

JS7105

A SHEMA FOR KORACH

Handout



THE TZITZIT CHALLENGE

ויקח קרח מה כתיב למעלה מן הענין דבר אל בני ישראל ואמרת אליהם ועשו להם צצית קפץ קרח ואמר למשה ... טלית שכולה תכלת מה היא שיהא פטורה מן צצית א"ל משה חייבת בצצית א"ל קרח טלית שכולה תכלת אינה פוטרת עצמה וארבעה חוטין פוטר אותה בית מלא ספרים מהו שתהא פטורה מן המזוזה א"ל חייבת במזוזה א"ל כל התורה כולה רע"ה פרשיות שיש בה כולן אין פוטרות את הבית ושתי פרשיות שבמזוזה פוטרות את הבית א"ל דברים אלו לא נצטוית עליהם ומלבך אתה בודאם

"And Korach betook himself" (Numbers 16:1).

What is written immediately above this thing? *"Speak to the Israelites, and you shall say to them that they should make them a fringe..."* (Numbers 15:38).

Korach leapt up and said to Moses ... "A tallit that is techelet all over: how about that? Has it fulfilled the laws of tzitzit?"

Moses answered, "It is still subject to the laws of tzitzit."

Korach said, "When a tallit is techelet all over that does not suffice to fulfil the law, yet four threads can fulfil it?!" He went on, "A house full of holy books: has it fulfilled the laws of mezuzah?"

Moses said to Korach, "It is still subject to the laws of mezuzah."

Korach responded, "The whole Torah – all 275 sections – are in the house, and they do not fulfil the law, yet two excerpts in a mezuzah do fulfil it, on behalf of the house?!" He went on, "You were not commanded regarding these things. You are forming them from your own desires!"

Midrash Tanchuma, Korach 2

THE HOLINESS CHALLENGE

וַיִּקְהָלוּ עַל מֹשֶׁה וְעַל אֶהֱרֹן וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֲלֵהֶם רַב לָכֶם כִּי כָל הָעֵדָה כֻּלָּם קִדְּשִׁים וּבְתוֹכְכֶם יְהוָה וּמִדּוֹעַ תִּתְנַשְּׂאוּ עַל קֶהֱל יְהוָה:

They banded together against Moses and against Aaron, and said to them, "You're taking rather a lot on yourselves, aren't you? For all the community, together, are holy, and the Eternal is among them. Why would you raise yourselves above the community of God?"

Numbers 16:3

Deuteronomy 28:1-9

And it shall be that, if you obey the voice of the Eternal One your God, and abide by all of God's laws that are commanded to you this day, the Eternal One will set you on high, among all the nations of the earth. And all these blessings will come to you and permeate you, if you will obey the voice of the Eternal One your God.

You will be blessed in the city and blessed in the field. The fruit of your womb and the fruit of your land and the fruit of your herds; the offspring of your cattle and the young of your flocks – they shall all be blessed. Blessed shall be basket and bowl. Blessed shall be coming and going.

When enemies stand before you, God will defeat them before you. They may approach you in unity, but they will flee in disarray.

The Eternal One will decree blessings for you – for your storehouses and for all your enterprises – in the land which your God is giving you.

As God's own holy people will station you, just as was sworn to you – if you keep God's commandments and walk in God's ways.

וְהָיָה אִם־שָׁמוּעַ תִּשְׁמַע בְּקוֹל יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשָׁמֵר לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת־כָּל־
מִצְוֹתָיו אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי מְצַוֶּה הַיּוֹם
וּנְתַנֶּנְךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ עָלְיוֹן עַל כָּל־גּוֹיֵי
הָאָרֶץ: וּבָאוּ עָלֶיךָ כָּל־הַבְּרָכוֹת
הָאֵלֶּה וְהִשְׁיִגְךָ כִּי תִשְׁמַע בְּקוֹל
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה בְּעִיר וּבְרוּךְ אַתָּה
בַּשָּׂדֶה: בְּרוּךְ פְּרִי־בִטְנְךָ וּפְרִי
אֲדָמָתְךָ וּפְרִי בְהֵמָתְךָ שֹׁגֵר אֲלֶפְיֶךָ
וְעִשְׂתָּרוֹת צֹאנֶךָ: בְּרוּךְ טַנְיָאֶךָ
וּמִשְׁאֲרֹתֶיךָ: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה בְּבֹאֶיךָ וּבְרוּךְ
אַתָּה בְּצֵאתְךָ:

