

Dvar Torah for Parshat Zakhor

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Based on *Sichot HaRan* (Rabbi Nachman's Wisdom) ##25–26

“Remember that which Amalek did to you...cutting down the weak tailing behind...obliterate the memory of Amalek...Do not forget” (Deuteronomy 25:17–19).

Usually we think of remembering and forgetting as part of the mental capacity we have to learn (and with good reason [Avot 5:14]), as something that happens to us, and/or something that we need to apply to practical concerns, like picking up the dry-cleaning or filing income tax returns. What could remembering and forgetting have to do with serving God, with making us better Jews? What should we remember? What should we forget? And since we're commanded to not take revenge or bear a grudge (Leviticus 19:18), what is it about Amalek that makes us treat them in the totally opposite way?

Thoughts, Rebbe Nachman says, are one of God's wonders. Thoughts are stacked in the mind. When reminded of something, links and symbols bundled in the mind are stimulated and—voila! you just “pull it out” from the appropriate bundle. Where was it till now? That's the wonder! In a lesson which deals with memory (*Likutey Moharan* I, Lesson #54), the Rebbe begins: Remember the future! Remember first thing in the morning—when you wake up—there is a world to come!

What happens when you pull something out of a pile? Everything gets re-arranged. So when we go to sleep we have to somehow arrange our minds so that World-to-Come consciousness is there to greet us when we open our eyes. (Hint: This probably won't happen from watching TV or YouTube!)

When you awake realizing that there is a world that's coming, that this world is only preparatory, that there is *tikkun-olam* and *tikkun-you* that needs to be made here and now, many things become forgettable, worthy of neither your time nor attention. Tzitzit, for example, remind us that there are (other) mitzvahs for us to do and to avoid even the attractive distractions—fuggedaboutit! Other things move to the forefront of conscious focus. Tefillin, as well, remind us to constantly expand our Torah wisdom and consciousness. A mind enthusiastically engaged in Torah is automatically disconnected from the nonsensical and heretical. It is a mind that is remembering there is a World to Come.

Anyone who on a regular basis, maliciously and actively opposes your attempts at *tikkun* is behaving like a mortal enemy.* Amalek's attacks on us in the desert are a sign and a symptom of their hatred towards us and, by extension, *tikkun-olam*. This cannot be forgotten or overlooked. This must be eradicated.

Until such time as the external Amalek can be removed, we have to remove the vestiges of Amalek that (may) have taken up residence within ourselves. A small *tikkun-you* is a big *tikkun-olam*.

agutn Shabbos!

Shabbat Shalom!

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A merry Purim to you and yours. If you're drinking, ***DON'T DRIVE!***

*It must be stated that opposition from well-meaning people (e.g., family members or friends), is *not* included. Such people are perhaps misguided, but they are not malicious.