



CANDLE LIGHTING 8:13 PM | 5 TAMUZ | JUNE 20, 2026 | HAVDALA 9:17 PM

שבת פרשת קרח

SHABBAT PARSHAT KORACH

Haftorah is Samuel I 11:14–12:22.
Pirkei Avot Chap. 4.

FRIDAY EVENING

MINCHA 6:46 PM

EARLIEST CANDLES 6:57 PM

SHKIA 8:32 PM

TZAIT HAKOCHAVIM 9:12 PM

SHABBAT

HASHKAMA 7:45 AM

SHACHARIT - MAIN 9:00 AM

POST-HASHKAMA SHIUR ≈ 9:11 AM

LAST KRIAT SHEMA 9:11 AM

FUNDAMENTALS SHIUR ≈ 11:30 AM

PRE-MINCHA SHIUR 7:25 PM

MINCHA 8:05 PM

SHKIA 8:32 PM

MAARIV 9:17 PM

KIDDUSH

Kiddush is sponsored by Shelly & Steve Winchester in celebration of Daniel's Auf Ruf and upcoming wedding to Yael Simons.

יעלה הזיווג יפה ויבנו בית נאמן בישראל

May the beautiful couple be elevated in the building of a faithful house of Israel.



SEUDAH SHLISHIT

Seudah Shlishit is sponsored by Esther Schwed in memory of her father Moshe Yehuda ben Menashe ע"ה.

MAZEL TOV



Mazel tov to Jewel & Robert Safren on the birth of a granddaughter, Shoshana Sarah, born to Kayla & Eli Katz.

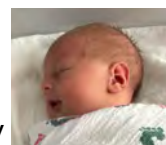
יגדלוה לתורה ולחופה ולמעשים טובים

May they raise her to Torah, chuppah and good deeds.

MAZEL TOV

Mazel tov Mazel tov to Elianna Kaplowitz & Aaron Czinn, and big brothers Judah and Asher, on the birth of a baby boy.

יגדלוה לתורה ולחופה ולמעשים טובים ויכניסוהו לבריתו בזמנו ובעתו
May they raise him to Torah, chuppah and good deeds, and may he be entered into the covenant of Abraham.



ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING AND ICE CREAM SOCIAL

This Tuesday, June 23, at 8:20 PM. Schedule is as follows: (1) Mincha/Maariv (8:20 PM), (2) Ice Cream (8:45 PM), (3) Year in Review (9:00 PM), (4) Shul Updates, (5) 2026-2027 Budget, and (6) Incoming Slate of Officers.



SUNDAY
6/21

MONDAY
6/22

TUESDAY
6/23

WEDNESDAY
6/24

THURSDAY
6/25

FRIDAY
6/26

WEEKDAY MINYANIM AT AHAVAT ACHIM

SHACHARIT	8:00 AM	6:15 AM	6:25 AM	6:25 AM	6:15 AM	6:25 AM
2ND SHACHARIT MINYON - YISHTABACH AT 7:40 AM		7:25 AM	7:25 AM	7:25 AM	7:25 AM	7:25 AM
MINCHA/MAARIV	8:20 PM	8:20 PM	8:20 PM	8:20 PM	8:20 PM	6:47 PM

ZMANIM

Earliest Talit	4:12 AM	4:13 AM	4:13 AM	4:13 AM	4:14 AM	4:14 AM
Gedolah	1:36 PM	1:36 PM	1:37 PM	1:37 PM	1:37 PM	1:37 PM
Shkia	8:32 PM	8:32 PM	8:32 PM	8:32 PM	8:32 PM	8:32 PM
Tzait	9:12 PM	9:12 PM	9:12 PM	9:12 PM	9:12 PM	9:12 PM

Rabbi Ely Shestack

President Jay Herman

UPCOMING EVENTS

June 23 - Annual Membership Meeting, Ice Cream Social, 8:45 PM. If partaking in the Ice Cream, please RSVP here: [Vanilla](#)

July 3 - Friday Night Independence Day BBQ /Shabbat Dinner. RSVP here: [250 Years](#)

July 12 - Summer Hike, Ramapo Valley. 10:00 AM. RSVP: [Take a Hike](#)

IN OUR FUTURE - KIDDUSH, SEUDAH SHLISHIT, & ETC.

July 4 - Birthday and anniversary kiddush.

June 27 - Kiddush is sponsored by Audrey & Jack Bickel with gratitude to Hashem for their children and grandchildren, and Jalen Brunson and the NY Knicks' historic win.

Aug. 15 - Kiddush is sponsored by Seymour Wigod in honor of Tali & Neal Wigod, Moshe, Shua and Shy, to wish them bracha, hatzlacha & yishuv tov on moving to Israel.

Aug. 22 - Kiddush is sponsored by Chana & Rabbi Shestak in celebration of Adira Nechama's Bat Mitzvah.

BIRTHDAY & ANNIVERSARY KIDDUSH



To add a birthday or anniversary to upcoming lists (next Kiddush on Shabbat, July 4), click here: [SIMCHA](#). Listings/sponsorships are \$36 per family per month. RSVP for the July birthday/anniversary Kiddush by Sunday night, June 28.

SHIURIM



- PESHAT OF THE PARSHA, Tuesdays at 1:00 PM, click here: [Parsha](#).
- TORAH FOR YOUR COMMUTE, via Whatsapp, with 3-minute daily Halacha insights. To join email Rabbi Shestak at rabbishestack@gmail.com.
- POST-HASHKAMA SHIUR, analyzing Mishlei (Proverbs).
- FUNDAMENTALS OF JEWISH THOUGHT, after Kiddush.
- SHABBAT SHIUR, **SANHEDRIN CH. 1**, 40 minutes prior to mincha.
- TZURBA M'RABANAN w/ Zack Doberman, Wednesdays at 8:30 PM. In-person at the shul and via Zoom.
- SEDER ON THE SIDDUR, at Seudah Shlishit.
- BEGINNER CLASS ON HOW TO READ HEBREW, Monday nights, 8:45 PM, at the shul. To sign up, click here: [Hebrew](#).



GITA COOPERWASSER ת"ע YOUTH EVENTS

June 20 - Perek in the Park, 4:15 PM.

GITA COOPERWASSER ת"ע SHABBAT YOUTH INFO



- **SHABBAT YOUTH LEADERS:**
3RD - 5TH: SOPHIA & ARIELYS
K-2ND: ISABELLA & ARIELLA
3 YRS - PRE-K: DANIELLE, RIHANNA & ZOE
- Youth groups for 3rd through 5th Graders starts at 9:00 AM (Drop Off) in the Youth Room on left on entering the social hall.
- Youth group for children 4 years old through 1st Grade starts at 9:00 AM (Drop Off) in the Youth Room on the right upon entering the social hall.
- Parent & Me, 9:00 AM in the Beit Midrash.
- Rabbi Meet & Greet, Friday night, kids can come over to the Rabbi after davening to receive a cup of grape juice and a ticket!
- Children earn tickets for coming to minyan (Friday night and/or Shabbat day), asking the rabbi questions or attending parent-child learning programs! Tickets can be redeemed for prizes.
- HIATUS UNTIL FALL - Children's corner at Seudah Shlishit, 1st to 5th graders will get 10 Torah questions in 10 minutes from Rabbi Shestak, with special snacks, tickets and more.

18-25 Saddle River Road
Fair Lawn, NJ 07410
201.797.0502
<http://www.ahavatachim.org>

Mishlei/Proverbs
Post-Hashkama Shiur 33 – Pride Cometh/Goeth Before the Fall

יִתְעַבְּתָּ מַלְכִּים עֲשׂוֹת הַשֵּׁעַ כִּי בִצְדָקָה יָכוֹן כִּסֵּא: "רָצוֹן מַלְכִּים שְׂפָתֵי צֶדֶק וְדָבָר יִשְׁרִים יֵאָהֵב: "חֶמְתָּ מֶלֶךְ מִלְּאֲדִימוֹת וְאִישׁ חֲכָם יִכְפָּרָנָה: "יִבְאֹרֶץ פְּנֵי מֶלֶךְ חַיִּים וְרָצוֹנוֹ כְּעֵב מִלְּקוֹשׁ: "מִקְנֵה חֲכָמָה מִה־טוֹב מִחֲרוֹץ וּקְנֹת בִּינָה נִבְתָּר מִכָּסֶּף: "מִסְלַת יִשְׂרָאֵל סוּר מִרַע שֹׁמֵר נֶפְשׁוֹ נֶצֶר דֶּרֶכוֹ: "לִפְנֵי־שֹׁכֵר גָּאוֹן וְלִפְנֵי כָשָׁלֹן גְּבוּהָ רֹחַ: "טוֹב שְׂפִלְיוֹת אֶת־עֲנָנִים (כְּתִיב עֲנָנִים) מִחֲלֹק שָׁלָל אֶת־גָּאִים: "מִשְׁכִּיל עַל־דָּבָר וּמִצָּא־טוֹב וּבֹטָח בִּי־ה־יְיָ אֲשֶׁרֵי: "לֶחֶם־לֵב יִקְרָא נִבּוֹן וּמִתֵּק שְׂפָתַיִם יִסִּיף לֶקַח: "מִקּוֹר חַיִּים שֶׁכֵּל בְּעֵלְיוֹ וּמוֹסֵר אֲנָלִים אֲנָלִים: —