יִתֵּן יְהוָה אֶת־אִיְבֹיֶיךָ הַקָּמִים עָלֶיךָ
נִגְפִים לְפָנֶיךָ בְּדֶרֶךְ אֶחָד יֵצְאוּ אֵלֶיךָ
וּבְשִׁבְעָה דַרְכִּים יָנוּסוּ לְפָנֶיךָ:

יֵצְאוּ יְהוָה אֶתְךָ אֶת־הַבְּרָכָה בְּאַסְמִיָּךָ
וּבְכָל מִשְׁלַח יָדְךָ וּבְרִכְךָ בְּאָרֶץ
אֲשֶׁר־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נָתַן לָךְ:

יְקִימְךָ יְהוָה לֹא לְעַם קָדוֹשׁ כְּאֲשֶׁר
נִשְׁבַּע־לָךְ כִּי תִשְׁמֹר אֶת־מִצְוֹת
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְהִלַּכְתָּ בְּדַרְכָּיו:

Exodus 19:4-11

You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, how I lifted you up on eagles' wings and brought you to Me. Now, if you will truly hear My voice and keep My covenant, you will be My heirloom from amongst all people on all the earth (which is Mine). And you will be to Me a dominion of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the children of Israel.

Moses went and summoned the longest-standing of the people, and placed before them all the words that had been commanded by the Eternal One.

The entire people answered together. They said, "All that God has said, we will do." And Moses relayed the words of the people to God. And God said to Moses, "Behold, I have come before you under cover of a cloud, so that the people will hear our conversation, and will trust forever. Then Moses recounted to the Eternal One the people's words.

And God said to Moses, "Go to the people, and direct them to sanctify today and tomorrow, and to wash their clothes. They shall be prepared for the third day, for on the third day, the Eternal One will descend, in the sight of all the people, from Mount Sinai.

אַתֶּם רְאִיתֶם אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתִי לְמִצְרַיִם
וְאֲשָׂא אֶתְכֶם עַל-בְּנֵפֵי נְשָׁרִים
וְאָבֵא אֶתְכֶם אֵלַי: וְעַתָּה אִם-שָׁמוּעַ
תִּשְׁמָעוּ בְּקוֹלִי וּשְׁמַרְתֶּם אֶת-בְּרִיתִי
וְהָיִיתֶם לִי סִגְלָה מִכָּל-הָעַמִּים כִּי-
לִי כָּל-הָאָרֶץ: וְאַתֶּם תִּהְיוּ-לִי
מְמַלְכֶת כֹּהֲנִים וְגוֹי קְדוֹשׁ אֵלֶּה
הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר תִּדְבַּר אֶל-בְּנֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל:

וַיָּבֵא מֹשֶׁה וַיְקַרָּא לְזִקְנֵי הָעָם וַיֵּשֶׁם
לִפְנֵיהֶם אֵת כָּל-הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה
אֲשֶׁר צִוָּהוּ יְהוָה:

וַיַּעֲנוּ כָּל-הָעָם יַחְדָּו וַיֹּאמְרוּ כָּל
אֲשֶׁר-דִּבֶּר יְהוָה נַעֲשֶׂה וְנִשְׁבַּח מֹשֶׁה
אֶת-דְּבָרֵי הָעָם אֶל-יְהוָה: וַיֹּאמֶר
יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה הִנֵּה אֲנֹכִי בָּא אֵלֶיךָ
בְּעַב הָעֲנָן בְּעֲבוּר יִשְׁמַע הָעָם בְּדִבְרֵי
עֲמֶךָ וְגַם-בָּךְ יֶאֱמִינוּ לְעוֹלָם וַיַּגִּד
מֹשֶׁה אֶת-דְּבָרֵי הָעָם אֶל-יְהוָה:

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵךְ אֶל-הָעָם
וְקַדְּשֵׁתֶם הַיּוֹם וּמָחָר וּכְבֹּסוּ
שְׂמֹלֹתֵיכֶם: וְהָיוּ נִכְנָיִם לַיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי
כִּי | בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי יֵרֵד יְהוָה לְעֵינֶיךָ
כָּל-הָעָם עַל-הַר סִינַי: