

Hakarat HaTov, showing and expressing gratitude is a fundamental concept of Judaism. The very beginning of the Torah, Sefer Bereishit points out the shortcoming of mankind by Adam HaRishon's failure to be Makir Tov to HaKadosh Baruch Hu. Instead of being thankful and grateful to HaShem for giving him the gift of "a woman", Adam turns around and blames his failure to abstain from the "tree in the middle of the Garden" on the woman. He says to GD, "The woman that You gave me, SHE is to blame for my sin (Bereishit 3:12). For this, Adam is duly punished, but did WE learn our lesson from this chapter in the Torah?? Absolutely NOT.!

There is an interesting Midrash Tanchuma (at the end of Sefer Bamidbar), which deals with Korach and attitude towards gifts that we receive from HaShem. Rav Soloveitchik noted that a Midrash Tanchuma should never be understood merely on the literal level but must be analyzed to find a deeper level of comprehension. The Midrash states that there were two exceptionally **wise** men, two exceptionally **strong** men and two exceptionally **wealthy** men who came to this world. In each case one of the two came forth from Israel and one came from the nations of the world. And the common denominator of all six is that they were all destroyed and they all met a terrible death at the end.

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The **wise** man from Israel was **Achitofel**, and his counterpart from the nations of the world was **Bilaam**. The **strong** man from Israel was **Shimshon** and his counterpart was **Goliat**. The **wealthy** man from Israel was **Korach** and his counterpart was **Haman**. The Midrash then proceeds to ask why these people's lives met such terrible endings. The Midrash answers, because they did not appreciate the tremendous gift that HaShem had granted them and did not acknowledge HaShem as the source of their exceptional greatness.\*\*\*\*\*

Most intelligent people realize that exceptional Chachma [wisdom] and exceptional Gevura [strength] are gifts from HaShem. The one thing that people may not look at as a gift, is Osher-wealth. If a person becomes wealthier than his neighbor, has a better job, he tends to attribute it to the fact that he was more capable, wiser, or a better businessman. The Midrash tells us otherwise.

If a person thinks, it's because of **his own** wisdom, or his own intelligence, that enabled him to accumulate his fortune, and **his physical or emotional** strength that made him successful, it then follows that he believes everything he owns is **his**; such a person is doomed for failure. If he realizes that these successes are truly gifts of HaShem, then his attitude and his actions will be different and so will his fate.

A **well known** physician who was gifted with an unusual talent of diagnosing internal ailments had literarily saved or extended the life of thousands of patients. He decided to retire at an early age. His Rabbi tried to convince him that GD gave him this talent to save lives, and continue doing so for as long as possible. Perhaps curtail your practice

and work shorter hours, but don't retire completely. The doctor didn't listen. He enjoyed life on the golf-course, but died in less than six months after retirement.

We all have some kind of talent; be it cooking, baking, painting, knitting, singing, teaching anything else that we can do better than others, we should view this as a "calling card" from HaShem to make others happy. And continue using it for as long as GD enables us to do it, BUT DON'T RETIRE FROM YOUR GIFTED TALENT!

Shabbat Shalom- from Yerushalayim .Rabbi Aharon Ziegler

QUESTIONS:

1-KEHOT WAS THE GRANDFATHER OF KORACH. WHO WAS THE GRANDFATHER OF KEHOT??

2-"ON", THE SON OF PELET, HAD been one of the leaders of the protesters. WHAT, OR WHO PURSUADED HIM TO WITHDRAW???

3-TEN JEWISH MEN ARE REQUIRED TO FORM A MINYAN FOR A DAVAR SHEH'BIKDUSHAH. WE LEARN THIS FROM 3 DIFFERENT SOURCES. ONE OF THE SOURCES IS FROM OUR PARASHA . WHAT SOURCE IS THAT???

4- We know it is a Mitzvah to save a Jewish life. How do we know it's a mitzvah, even if the the person is being punished by HaShem??

5- Our parasha speaks about the kedusha of a B'CHOR "first born child"-(18:14-17)

WHAT IS THS DIFFENCE BETWEEN A B'CHOR LENACHALA, AND A B'CHOR THAT NEEDS REDEMPTION THROUGH A KOHEN???