12 Evil deeds are an abomination to kings, for a throne is established through righteousness. 13 Righteous lips win the favor of kings, and [a king] loves one who speaks honestly. 14 The king's wrath is [like] angels of death, but a man who is wise can appease it. 15 From the light of the king's countenance comes life, and [showing you] his favor is like a cloud bringing spring rains. 16 How much better is acquiring wisdom than gold, and acquiring understanding is preferable to silver. 17 The highway of the upright heads away from evil; [and] one who guards his soul will watch his path. 18 Pride precedes destruction, and arrogance before stumbling. 19 It is better to be humble and among the lowly than to divide spoils with the proud. 20 One who deliberates over a matter will find success, and one who trusts in the Lord is praiseworthy. 21 The wise-hearted shall be called a person of understanding; and sweet lips increase learning. 22 Good sense is a fountain of life to one who has it, but rebuking fools is foolish.¹

A. When we previously discussed v. 10, “There is magic on a king's lips, so his mouth cannot make an error in judgment,” we tried to find context for this seemingly inaccurate statement. With v. 12, we encounter another statement that seems inaccurate if read as a universal empirical claim.

- V. 12 → Evil deeds are an abomination to kings, for a throne is established through righteousness.
 - o Metzudot sees this as advice given to kings. For your kingdom to endure, evil must be an abomination. Vilna Gaon sees this as referring to a king's subjects, whose propensity for evil must be reined in for a kingdom to endure.

B. Chapter 16 continues with further commentary relating to kings.

- V. 13 → Righteous lips win the favor of kings, and [a king] loves one who speaks honestly.
- V. 14 → The king's wrath is [like] angels of death, but a man who is wise can appease it.
- V. 15 → From the light of the king's countenance comes life, and [showing you] his favor is like a cloud bringing spring rains.

The pshat (reordered): (1) kings have the power of life and death, (2) a person known for speaking with integrity shall find the favor of and be beloved by kings, (3) don't challenge an angry king and instead try to appease him, and (4) one who is in the good graces of a king will find blessings coming therefrom.

- The Vilna Gaon and Alshich see the references to a king here as referring to Hashem, and therefore constituting relationship advice with our Creator.
- The Shevet MiYehudah, similar to the idea above that v. 12 may be advice to kings, also sees this as advice to kings, *i.e.*, if a king's wrath causes the rebellion of his subjects, the angel of death may find him.

C. Mishlei now returns to some of our common themes, emphasizing the importance of wisdom, understanding and good sense, discussing how one enhances his relationship with these matters, and addressing how pride, arrogance, and foolishness are obstacles thereto.

¹ Mishlei Chapter 16.

