

Since the rebellion could not have happened without his money, the rebellion was named after him.

Hacham Obadiah concludes with the *pasuk*: “Wealth is held by its owners to their detriment.” Shabbat Shalom. Rabbi Reuven Semah

Looks Good but...

”וַיִּקְהָלוּ עַל־מֹשֶׁה וְעַל־אַהֲרֹן וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֲלֵהֶם רַב־לָכֶם כִּי כָל־הָעֵדָה כָּלָם קְדָשִׁים וּבְתוֹכְכֶם ה' וּמִדּוּעַ תִּתְנַשְּׂאוּ עַל־קֹהֵל ה'”

“And they gathered against Moshe and against Aharon and said to them, ‘It is too much for you! For the entire assembly is holy, and Hashem is among them; why do you exalt yourselves over the congregation of Hashem?’” (*Bemidbar* 16:3)

Korah attacks Moshe with a strong claim – “The entire Jewish People experienced a direct connection with Hashem at Sinai, so why do we need *you*?” It seems from this argument that Korah’s sole concern was for the good of the Jewish People. However, the *Ibn Ezra* learns that Korah’s revolt took place directly after Aharon and his sons were appointed to replace the firstborns, who had lost their right to Priesthood as a result of their involvement in the sin of the Golden Calf. The *Ibn Ezra* explains that the reason Korah rose up against Moshe was because he was a firstborn, as were the two hundred and fifty men who joined him, and although they disguised their arguments in honorable terms, in reality it was their own thirst for power that drove them to enter into a fight with Moshe and Aharon.

From here we see that an *outwardly* righteous appearance does not necessarily mean the *presence* of righteousness, and although it is undoubtedly important to *appear* to be righteous, to actually *be* righteous is life’s goal! Our outward actions help us do this, as the *Sefer Hahinuch* writes, “One’s personality is molded by his external actions,” but we can never think that *looking* righteous is the goal, it is only the means to the goal.

The following story helps to emphasize this point.

In his home, Rav Yoel Teitelbaum, the Satmar Rebbe, once honored R’ Elimelech Gavriel “Mike” Tress, the Administrative President of Agudat Yisrael of America; the man responsible for saving thousands of Jews during the Holocaust as well as having a major input in the Torah establishing its roots in America. Upon hearing of the visit, some young students approached the Rebbe and brazenly asked him how he could honor a man who did not have a beard. “Surely the Rebbe knows the importance of having a beard,” they said. The Satmar Rebbe looked them in the eyes and said, “You’re right. When that man leaves this world, the Heavenly Court will say, ‘Jew, Jew, where was your beard?’ But when *you* leave this world, they will say, ‘Beard, Beard, where was your Jew?’”

Hard Labor

”וְהָיָה הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר־יִבְחַר ה' הוּא הַקְּדוֹשׁ רַב־לָכֶם בְּנֵי לְוִי”

“And it will be the man who will be chosen by Hashem, he is the holy one, (you have taken) too much upon yourselves, sons of Levi.” (*Bemidbar* 16:7)

Rashi asks: “Korah was an intelligent person, so what led him to (persist in) this foolishness?”

Seemingly, Korah’s actions were much more wicked than foolish; why does *Rashi* look at what he did as “foolishness”?

Also, the *Midrash* relates that Korah was incited to rebellion by his wife. She argued, “Why did Moshe appoint his brother as *Kohen Gadol* and leave you to carry the heavy *Aron*?” Yet, this *Midrash* is difficult to understand, since *Hazal* teach us that the holy *Aron* in the *Mishkan* was weightless; in fact, it maintained the characteristic of carrying its carriers, and they expended no energy when walking! What, then, were Korah and his wife complaining about?

Rav Chaim Pinchas Scheinberg *shlit”a* explains. The ease or difficulty of any endeavor is dependent on one’s attitude. If one believes in the Torah’s power to carry a person, it will do so. If one views the Torah as a burden, it will feel like one. Similarly, if one devotes himself to spiritual growth, it is not hard to accomplish. This is the meaning of the *Gemara* (*Sukkah* 53) that at the end of time, *sadikim* will be surprised to discover how “big” the *yesser hara* really is and how hard it is to conquer it. Since *sadikim* devote their entire lives to overcoming the *yesser hara*, it seems easy to them.

Certainly, Korah’s actions were wicked. However, he could never have stooped so low and caused such a terrible rebellion had he not been foolish enough to confuse his privileged position with labor. To him, the Torah was a heavy burden; the *Aron* certainly did not carry him. Thus, at the root of his discontent was foolishness. He couldn’t see his station for what it was; the right to be borne by the Torah. (*Torah Tavlin*)

Heart Monitor

Watch your diet. Get a good night’s sleep. Exercise regularly. Avoid stress. These instructions are all part of a doctor’s prescription for heart health.

Our Sages also teach us the importance of developing a good heart, but their intention is quite different. Yes, people must take care of their physical well-being; it is a Torah requirement. But they must also work constantly on developing a good heart.

Envy is a disease of the heart; people must learn not to be suspicious, jealous or hateful. Short temper can deal a more deadly blow than cholesterol buildup. Kindness and empathy work much better than pills in developing a healthy demeanor. Cheerfulness and pleasantness provide longevity; tranquilizers can’t do that. Aside from these benefits, a good heart also attracts people to the one who is pleasant and outgoing. Individuals look for opportunities to share their thoughts and concerns with others who demonstrate the qualities that indicate a “good heart.”

The *Mishnah* states (*Abot* 2:9): When the great Sage, Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai asked his students to determine the best type of attitude or character trait that a person can have, Rabbi Elazar answered, “A good heart.” This means: the proper attitude, and the absence of envy.

If you catch yourself doing something that is harmful to the development of your good heart, stop and check your emotional heart monitor. Change direction – from anger to serenity, from envy to generosity, from tension to calm. This only takes a minute, but the health benefits are immeasurable. (One Minute With Yourself – Rabbi Raymond Beyda)

Bentching Request

Summer was in full swing – and that meant it was time for camp! Yitzzy Kaufman was enjoying every minute of his stay in Camp Avoseinu. The highlight of the week