה within! He thinks his actions are completely right. He thinks his שיטות are totally לשם שמים. They can often build for themselves שיטות and even give proof for them from the תורה.

But what they don't realize is, that with a נגיעה a person is simply twisting everything backwards – fitting everything according to his נגיעה.

He doesn't see the truth. It's clear in חז"ל that קרח thought in his mind that he was fighting a battle לשם שמים! He didn't see the truth because of his נגיעה.

This is the power of a נגיעה.

He didn't see his מדה of קנאה taking the upper hand over here.

We must prepare ourselves with refining our מדות before the נסיון comes, because once the נסיון arrives, it will be too late, we will not recognise our bad מדות because of a נגיעה.

If קרח would have worked on his מדה of קנאה, he wouldn't have gone through all of this, he would have realised and recognised that it was simply his נגיעה leading him along the wrong path.

A נגיעה can change and stop a person from seeing what he is meant to see. It's therefore so important in life not to have a דעה and opinion about everything, but rather to be מבטל oneself completely for older people, the דעת תורה – those with experience and know better. We mustn't accustom ourselves to have an opinion in every matter.

The משנה at the end of (ט', ט"ו) teaches, "בעקבות משיחא חצפא יסגא" – in the times of משיח there will be "חוצפא יסגא"; meaning: in the times of משיח every young person will think to himself, "I know better... I know how to decide this and that..."

But we must understand that we cannot overpower our נגיעה. Our נגיעות will bog us down and make us completely blind. Even קרח went wrong because of his נגיעה! If קרח didn't see his נגיעה, certainly we too, will not see our hidden נגיעות.

We must be aware of this, and to understand to be מבטל ourselves completely to the גדולי ישראל – those who know better.

Not to have a דעה in everything. It's something we suffer tremendously with in the secular world. Everyone has his rights, and everyone can have his own opinion in everything and anything. The entire democracy is built on this, every single person has the right to give his opinion and place his vote. A שוטה who knows nothing has the rights to vote and give his opinion whether England should leave the European union or not?!

If we think about the world of democracy, we see how flawed it all is. How can a person who has no idea what's going on in the economy go and vote whether England should leave or not?

The leaders by the גוים also go along with their own נגיעות, all they want is to be voted again in the next run.

However, with השקפת התורה it doesn't work with democracy. Not every person has to give his opinion in everything. It's up to our רבנים and גדולים who decide.

It's our leaders who lay down what is right and what is wrong.

The מסילת ישרים tells over a famous משל about a person who is lost in a maze. He's desperate to get out. The person above – standing on top of a tall tower can see clearly where he must turn to get out. Only a fool will turn around and say to the man standing on the tall tower, "What do you know... I understand much better... I know how to get around the maze... I can decide myself which way to turn right or left..."

He's a שוטה – a complete fool.

However, this is often how we behave. This world is like a maze, we're complete lost, we don't know where to turn, עולם הזה דומה לחושך – this world is compared to darkness. We're lost – we don't understand anything. We must stop having our own דעות when traveling through the maze, but rather only listen to our true leaders – those who are already standing on top of the tower that can show us the way of life.

We see many-a-time throughout the פרשיות that a נגיעה will twist everything and stop a person thinking straight.

We must work on this lifetime עבודה of being מבטל ourselves for those who know better. We'll conclude with a *moridiker* vort of the שפת אמת. The מדות of a person are inherited, which פשטות means through the genes and the DNA, it is transferred to the children of a person his מדות.

However, the שפת אמת explains: One of the reasons why קרה was convinced that he was right because he saw that שמואל הנביא was going to come from him and eventually be one of his great grandchildren.



שמואל הנביא was equivalent to משה and אהרן together! קרח was therefore convinced, "If שמואל הנביא is going to come from me and he will be שקול כנגד משה ואהרן, it's not possible that I can have any bad מדות within me! I obviously don't have any נגיעות involved!" קרח thought that if he would have a נגיעה, it wouldn't be possible שמואל הנביא to come from him.

However, the שפת אמת teaches, the מדות of a person are only inherited once a person dies. That is when he gives his מדות over to his children.

The mistake of קרח was that קרח didn't realize that הקב"ה was going to destroy him *not* through death. The תורה tells us, (ט"ז, ל"ג), "חיים שאלהם..." – they were swallowed up **alive**, they were never killed. קרח is still alive!

If קרח never died, he therefore never gave over his bad מידות to his children.

His נגיעה twisted him and he made a whole חשבון how right he must be. He made a חשבון to convince himself why he was right.

The נגיעה didn't allow him to think, "Perhaps something is going to happen which will disprove my theory?! Perhaps שמואל הנביא can come from me despite the fact I have bad מידות... for perhaps הקב"ה will destroy me without giving me death..."

His נגיעה stopped him from thinking that perhaps there could still be a possibility that there can be a שמואל הנביא even though he has within himself this מדה of קנאה.

Transcribed by אברהם דוב הכהן כהן - Avrohom Dov Kohn.