- V. 16 → How much better is acquiring wisdom than gold, and acquiring understanding is preferable to silver.
 - o The Vilna Gaon reminds us that silver is the common currency, while gold is stored in treasury. In that regard, we can learn from here that understanding should dictate how we interact with others, while wisdom should shape our inner motivations.
- V. 17 → The highway of the upright heads away from evil; [and] one who guards his soul will watch his path.
 - o Having wisdom and understanding is not enough. One must also act upright and guard one's soul. Recall the admonition directed at Shlomo at I Melachim 11:4 – “And it was at the time of Solomon's old age, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods, and his heart was not whole with the Lord, His God, like the heart of David his father.”
- V. 18 → Pride precedes destruction, and arrogance before stumbling.
 - o The middle² pasuk in all of Mishlei is perhaps also one of the best-known biblical/proverbial adages in English-speaking culture, namely “pride cometh/goeth before the fall”.³
 - o The common understanding appears to be that גָּבוּהַ רִי (pride) is external, while גְּבוּהַ רִי (arrogance) is internal. In that regard, the destruction of pride may come from others whose envy was aroused (Ralbag and Meiri), while arrogance leads to one's own failure (Vilna Gaon). Metzudot sees the consequences of each of pride and arrogance coming from Hashem, and “pride” referring to an elevation of a person's status by Hashem, for the purpose of increasing his punishment when bringing him down (like elevating a plate to smash it).
- V. 19 → It is better to be humble and among the lowly than to divide spoils with the proud.
 - o A follow up to verse 17, as we head away from evil, and guard our soul, we must associate with those unlikely to set our hearts astray.
- V. 20 → One who deliberates over a matter will find success, and one who trusts in the Lord is praiseworthy.
 - o Ibn Ezra sees this as a continuation of the previous verse. For the wise, making a decision without deliberation is a sign of arrogance. Protect yourself by being deliberate and trusting in Hashem and not simply your own mental faculties.
- V. 21 → The wise-hearted shall be called a person of understanding; and sweet lips increase learning.
 - o References to the heart in Mishlei, unlike in modern culture, refer to the source of intelligence. Rabbeinu Yonah sees this combination of wisdom and intelligence as creating worthwhile words to be disseminated. As we mentioned above in discussing verse 16, understanding is the “common currency”, so now the words can be shared with understanding, and if said with sweet lips, learning therefrom will increase.
- V. 22 → Good sense is a fountain of life to one who has it, but rebuking fools is foolish.
 - o When we first discussed מְקוֹר חַיִּים, “fountain of life”⁴, it was in the context of the mouth of the righteous. As learning was discussed at v. 21, vs. 21 & 22 would seem connected.
 - o Here we are revisiting an idea set forth at Mishlei 9:8 — “Do not rebuke a scoffer as he will [just] hate you; [but] rebuke a wise man and he will love you.” Here the lesson perhaps is that it is not our fault, and we should not be disheartened, when fools do not accept wisdom.
 - o Rabbeinu Yonah has an alternative understanding of this pasuk, suggesting that one should use good sense to ignore fools, and that “rebuke from” a fool is foolish.

² Mishlei has 915 pesukim, and Mishlei 16:18 is the 458th pasuk, the middle pasuk.

³ We previously discussed this verse when we compared it to Mishlei 11:2, “When arrogance appears, disgrace follows, but with the humble is wisdom.”

⁴ Mishlei 10:11. A tree of life was also mentioned at 13:14 (“teaching of the wise”) and Mishlei 14:27 (“fear of Hashem”).



AHAVAT ACHIM
קהלת אהבת אחים
THE FAMILY SHUL

SPRING-SUMMER EVENTS

**FRI-SAT
MAY 22-23**

SHAVUOT

SUN, MAY 24

**COMMUNITY
SOFTBALL GAME**
FOLLOWED BY PIZZA

SUN, JUNE 14

BOWLING NIGHT
FOR ADULTS

TUES, JUNE 23

ANNUAL MEETING
+ ICE CREAM SOCIAL

FRI, JULY 3

BBQ SHABBAT DINNER

SUN, JULY 12

SUMMER HIKE
AT RAMAPO VALLEY
COUNTY RESERVATION

For More Information Visit:

www.ahavatachim.org/aa-events/upcoming-events/

ANNUAL MEETING & ICE CREAM SOCIAL

RSVP!

Join us for our Annual General Membership Meeting and Ice Cream Social — an evening of community, connection, important updates, and sweet treats for everyone to enjoy!

Tuesday, June 23 2026

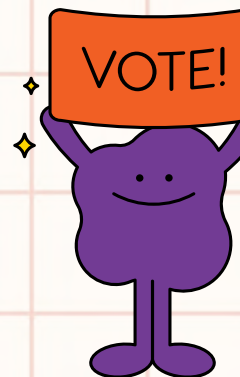
At 8:20 pm

Agenda:

- Mincha/Maariv (8:20pm)
- Ice Cream (8:45pm)
- Year in Review (9:00pm)
- Shul Updates
- 2026-2027 Budget
- Incoming Slate of Officers

Zoom link to be
provided on 6/9!

VOTE!





