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# בשבת



אור ישראל

Living Life Deeper

PARSHAS  
PINCHAS

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## THROUGH THICK AND THIN

We find a *Passuk* in this week's *Parshah* that seems troubling. While listing the families of *Klal Yisrael*, the *Passuk* parenthetically mentions that the sons of Korach did not die.<sup>1</sup> On the face of it, this is hard to understand, as we know that all of Korach's family was swallowed up by the earth.<sup>2</sup> How, then, are we to make sense of this *Passuk*?

Rashi<sup>3</sup> quotes the *Gemarah*<sup>4</sup> which states that the children of Korach were swallowed by the earth, but they had a feeling of *Teshuvah* as they were sliding down. Because of that feeling, Hashem created high places for them to stand, so that they should not fall all the way into *Gehennom*.

The Alter of Slobodka (Rav Nosson Tzvi Finkel 1849 -1927) points out how this innocuous *Passuk* is telling us something amazing!<sup>5</sup> The children of Korach were as culpable as their father in their rebellion against Moshe and Hashem. Additionally, the *Teshuvah* that they did doesn't seem to be one that would be effective - all they had was a slight feeling of remorse as they slid to their doom! Nevertheless, for that feeling, Hashem saved them from a terrible end.

The Alter of Slobodka explains that no matter how difficult and dire our situation may appear, Hashem is right there with us, looking for ways to build a relationship with us. Sometimes life may seem bleak, with few prospects on the horizon. There are times when we may feel alone, and no one can help us. The reality is, though, that Hashem is there, sometimes hiding, but He is always there, guiding us through the maze of life.

The next time we are faced with a difficult challenge, we can draw strength from the fact that we know Hashem is holding our hand, cheering us on, and waiting for us to reach out to Him.

1 *Bamidbar* 26:11

2 *Bamidbar* 16:23-33

3 *Bamidbar* 26:11 s.v. בני קרח

4 *Sanhedrin* 110a, see *Medrash Tehillim* 45:3

5 *Ohr HaTzafun* Vol 2. p. 12-13

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sometimes  
hiding, but  
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### Mind the Gap - Taking the Next Step

When going through a challenging time, it can be difficult to feel as if Hashem is there with us. How can we draw strength from the knowledge that Hashem is with us, even in the face of painful situations?

Like any skill, recognizing Hashem in our life takes practice. There are two times when we can practice - when life is going well, and when life is rough.

When life is moving along smoothly, we can take the time to recognize that it's not by chance, that Hashem is pulling the strings, and to be thankful to Hashem. Since we are not facing challenges, it is easier for us to feel Hashem in our lives. Doing this will prepare us for the times when life takes a downward turn.

During those times, we can still find the silver lining. Despite our troubles there is almost always a way to see Hashem - we may have a good support system, a good doctor, a decrease in other pressures in our life, etc.

These things don't happen by chance, and it may be hard to see them when we are consumed by our challenges. However, if we look for Hashem in our life, we will find Him.

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**Tikkun HaMiddos is the key  
to unlocking Shas** - The Alter of  
Slobodka, *Pisgamim U'Maamarim*  
*MiGedolei Baalei HaMussar*, p. 45

# WE ARE NEVER ALONE

To our dear readers:

The following story does not follow our usual formula - we try to make our stories relatable, about the 'every-man,' with a lesson that we can all learn from. The more impossible a story, the more difficult it is to relate to the lesson.

Nevertheless, we include the story below, because it truly is about the 'every-man,' a person who is not a known Tzaddik or Talmid Chacham. It is a true story about a mother, and her relationship with Hashem.

Mrs. Hadassah Shafran\* was going through a very difficult time. Her eight-year-old son was diagnosed with a serious disease, and the doctors were not sure of his prognosis. When little Shmuel was admitted to the hospital, one of the staff members remarked, "Wow, this is the youngest patient we've had here with this disease."

Mrs. Shafran would *Daven* throughout the day, but would reserve her most personal entreaties for the nighttime. This would afford her the ability to truly connect to Hashem, as she didn't have to worry about interruptions, other responsibilities, or feeling inhibited by having people around her.

Tonight's *Tefillah* felt different. After months of shouldering the burden of her son's illness, something inside her broke. Sobs shook her body, as she begged Hashem to make her son whole again. Her usual mixture of personal prayer and *Tehillim* gave way to wordless cries, as there simply were no words to truly express her feelings.

Unexpectedly, she felt someone in the room. Blinking away her tears, she looked up - no one was there. But the feeling of someone present was overwhelming. Mrs. Shafran peered across the room, but the room was empty. Yet, there it was - the feeling that someone, *something*, was present. From the corner of the room came a feeling, a feeling of pure love. The feeling of, "I love you, I'm with you, things are going to get better."

In Mrs. Shafran's words, "I felt this calm serenity, and I just knew I was in good hands. I continued to *Daven*, but this time with the knowledge that things will work out.

"It's been about twenty years since that incident, and the feelings have become subdued. However, everything comes right back whenever I think of this story, and it reminds me that Someone is listening."

\*Name has been changed.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- Hashem's desire for a connection to us is akin to a child's desperate need for its mother's love.<sup>1</sup>
- We have more enjoyment from our possessions when we recognize that everything we've worked for comes from Hashem.<sup>2</sup>
- Hashem manifests his presence with us in all of our exiles, as if He Himself were in exile with us.<sup>3</sup>

1 *Medrash Tanchuma Bechukosai* 3:1

2 *Chidushei HaLev, Bereishis* 21:10

3 *Rabbeinu Bachya, Bereishis* 46:4 s.v. אנכי ארד

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