

**It's All Good**  
**By Rabbi Pinchos Lipschutz**

Many nations have risen up to battle us, subjugate us, and torment us, yet Amaleik is singled out for eternal derision. Many of those who fought us succeeded in their battles, killing many of us, crushing us, and evicting us from our land. Amaleik, though the first to fight us, did not succeed in his mission and was beaten back by the Bnei Yisroel under the leadership of Moshe and Yehoshua.

Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv explained that the behavior of Amaleik is diametrically opposite that of the Jewish people. The posuk (Devorim 25:18) states regarding Amaleik, "Asher korcha baderech vavezaneiv becha kol hanechesholim acharecha – They came upon you while you were traveling and attacked those who were weak" and tired from traveling.

"They respected strength, denigrated weakness, and supported the rodef, the attacker," said Rav Elyashiv. "The Torah teaches to love the outsider and to support him, to hate the bully and to support the nirdof, the victim.

"This battle is eternal because Am Yisroel is always tired and always on the move in the desert."

Rav Elyashiv likened this to the famous story (Melochim 3) of the two women who went to Shlomo Hamelech quarreling over ownership of a child, each one claiming that she had given birth to it. The Medrash (Shir Hashirim 1) states without explanation that the women involved were sheidim, not human.

The Vilna Gaon explains the Medrash. Chazal teach (Avos 5:10) that there are four types of people: "The one who says, 'What is mine is mine and what is yours is yours,' is a beinoni, and some say that is middas Sedom. The one who says, 'What is mine is yours and what is yours is mine,' is an am ha'aretz. If he says, 'What is mine is yours and what is yours is yours,' he is a chossid. And the one who says, 'What is mine is mine and what is yours is mine,' is a wicked rosha."

Says the Gaon, from here we see that to destroy something when there is no purpose or gain from its destruction is not a human trait, and therefore, since one of the women agreed to cut the baby in half, the story must have occurred with sheidim.

Such is the attribute of Amaleik, battling Am Yisroel just for the sake of fighting them, with no gain in it for themselves. They continuously battle us, but they never win.

In our day, time and again, we see enemies of the Jewish people seeking to destroy us. Although Hashem continues to protect us each time and allow us to win over our enemies, they continue attacking even though they know that they will lose and often die in the process.

Israel recently suffered an awful attack and has been working desperately to defeat a despicable terrorist enemy who threatens us and the world. However, the Amaleiki nations of the world and some like-minded Jews target Israel for derision and seek to prevent it from winning the war, even if that means empowering their own worst terror enemies. They seek to present the terrorists with the gift of a state on Israel's doorstep, as if it were a reward for perpetrating a monstrous attack on the innocent people of Israel.

Although they have nothing to gain from battling and hindering Israel, and only stand to lose, they persist in their campaign to hobble Israel and its leadership.

The sefer Siach Ish quotes a letter from Rav Elyashiv that was apparently written in the 1940s. This is what he writes: "In normal years, we read the parsha of Amaleik on Purim and on the Shabbos that precedes it. The past few years, we read the parsha of 'Vayavo Amaleik' every hour of every day. And even in this, we see the trait of Amaleik in that he comes upon us 'baderech,' when we are on the way to build and strengthen the Jewish people in Eretz Yisroel.

"It is possible that the Sar of Eisov knows that if we are able to realize our goal and arrive at our final destination, we will be on the way to kabbolas haTorah, as we were promised by the novi (Yeshayahu 11:9) that at the End of Days, 'Umolah ha'aretz dei'ah es Hashem.'

"This is the same Amaleik that five years ago spread his hand on the seat of Hashem, destroyed our Botei Mikdosh, and killed gedolei Torah.

"What can we do to combat the Amaleik that threatens us now? We can follow the same advice that Moshe gave to his talmid, when he said at the outset of the fight with Amaleik, 'Bechar Ionu anoshim – Go choose for us strong men to fight him.'

"Although in our days we don't have a general such as Yehoshua, who didn't leave the tent of Moshe, we have to find and choose men who are 'yerei cheit,' who will climb the mountain and hold aloft the hands of Moshe, seeing to it that Hashem's nation turns its gaze upwards, towards Hashem, knowing that their salvation will come from Him.

"The Gemara in Makkos (10) states, "Rabi Yehoshua ben Levi taught: The explanation of the posuk (Tehillim 122:2), 'Omdos hoyu ragleinu bishorayich Yerushalayim,' is as follows: Who caused our legs to remain upright in battle? It was those behind the gates of Yerushalayim who were studying Torah."

"This is compounded when talking about a battle with Amaleik, whose main strength emanates when Klal Yisroel is weakened in Torah, as the posuk (Shemos 17:8) states that Amaleik battled the Jewish people in Refidim. Chazal (Tanchuma, Shemos 25) explain that Refidim hints that "rofu yedeihem min haTorah," the people became weakened in Torah."

When we don't study Torah as we should, Amaleik is given the power to attack us. Therefore, the way we combat Amaleik is by strengthening our study and observance of Torah. In our day,

as well, as we contend with Amaleik and seek to turn him back and rid our people of the threat he presents, the ultimate weapon we have is Torah.

When we seek to explain defeats, victories and tragedies in natural terms, we cause trouble for ourselves and are not able to obtain victory and comfort.