AHAVAT ACHIM
— קהלת אהבת אחים —
THE FAMILY SHUL

CONGREGATION AHAVAT ACHIM INVITES YOU TO A

SHABBAT FRIDAY BBQ DINNER

Join us for a very special Shabbat,
as we celebrate with a themed
dinner and BBQ halachot shiur.
Celebrate 250 years of American
independence with your Ahavat
Achim family!

07.03.2026 | AFTER MAARIV

Early Bird Pricing:

RESERVATIONS MADE BEFORE 6/11:

ADULTS (12 YEARS OLD +) - \$25

CHILDREN AGES 6 - 11 - \$10

CHILDREN AGES 3 - 5 - \$3

FAMILY MAX - \$70

RESERVATIONS MADE AFTER 6/11:

ADULTS (12 YEARS OLD +) - \$30

CHILDREN AGES 6 - 11 - \$13

CHILDREN AGES 3 - 5 - \$5

FAMILY MAX - \$85

RSVP NOW!



Summer Hike at Ramapo Valley County Reservation

**SUNDAY,
JULY
12**

10:00 AM
Meet at the main
parking lot

Ramapo Valley Rd
(Route 202),
Mahwah, NJ

- Only ~20 minutes away from Fair Lawn!



HIKE OPTIONS:

A. SCARLET OAK POND TRAIL

- STROLLER FRIENDLY!
- PAVED LOOP AROUND THE POND
- PICNIC AREAS FOR RELAXING AND ENJOYING THE VIEWS

B. RIDGE LOOP - VISTA LOOP TRAIL

- ADVANCED OPTION, ~3 MILES
- SCENIC VIEWS WITH A RIVER
- A UNIQUE VIEW POINT WITH NATURAL CACTUS!

**RSVP HERE
BY 7/10**

[HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/SUMMERHIKE26](https://tinyurl.com/summerhike26)





Covenant & Conversation

Jonathan Sacks
THE RABBI SACKS LEGACY

KORACH • קורח

FROM THE TEACHINGS AND WRITINGS OF RABBI LORD JONATHAN SACKS זצ"ל

With thanks to the Schimmel Family for their generous sponsorship of Covenant & Conversation, dedicated in loving memory of Harry (Chaim) Schimmel. "I have loved the Torah of R' Chaim Schimmel ever since I first encountered it. It strives to be not just about truth on the surface but also its connection to a deeper truth beneath. Together with Anna, his remarkable wife of 60 years, they built a life dedicated to love of family, community, and Torah. An extraordinary couple who have moved me beyond measure by the example of their lives." — Rabbi Sacks

This year's series of essays were originally written and recorded by Rabbi Sacks זצ"ל in 5773 (2012–2013). These timeless messages are accompanied by a new [Family Edition](#) created to inspire intergenerational learning on the Parsha.

Power versus Influence

Korach rebellion was an unholy alliance of individuals and groups united by their grievances with Moses' leadership. There was Korach himself, a member of the tribe of Levi, angry (according to Rashi) that he had not been given a more prominent role. There were the Reubenites, Datan and Aviram, who resented the fact that the key leadership positions were taken by Levites rather than members of their own tribe. Reuben had been Jacob's firstborn, so some of his descendants felt that they should have been accorded seniority. Then there were the two hundred and fifty "leaders of the community, chosen from the assembly, men of repute" who felt aggrieved (according to Ibn Ezra) that after the sin of the Golden Calf, leadership had passed from the firstborn to a single tribe, the Levites.

Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose. The Korach story is an all too familiar tale of frustrated ambition and petty jealousy - what the Sages called "an argument not for the sake of heaven."

What is most extraordinary about the episode, however, is Moses' reaction. For the first and only time, he invokes a miracle to prove the authenticity of his mission:

Then Moses said:

"By this you will know that the Lord sent me to do these deeds; it was not my idea. If all these men die as others do, and share the common fate of all humanity, then the Lord has not sent me. But if the Lord creates something entirely new, so that the ground opens its mouth and swallows them and all they have, and they go down alive to Sheol, then you will know that these men have provoked the Lord."

Num. 16:28-30

In effect, Moses uses his power to eliminate the opposition. What a contrast this is to the generosity of spirit he showed just a few chapters earlier, when Joshua came to tell him

that Eldad and Medad were prophesying in the camp, away from Moses and the seventy elders. Joshua regarded this as a potentially dangerous threat to Moses' leadership and said, "Moses, my lord, stop them!" Moses' reply is one of the most majestic in the whole of Tanach:

"Are you jealous for me? Would that all the Lord's people were prophets, that the Lord would put His spirit upon them all!"

