

Evil Must Be Destroyed

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This Shabbat, in addition to the regular Torah portion, *Parshat Zachor* (Remember!) is read. These verses exhort us to “Remember what Amalek did to you on the way when you left Egypt.” It is a Biblical *Mitzvah* for each individual to go to *Shul* and listen to this reading. The questions abound: Who is Amalek and why is it important to remember his past actions? Moreover, is this essentially a history lesson, or is it relevant to our own lives and times?

Amalek was an ancient people who, for seemingly no discernible reason, attacked the fledgling Jewish nation soon after the liberation from Egypt. The Torah provides no context to this battle. We are not told what motivated this gratuitous assault.

However, Hashem told Moshe that Amalek must be utterly destroyed. The first Jewish King, Saul, was tasked with this mission. He was generally successful, but because he failed to fulfill all its objectives, he lost his kingship.

The ancient nation of Amalek no longer exists. Nevertheless, we are commanded to recount its actions every year. Even more strangely, Hashem proclaims that He is at war with Amalek, in every generation. He also Promises to utterly Obliterate the “remembrance” of that wicked People. However, the question arises, if the nation of Amalek no longer exists, why must we remember its historical maliciousness, and how can we conduct an ongoing battle with it?

Our Rabbis have explained, that Amalek is not just a historical phenomenon. Rather, it is an ideology of arrogance and hatred that is directed especially (but not exclusively) at the Jews, because of their unique relationship with Hashem.

The original Amalek, journeyed into the wilderness to eradicate the Jews precisely *because* they had assumed the mission of proclaiming G-d’s kingship over the world. Amalek’s hatred of the Jews is an extension of its animosity toward Hashem. Amalek asserts the deification of man, and seeks to destroy the people whose very essence is to emulate their father Abraham, who taught the world about G-d’s absolute sovereignty.

We can now understand the relevance of *Parshat Zachor* to our times. Throughout history, there have been many manifestations of the Amalekite phenomenon. It always aimed for the destruction of the Jews, through pogroms, inquisitions, and the Holocaust. Rabbi Soloveitchik famously said, that the Nazis assumed the status of Amalek.

We are obligated to remember Amalekites because they still abound, and it is our obligation to teach the world to confront evil and destroy it.

The world today is paralyzed by an attitude of moral relativism and cannot recognize evil for what it is. This faulty morality has deadly implications for Jews and for Israel. The conflict between the Jewish

state and its Arab enemies is not an ordinary political dispute that lends itself to reasonable compromise. Every concession that Israel has made has led to greater malice and aggression.

The Arabs' paranoid hatred of Jews is rooted in their religious doctrines and is so deeply indoctrinated that it is beyond repair. A very wise person said, "You cannot reason people out of a position that they have not been reasoned into." This perfectly captures the situation that Israel is up against. Israel must resist the pressure to accept delusionary diplomatic "solutions" that endanger her security and existence.

Let us remember that G-d's Name and Throne will not be firmly established in His world as long as those who deny Him and affirm the doctrine that "might makes right", are permitted to thrive. The lesson of *Parshat Zachor* is that evil must be destroyed.

Shabbat Shalom.