

## For a hand is raised on the Throne of Hashem an eternal battle of G-d with Amalek from generation to generation. (17:16)

The last *pasuk* in this *parshah* underscores the eternal battle between the forces of good and the forces of evil. Hashem will not rest until Amalek is eradicated along with its physical and spiritual successors. Wherein lay the evil that Amalek wrought against us? Indeed, in the end of *Parashas Ki Seitzei* (*Devarim* 25:18), the Torah exhorts us to remember what Amalek did to us. The immediate question that glares at us upon reading this *pasuk* is: What did Amalek really do to us? He attacked us and was wiped out by Yehoshua and the Jewish army. For all intents and purposes, they were doing the fighting, but win or lose, defeat or victory is all in the hands of Hashem. The Torah answers this question: *Asher karcha ba'derech*, "That he happened upon you on the way." Among the various explanations of the word *karcha* is its relation to *kar*, cold. Amalek cooled our passion and excitement to serve Hashem. While Amalek's attack was an unprovoked act of cruelty against a fledgling people who had just been released from servitude, some also advance the notion that this attack had a negative spiritual and psychological impact on the nascent nation. The act of aggression shattered their sense of security, instilling within them fear, which led to a loss of fervor in their relationship with Hashem.

This is what we must remember. Memory is personal – it happened to us. Indeed, Amalek should be viewed as a metaphor for any force that attempts to undermine Hashem, that seeks to weaken our commitment to the values, faith and service to the Almighty. *Zachar* accentuates the importance of remaining vigilant against all forms of complacency and external influences that would distance us from Hashem. It is for this reason that blotting out the memory of Amalek has become a symbol to the Jewish people. We may never let our guard down because Amalek lurks in the shadows, seeking any which way to destroy us by creating a barrier between us and Hashem.

Having said this, and establishing an understanding of the evil represented by Amalek, we return to our opening *pasuk*. *Rashi* comments concerning the usage of incomplete words in this *pasuk*. Instead of the four-letter Name of Hashem, *Yud, Kay, Vov, Kay*, the Torah writes *Kah* – *yud, kay* – and, instead of *Kisei, kuf, samach, alef*, it writes *k'eis* – *kuf, samach*. This teaches that neither Hashem's Name nor His Throne is complete as long as the evil of Amalek is in force.

When one serves Hashem dispassionately, it implies a lack of emotion and religious fervor. While following religious practices by rote may fulfill certain obligations, it does not engage the heart and soul in the service. This produces an incomplete, flawed observance, because, while the individual succeeds in performing the service, he does not serve the goal of the service, which is bringing oneself closer to Hashem. Relationships are founded in love, devotion, active passion and fervor toward seeing this relationship mushroom into something greater. Regardless of the power and distinction associated with an earthly monarch, if his subjects serve him with indifference, with a lack of enthusiasm and vibrancy, then his monarchy is lacking, his reign incomplete. Hashem

knows that the evil wrought by Amalek, if allowed to exist, will create a fissure between *Klal Yisrael* towards Him. Their service will be similar to a body without a soul – imperfect. This is what is meant by Hashem's Name and Throne being fragmented. A world filled with evil, represented by Amalek, is not yet a perfected world. Hashem will not bestow His complete monarchy on a world in which injustice and depravity reign. His full name and complete Throne belong in a world in which rectitude and virtue prevail, and evil in all its form has dissipated. Then the entire world will be able to acknowledge Hashem with His complete Name.