



Parsha Korah 1
Samuel 11:14-12:22
June 21, 2014 / 23 Sivan 5774

Had the calendar not interrupted the normative haftarah reading we could have felt a connection between Korah and last week's haftarah for Sh'l'ah L'kha. Last week we learned that Joshua, the successor to Moses, modified a divine imperative and allowed Rahav and her descendants, as a result of her willingness to assist in the downfall of Jericho, to live even though it violated a Divine commandment. With the death of Joshua the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham could be understood as being fulfilled. A major period of Biblical history has drawn to a close and from this point until the establishment of the monarchy, Israel will be governed by charismatic leaders who we came to call Judges. This morning's haftarah is an indication that the period of Judgeship is drawing to a close.

Our rabbis compared Samuel to Moses and demonstrate it in the way they selected this haftarah. The haftarah tells us as soon as Saul had been declared King that Samuel announced his retirement. He asked the people if he had acted justly. He asked if anyone can testify that he might have stolen or defrauded. Samuel needed the people to acknowledge that was an honest person.

Similarly, in the aftermath of the rebellion of Dathan and Abiram, Korah's conspirators, Moses announced to God that he has not wronged them or taken anything of from them. Moses also lead by example. He was a just and honest man. The haftarah in a more developed way makes a similar point about the way Samuel conducted himself.

Leaders need to set examples. The venue doesn't matter nor does the title. What does matter is the manner in which we conduct ourselves.

This week's Haftarah commentary is reprinted from one written for The Unraveller on June 12, 2010 by Rabbi Charles Simon, Executive Director of the FJMC and author of "Building A Successful Volunteer Culture: Finding Meaning in Service in the Jewish" Jewish Lights Publishing.