

פרשת קרח

וי [16,7]. Rashi here explains how Korach, who was from the **גדולי הדור**, could do such a foolish thing as bring the **קטורת** when there was a big chance that he would get killed. He explains that Korach saw with **רוח הקודש** great people descending from him. They would serve as a merit to save him. Rashi, however, does not address this question in regard to the two hundred and fifty men that went along with Korach. Chazal tell us that they were the heads on Sanhedrin, and among them were the Nesi'im. How do we explain how *they* could do such a foolhardy thing when there was so much for them to lose?

My Rebbi, Rav Yitzchok Sorotzkin, Shlita, Rosh Yeshivas Telz, explained, based on the Rambam in **ה"א פ"ו דעות** that the nature of a person is that he is influenced by his friends, acquaintances and his surroundings. Therefore, a person should associate with **צדיקים** and avoid socializing with **רשעים**. If he lives in a land where everyone is wicked, he should move away. In his **ספר דעת חכמה ומוסר**, Rav Yeruchom Levovitz points out that there are two types of **יצר הרע**. Our own evil inclinations are from within while from without are outside surroundings that also play a major role to influence us. The **יצר הרע** from inside, we are able to combat with Torah. When it comes to the **יצר הרע** from the outside, the Rambam is teaching us, that it is so powerful that the only way to combat it, is to avoid it. This is the difference between Korach and his followers. Rashi (16,1) says that **שבט** Reuven were neighbors to Korach. They associated with him and were influenced by him. Regarding **שבט** Reuven there is no question why they went along. This is the nature of a person to be drawn and affected by the people with whom he associates. Korach on the other hand did not have this **יצר הרע**. Rather his **יצר הרע** was internal. Consequently, Rashi explains only the behavior of Korach and how he could have done something so foolish.

Rav Yeruchom adds that today the primary source of destruction of Klal Yisrael is from the **יצר הרע** from the outside. This was said over eighty five years ago; how much more so can this be said about our day and age. If the heads of Sanhedrin in the **דור המדבר** can fall prey to outside influences, certainly are we vulnerable to them. The only way to ensure that we don't become influenced by the outside world, is to follow the words of the Rambam. To live in a Torah environment, and to make sure we and our families associate with Torah-true people.

Have a good Shabbos.

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