



THE SHALOM BAYIT JOURNAL



Parashat Korach

The Wisdom to Build a Home

Understanding the Torah and the Human Experience

Psychology recognizes something many of us experience every day. The people closest to us often become the lens through which we see the world.

They can reinforce our fears, resentment, and negative interpretations, or they can gently help us step back and see situations more clearly. A healthy relationship does not simply offer support. It helps us make better life decisions.

Parashat Korach offers a remarkable illustration of this principle.

When discussing Korach's rebellion, most of our attention naturally focuses on Korach himself. We examine his motivations, his arguments, and the devastating consequences of his actions.

Yet Chazal direct our attention elsewhere. The Gemara teaches:

"Chachmot Nashim Banta Beitah, V'Ivelet B'Yadah Teharsenu."

"The wisdom of women builds her house, and foolishness tears it down with her own hands."

The Gemara applies the first half of the verse to the wife of On ben Pelet and the second half to the wife of Korach.

Neither woman stood at the center of the rebellion, yet Chazal saw their influence as so significant that they became symbols of building and destroying a home.

According to the Gemara, Korach's wife looked at her husband's frustration and strengthened it. She pointed him toward what he lacked. She highlighted perceived injustices and encouraged him to focus on the positions held by Moshe and Aharon. Whether her intentions were good or not, she reinforced his belief that he had been wronged.

The wife of On ben Pelet took a very different approach. She asked her husband a simple question: "What difference does it make to you? If Moshe remains the leader, you remain a student. If Korach becomes the leader, you remain a student." With only a few words, she helped her husband step back from the emotional intensity of the moment and see the situation more clearly.





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Both wives influenced their husbands. The difference was that one strengthened resentment, while the other restored perspective. "The wisdom of women builds her house."

What made On ben Pelet's wife remarkable was not that she won an argument. It was that she understood what would actually help her husband.

Psychology observes that when people become emotionally activated, their thinking often narrows. They become focused on the offense, the disappointment, the insult, or the unfairness. In those moments, they become less able to see the larger picture and more convinced that their current emotional experience is the entire reality.

The people closest to us have tremendous influence during these moments. They can reinforce our most painful interpretations, or they can gently help us regain perspective.

One of the most valuable gifts we can offer the people we love is not simply agreement, but wisdom. Sometimes supporting someone means validating their feelings. At other times, it means lovingly helping them step back and see the situation more clearly.

Many relationships become stuck because both people are trying to determine who is right and who is wrong. The irony is that couples can spend years trying to prove they are right while becoming increasingly disconnected from one another.

Progress often begins when couples stop focusing on judgment and start focusing on understanding. Instead of looking for a verdict, they begin looking for insight. When people feel understood, they are often far more willing to move toward one another and work together toward change.

Rather than escalating the situation, they help one another slow down, regain perspective, and make wiser decisions. They know that loving someone is not always about agreeing with them. Sometimes it is about helping them become their best selves.

The wisdom of On ben Pelet's wife reminds us that building a home is not about winning arguments or proving that we are right. It is about helping the people we love see more clearly. A healthy home is one where husbands and wives gently guide one another back toward wisdom, perspective, and their best selves.

