

## Remember what Amalek did to you... you shall wipe out the memory of Amalek from beneath the heaven. (25: 17,19)

The *parshah* begins with a war against our enemies and concludes with the war we are to wage constantly against our archenemy: Amalek. *Horav Chaim Shmuelevitz, zl*, asserts that Amalek is not merely one solitary nation. Amalek is a concept, symbolizing any group of people bent on destroying the Jew's relationship with Hashem. They employ every weapon, every idea, that puts questions in the mind of the Jew, to cool off his passion to serve Hashem, to ever so slightly convince him to water down his obedience to the Almighty. Amalek convinces us (or forces us) to believe that we can have a better way, an easier way, a healthier way to live, rather than adherence to Torah and *mitzvos*.

How does one successfully battle and triumph over the wiles of Amalek? The power of *emunah* and *bitachon*, faith and trust in the Almighty, will fortify and give us the strength, resolve and stamina to overcome the onslaught of Amalek's heresy. One who believes in Hashem is acutely aware that, ultimately, all is not in his own hands. One follows every regimen endorsed by the healthcare professionals, but, at the end of the day, he ignores the only One Who can help him – Hashem.

Trust requires an awareness that Hashem cares deeply about each and every one of us. If we would take the time to think about this, our lives would be different, and our anxiety would decrease. The problem is that when we are under severe pressure, we do not think of Hashem. We just want relief.

Hashem sends us down here to achieve a mission successfully, and then we return to our Source. Hashem supervises every aspect of our mission, and He will often subtly send us a message when we veer off the prescribed path towards success. When things do not go exactly as we had planned or hoped, we turn to Hashem in prayer. The prayer that emerges from our mouths should be an indication of our commitment to, and belief in, Hashem. A beautiful and inspirational story demonstrates the feelings and intentions that should course through our minds when we turn to Hashem in prayer.

A woman came to a *Chassidic Rebbe* known for the efficacy of his blessings with a compelling request: Her only son had been diagnosed with leukemia. The doctors had given him a grim prognosis. Unless a miracle were to occur, he would succumb to the illness in a few months. The mother trembled with fear as she pleaded with the holy *Rebbe* to intercede in her behalf, so that the decree would be annulled. Tears rolled down her cheeks as she begged the *Rebbe* for a blessing. The *Rebbe* looked at the woman and asked, "If you knew that it was Hashem's will that your son succumb to this disease, would you be willing to let go, to let your son die? Could you give up your son if you would know that Hashem wants him?"

The distraught mother just sat there and looked at the *Rebbe*, while a multitude of thoughts and emotions went through her mind. Finally, she replied, “*Rebbe*, if I knew for certain that it was Hashem’s Divine will that my son die, I would be willing to give him up!”

The *Rebbe* listened to her, nodded his head, and said, “Now we can pray for your son.” He then offered a prayer on behalf of the boy, submitting him completely to the wisdom and mercy of Hashem. Three days later, the boy was released from the hospital – with a new lease on life. He is now a grown man.

Faith and trust go beyond ordinary belief. They call upon us to develop our relationship with Hashem as the silent (managing) partner in our lives. The following story is a classic example of this idea. *Horav Leib Gloiberman, zl*, was a saintly *Yerushalmi*. He merited to be among the close students of *Horav Yisrael, zl, m’Stolin*. During his twilight years, he came down with a serious infection in his leg. This was before CT and MRI scans. Thus, doctors employed their expertise, based upon experience, to render medical decisions. They determined that unless *Rav Leib*’s leg were to be amputated, he would die as the result of the infection spreading to the rest of his body.

The surgery was scheduled. During the procedure following the actual amputation, one of the surgeons came out to talk to the family. Apparently, after thoroughly examining the amputated leg, it was determined that the surgery had not been necessary. Understandably, what had happened could not be reversed. *Rav Leib* had lost his leg.

When *Rav Leib* woke up from the anesthesia, a member of his family was with him to check on his recuperation from surgery. He did not think before he spoke, and he blurted out that it had all been a mistake; the doctors’ diagnosis was erroneous. He never should have lost his leg. When *Rav Leib* heard these words, he declared, “These ears (pointing to his ears) heard from my venerable *Rebbe*, *Volt ich, zolt ich*, ‘If I would have done this, or if that would not have happened to me (the results would have been different) is an *apikores*, heresy!’” By asserting that things could have ended differently, he intimates that Heaven had no hand in his achievement – negative or positive. “In their medicine manuals,” he added, “they could write that a leg that has such an infection does not require amputation. According to the Heavenly diagnosis, however, my leg obviously required amputation; proof positive is that it was amputated (by mistake). This is what Hashem wanted. The subject is closed.”

This story provides us with a clear perspective of the meaning of *emunah* in Hashem. The believer believes that whatever happens is orchestrated by Heaven for a reason beyond his ken. It is with ironclad faith that we are able to triumph over the minions of *Eisav*, *Amalek* – regardless of the name to which they presently answer.