Rav Gedaliah Schorr (Ohr Gedalyahu, Purim 4) says that if we examine the Megillah, we will see that the very same occurrences that brought on bad omens for the Jewish people were turned into omens of geulah, when the people did teshuvah.

The cause of the decree against the Jews was because they joyfully participated in the feast of Achashveirosh. At that feast, the story with Vashti took place and Haman was given his big promotion.

At the root of the sin of participating in Achashveirosh's feast that caused the decree of their destruction was that they were opposed to the position of Mordechai, who would not bend or bow to the king and his men. They believed that all their problems were caused by Mordechai not being subservient to the leader. They felt that if they would ingratiate themselves with the king and lobby him as the laws of nature would dictate, the king would like them and they would be able to work things out.

But the opposite happened. Going to the feast immediately awakened Amaleik and empowered Haman to go after them. It was when they repented and did teshuvah that they realized that they were wrong for going to the feast and Mordechai was correct in his position of not bending to the kingdom. When they then began following Mordechai and his instructions, everything turned around and that same feast that caused them so much trouble now caused good things to happen to them. The feast that caused the demise of Vashti triggered the selection of Esther to be the new queen and the salvation was brought about through her.

This is hinted at in the posuk (Yirmiyohu 30:7) which states, "Eis tzorah hee l'Yaakov umimenah yivosheia," that when Yaakov is in a tzorah, when things aren't going right and tragedy threatens, the deliverance will come from the tzorah itself.

We see from this analysis of the Megillah that the outcome of a precarious situation is dependent on us. If we understand what is happening according to the natural way of cause and effect, then it will end poorly for us. But if we go beyond the superficial cause and effect method of comprehending current events and things that plague us, appreciating that everything that happens is because Hashem arranged it so, then things that appear to be bad turn out to be good, because Hashem arranged His world that way.

In our time, when we see things that are happening and hear things that world and political leaders are saying, it seems as if the world is closing in on us and there is nothing but gloom and doom ahead. However, we have to know that if we do teshuvah and recognize that Hashem is manipulating everything that is happening, then those very same speeches, attacks and

actions that appear so threatening and dangerous can be at the root of our deliverance and ultimate victory. We mustn't get sucked in and frightened by things that we see and read and hear. We have to know that there is a deeper meaning behind everything that transpires.

The same is true in our private lives. When we face challenges, and sometimes they are so crushing that we see no escape and no way to overcome them, we must know that they were placed there by Hashem, and when we turn to Him, those very aggravations will bring about our recovery.

The Rama finishes the halachos of Purim and Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim by quoting the posuk in Mishlei (15:15) which states, "V'lev tov mishteh tomid – A good heart is always celebrating." There are many different interpretations for what the Rama's intention was in citing this posuk. The Mishnah Berurah understands that he is saying that it is a good thing to increase the celebration of the miracles that took place at this time.

Rav Tzadok Hakohein explains (Pri Tzaddik, Rosh Chodesh Adar 1:1) that in the World to Come, we will recognize that everything Hashem did and does is for the good. But a person who is described as a "lev tov," someone who has cleansed his heart of the yeitzer hora that dwells on the left side of the heart, now has one heart, which is filled with good and is dedicated to Hashem, for the left side of his heart also becomes filled with good upon the banishment of the yeitzer hora. Thus, he is always happy, always filled with simcha. This person is able to appreciate that everything Hashem does is for the good and there is no "ra," something that other people will only see in the World to Come.

This lies at the core of the Purim miracle, which was the defeat of Amaleik, who is at the root of the yeitzer hora, as it says in the Zohar. At the time, everyone appreciated that all that Hashem does is for the good, because they had feared what would happen as a result of Haman's decree. They realized that without Haman's decree, it would not have been possible for Esther to ask Achashveirosh to destroy Amaleik and kill the citizens of his nation. The decree caused the Jewish people to overcome their enemies, and thus they saw that "hakol letovah," everything that Hashem does is for the good. The evil decree itself was their salvation.

This is why the Rama quotes the posuk from Mishlei, for someone who lives in this world with a "tov leiv," meaning the understanding that everything Hashem does is for the good, does not become depressed when things don't go the way he thinks they should. Rather, he knows that everything is designed from Above and will turn out in a positive fashion.

We get to that level only by increasing our study of Torah, for only with Torah and teshuvah can we defeat Amaleik. We cannot beat him with conventional arms and battle plans. Studying Torah and performing its mitzvos properly and with diligence purifies our hearts and souls and brings us closer to Hashem. Look at the people who do nothing but learn Torah and you see pure souls and good hearts. Each one is a lev tov who is one with his Creator and always b'simcha.

When you encounter someone like that, with the sublime smile on his face and satisfaction in his heart, know that it is in his zechus that the world exists, that we exist, and that it will be in his zechus that Amaleik will be defeated.

Know one more thing: You can also be like him. There is nothing preventing anyone reading this column from becoming a leiv tov, who only sees good and who is one with Hashem. That is the lesson of Purim. Look around and see Hashem everywhere. See the good. See the good people and become one yourself so that you will be good and happy.

May we merit vanquishing all of our enemies and all who want to do us harm, and beating Amaleik very soon.

Ah freilichen Purim.