

Dvar Torah for Parshat Zakhor

Based on *Likutey Halakhot, Birkhot HaShachar 5:30-38*

No Doubt

(The reading of Parshat Zakhor is *Deuteronomy 25:17-19*. By reading these verses we fulfill the mitzvah of remembering the deceitful, evil deeds of the Amalekites. On account of those deeds we are commanded to obliterate them.)

In Hebrew, the wisdom of numerology is called *gematriya*. The *gematriya* (numerical value) of the word **AMaLeK**, the name of the nation determined to destroy the Jewish people, is the same as *SaFeK*, doubt.

One way to win a war is firepower. Out slug or outshoot the other guy; have your troops out kill his and victory is yours. A more cunning way is to infiltrate enemy headquarters and disseminate counterfeit orders, concerning objectives, strategy and personnel, which conflict with their genuine ones. Voilà! The enemy will be paralyzed. They will have neither goals nor strategy. At best, they will have a vague desire "to win the war." Some will not even realize that they are at war.

Don't look now, but we've been infiltrated.

There are three doubts. There is doubt concerning *ratzon Hashem* (God's will), namely, what does He want, what does the Torah prescribe in a particular situation? Second is the doubt of self, i.e., what value could I or my mitzvot have? Third is doubt of Hashem's omnipotence.

At Mount Sinai, Moshe Rabbeinu (Moses our teacher), in his extraordinary greatness, was privileged to receive a clear set of viable instructions detailing *ratzon Hashem*. These instructions are known as the Torah. Moshe Rabbeinu (and likewise each of the giant tzaddikim who have followed him) is continually teaching Torah.

As long as we are certain that the instructions that Moshe Rabbeinu transmitted are still in effect, we know that our goal is to serve Hashem by attempting to become more and more aware of Him. If, God forbid, we wonder, "What has become of Moshe?" (see *Exodus 32:1*), predicating the validity of the instructions on Moshe Rabbeinu's presence, we are on the road to making a golden calf.

Rebbe Nachman refers to the mitzvah of tefillin as an example of *ratzon Hashem*. So, Reb Noson writes that a question whether a particular pair of tefillin is kosher is, what is the will of God vis-à-vis these tefillin? New questions arise as new situations arise. Questions about how to relate to the environment are one example. To dispel doubts, new or old, we need to study the works of *talmidei chakhamim* (Torah scholars) who have endeavored to answer them honestly.

"Remember what Amalek did to you...they cut off those lagging in the rear..." (*Deuteronomy 25:17-18*). Too many of us think of ourselves as "lagging in the rear" and have come to doubt our prospects. "I've been such a poor excuse of a Jew for these last 80 years. What difference is the next day or two going to make to my overall record?" "I'm just some housewife in suburbia—how can anything *I* do possibly add to Hashem's glory or benefit the Jewish people?" To eliminate these doubts we need to study works of Torah that restore our souls.

History and current events alike offer countless examples of Hashem's omnipotence. However, there are two major factors that erode our belief in His omnipotence. One is the analysis and chatter of experts and talking-heads that explain all phenomena. As accurate as their insights may be and often are, they always leave out a crucial detail: nature is God's servant. Nature does what it does because God wants it to. This fact is so invisible that it is ignored even when mentioned.

The second "erosion" factor is money. Yes, we believe Hashem sent manna in the desert. On the other hand, do we really believe He puts the money in our bank accounts? Sadly, many of us do not.

Giving *tzedakah* (charity) strengthens our *ratzon*. Simply put, giving away money to charity (for a proper cause, not blindly or foolishly) shows that despite the natural cause-and-effect of "the more I give away, the less I have", we truly believe that Hashem will make it that we will not lose anything at all. Simultaneously, we show that we have no doubt that the One Who put money in our possession in the first place will do so again—and again.

Giving *tzedakah* and strengthening our belief in Hashem's omnipotence also gives us the flexibility to devote more time to our Torah study, further strengthening our will to become constantly aware of Hashem.

agutn Shabbos!
Shabbat Shalom!

Copyright © 2001, Breslov Research Institute

[Home](#)

[Dvar Torah Index](#)

[Zmanei HaShanah Index](#)