



כולל רבנים
רבינו צבי אשכנזי

An Initiative of Amsterdam Community Kollel

THIS WEEK IN JEWISH HISTORY

29 Sivan

- Moshe sent the Meraglim to survey Eretz Yisrael.
- Germany occupied Kovno and Vilna, 1941.

30 Sivan

- Numerous Jews were killed in a pogrom at Jassy, Rumania, 1941.

1 Tammuz

- Yaakov and family went down to Mitzrayim
- Yahrzeit of Rabbi Shlomo Kluger, 1869.

2 Tammuz

- Earthquake hits Eretz yisrael, 1927.

3 Tammuz

- Yehoshua "commanded" the Sun and the Moon to stand still.
- Menasseh b. Israel petitioned Oliver Cromwell for permission to practice Judaism in England, 1656.
- The Yahrzeit of the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

4 Tammuz

- Yahrzeit of Rabbeinu Tam, 1171.
- Rabbi Meir of Rothenberg was imprisoned, 1286.
- Jerusalem bombed for the first time in its history, 1948.

5 Tammuz

- Yechezkel's first prophecy, 502b.c.e.
- Memorial fast day for approx. 50,000 Ukrainian Jews killed in 1768.

TAKING SIDES

"ויקח קרח" - and Korach took

Rashi explains that Korach took himself to a *tzad*, to one side. As the Targum translates, *isplig*, he split himself off. Later in the parsha, Moshe rebukes Korach with the words "רב לכם בני לוי". Rashi explains that by rebelling in this way, Korach had gone too far. Rashi then asks what caused Korach to make such a mistake. Surely he was a *pikeiach*. If Korach was so wise, how did he end up becoming the leader of such a destructive dispute?

The Munkatcher Rov brings a fascinating minhag practised by R' Zvi Hirsch of Zidichov. During Sheva Brochas, he would seat the choson and kalla in the corner of the room. He explained that the essence of a marriage is the joining of two different sides. Two people, often from different backgrounds, come together to form a new unit. The corner is the place where two sides meet and is therefore the ideal location for the choson and kalla. It is *mechaber es hatzedadim*, joining the sides. Interestingly, the gematria of *tzad* is 94, which is also the gematria of *mazel tov*. We call out "*mazel tov*" to celebrate the coming together of two sides.

The Ropshitzer Rebbe explains that the advantage of a *pikeiach* is that he can see both sides of an argument. He is able to look at an issue objectively and understand each perspective. In this way, he can bring peace between people. The gematria of *pikeiach* is 188, exactly twice that of *tzad*. Korach possessed this quality and should have been the last person to become involved in machlokes. This is Rashi's question: if he was a *pikeiach*, why did he choose only one *tzad*?

The Targum's expression *isplig* is especially precise. Literally, it means that he divided himself. Korach was capable of seeing both sides, but he halved himself and reduced his vision to a single perspective. Once he could no longer see another person's *tzad* then *machlokes* became inevitable.