Num. 11:29

What was the difference between Eldad and Medad on the one hand, and Korach and his co-conspirators on the other? What is the difference between Moses saying, "Would that all the Lord's people were prophets," and Korach's claim that "All the community is holy, every one of them, and the Lord is in their midst. Why then do you set yourselves above the Lord's people?"¹ Why was the first, but not the second, a legitimate sentiment?

Is Moses simply being inconsistent? Hardly. There never was a religious leader more clear-sighted. There is a distinction here which goes to the very core of the two narratives. The Sages, in one of their most profound methodological observations, said that "the words of the Torah may be poor in one place but rich in another." By this they meant that, if we seek to understand a perplexing passage, we may need to look elsewhere in the Torah for the clue. A similar idea is expressed in the last of Rabbi Ishmael's thirteen rules of biblical interpretation:

"Where there are two passages which contradict each other, the meaning can be determined only when a third passage is found which harmonises them."

In this case, the answer is to be found later in the book of Bamidbar, when Moses asks God to choose the next leader of the Israelites. God tells him to take Joshua and appoint him as his successor:

So the Lord said to Moses, "Take Joshua, son of Nun, a man infused with My spirit, and lay your hand upon him. Have him stand before Elazar the priest and the entire community, and in their sight, give him this charge. Give over to him some of your majesty, so that the entire Israelite community will obey him."

Num. 27:18-20

Moses is commanded to perform two acts over and above presenting Joshua to the priest and people. First he is to "lay his hand" on Joshua. Then he is to give Joshua "some of [his] splendour." What is the significance of these two gestures? How did they differ from one another? Which of them constituted induction into office? The Sages, in Midrash Rabbah, added a commentary which at first sight only deepens the mystery:

"Lay your hand on him" - this is like lighting one light from another. "Give him some of your splendour" - this is like pouring from one vessel to another.

¹ The first grievance that Korach expresses against Moses, Numbers 16:3.

In actual fact it is this statement that will enable us to decode the mystery.

There are two forms or dimensions of leadership. One is power, the other, influence. Often we confuse the two. After all, those who have power often have influence, and those who have influence have a certain kind of power. In fact, however, the two are quite different, even opposites.

We can see this by a simple thought-experiment. Imagine you have total power, and then you decide to share it with nine others. You now have one-tenth of the power with which you began. Imagine, by contrast, that you have a certain measure of influence, and now you share it with nine others. How much do you have left? Not less. In fact, more. Initially there was only one of you; now there are ten. Your influence has spread. Power operates by division, influence by multiplication. With power, the more we share, the less we have. With influence, the more we share, the more we have.

So deep is the difference that the Torah allocates them to two distinct leadership roles: king and prophet. Kings had power. They could levy taxes, conscript people to serve in the army, and decide when and against whom to wage war. They could impose non-judicial punishments to preserve social order. Hobbes famously called kingship a 'Leviathan' and defined it in terms of power. The very nature of the social contract, he argued, was the transfer of power from individuals to a central authority. Without this, there could be no

government, no defence of a country and no safeguard against lawlessness and anarchy.

Prophets, by contrast, had no power at all. They commanded no armies. They levied no taxes. They spoke God's word, but had no means of enforcing it. All they had was influence - but what influence! To this day, Elijah's fight against corruption, Amos' call to social justice, Isaiah's vision of the end of days, are still capable of moving us by the sheer force of their inspiration. Who, today, is swayed by the lives of Ahab or Jehoshaphat or Jehu? When a king or queen dies, their power ends. When a prophet dies, their influence begins. Returning to Moses: here was a man who occupied two leadership roles, not one. On the one hand, though monarchy was not yet in existence, Moses had the power and was the functional equivalent of a king. He led the Israelites out of Egypt, commanded them in battle, appointed leaders, judges and elders, and directed the conduct of the people. He had power.

But Moses was also a prophet, the greatest and most authoritative of all. He was a man of vision. He heard and spoke the word of God. His influence is incalculable. As Jean-Jacques Rousseau wrote, in a manuscript discovered after his death:

... an astonishing and truly unique spectacle is to see an expatriated people, who have had neither place nor land for nearly two thousand years ... a scattered people, dispersed over the world, enslaved, persecuted, scorned by all nations, nonetheless preserving its characteristics,

its laws, its customs, its patriotic love of the early social union, when all ties with it seem broken. The Jews provide us with an astonishing spectacle: the laws of Numa, Lycurgus, Solon are dead; the very much older laws of Moses are still alive. Athens, Sparta, Rome have perished and no longer have children left on earth; Zion, destroyed, has not lost its children.

Rousseau, *Cahiers de brouillons, notes et extraits*, no. 7843 (Neuchâtel).

The mystery of Moses' double investiture of Joshua is now solved. First, he was told to give Joshua his authority as a prophet. The very phrase used by the Torah - *vesamachta et yadecha*, 'lay your hand' on him - is still used today to describe rabbinic ordination, which we call *semichah*, meaning, the 'laying on of hands' by master to disciple. Second, he was commanded to give Joshua the power of kingship, which the Torah calls 'splendour' (perhaps 'majesty' would be a better translation). The nature of this role as head of state and commander of the army is made quite clear in the text. God says to Moses: "Give him some of your splendour so that the whole Israelite community will obey him ... At his command, he and the entire community of the Israelites will go out, and at his command they will come in." This is the language not of influence but of power.

The meaning of the Midrash, too, is now clear and elegantly precise. The transfer of influence ("Lay your hand on him") is "like lighting one light from another." When we take a candle to light another candle, the light of the first is not diminished. Likewise, when we share our

influence with others, we do not have less than before. Instead, the sum total of light is increased. Power, however, is different. It is like "pouring from one vessel to another." The more we pour into the second, the less is left in the first. Power is a zero-sum game. The more we give away, the less we have.

This, then, is the solution to the mystery of why, when Joshua feared that Eldad and Medad (who "prophesied within the camp") were threatening Moses' authority, Moses replied, "Would that all the Lord's people were prophets." Joshua had confused influence with power. Eldad and Medad neither sought nor gained power. Instead, for a while, they were given a share of the prophetic "spirit" that was on Moses. They participated in his influence. That is never a threat to prophetic authority. To the contrary, the more widely it is shared, the more there is.

Power, however, is precisely what Korach and his followers sought - and in the case of power, rivalry is a threat to authority. "There is one leader for a generation," said the Sages, "not two." Or, as they put it elsewhere, "Can two kings share a single crown?" There are many forms of government - monarchy, oligarchy, and democracy - but what they have in common is the concentration of power within a single body, whether person, group or institution (such as a parliament). Without this monopoly of the legitimate use of coercive force, there is no such thing as government. That is why in Jewish law "a king is not allowed to renounce the honour due to him."

Moses' request that Korach and his followers be swallowed up by the ground was neither anger nor fear. It was not motivated by any personal consideration. It was a simple realisation that whereas prophecy can be shared, kingship cannot. If there are two or more competing sources of power within a single domain, there is no leadership. Had Moses not taken decisive action against Korach, he would have fatally compromised the office with which he had been charged.

Rarely do we see more clearly the stark difference between influence and power than in these two episodes: Eldad and Medad on the one hand, Korach and his fellow rebels on the other. The latter represented a conflict that had to be resolved. Either Moses or Korach would emerge the victor; they could not both win. The former did not represent a conflict at all. Knowledge, inspiration, vision - these are things that can be shared without loss. Those who share them with others add to spiritual

wealth of a community without losing any of their own.

To paraphrase Shakespeare, "The influence we have lives after us; the power is oft interred with our bones." Much of Judaism is an extended essay on the supremacy of prophets over kings, right over might, teaching rather than coercion, influence in place of power. For only a small fraction of our history have Jews had power, but at all times they have had an influence over the civilisation of the West. People still contend for power. If only we would realise how narrow its limits are. It is one thing to force people to behave in a certain way; quite another to teach them to see the world differently so that, of their own accord, they act in a new way. The use of power diminishes others; the exercise of influence enlarges them. That is one of Judaism's most humanising truths. Not all of us have power, but we are all capable of being an influence for good.



Around the Shabbat Table

1. Think of the person who has had the most influence on you. Would you consider yourself their student?
2. Can you articulate the ways that Moses has influenced your own life?
3. How would you like to influence the world for good? Do you need to harness power in order to do this?

● These questions come from this week's **Family Edition** to Rabbi Sacks' Covenant & Conversation. For an interactive, multi-generational study, check out the full edition at <https://rabbisacks.org/covenant-conversation/korach/power-versus-influence/>