



Family TORAH JOURNAL



PARSHA PERSPECTIVES RABBI YERUCHAM LIST, KOLLEL ADJUNCT

In the Jews' victory in the war with Amalek, we find an interesting critical factor. Moshe asked Yehoshua to lead the battle, while he would be at the top of Har Sinai davening. The verse continues: *And it was when Moshe raised his hands Yisroel was stronger, and when he put down his hand, Amalek was stronger.*

The Mishna in Rosh Hashana explains the meaning of this phenomenon: *Do the hands of Moshe make war or break war? Rather, this is to tell you that all the time that Yisroel was looking upwards and subjugating their hearts to their Father in heaven, they would be winning, and if not, they would fall.* The Mishna is indicating to us that victory over our arch-enemy is totally dependent upon our awareness of and subjugation to Hashem. With Moshe's hands spread out to the heavens reminding us in Whom we should be placing our trust, we would be victorious. If not, ...

Furthermore, the fact that Amalek attacked at all seems to be indicative of a fall in the attachment between Hashem and His people. Immediately before the attack, Yisroel had another crisis of Emuna precipitated by a lack of water. The verse states: *He called the place Massa Umeriva because of the quarrel of the Bnai Yisroel, and because of their test of Hashem saying "Is Hashem among us or not?"*

The next words in the Torah are, "And Amalek came and waged war with Yisroel in Rephidim." Asking this kind of question is tantamount to a written invitation for Amalek to come and attack us. The numerical value of Amalek is the same as the value of *safek*, doubt. The spiritual force of Amalek causes any doubts about the presence of Hashem among us. If we allow those doubts to get the upper hand, then the physical manifestation of Amalek is not far behind, coming to finish us off.

It is instructive that the place where all of this occurred is called Rephidim. Chazal see this name as an abbreviation for *Rafu Yodayim Min Hatorah*, or "Their hands became weak in the Torah," which is a primary maintainer of Hashem's presence among us. If we wish to be protected against our arch-enemy, as well as other enemies, the best course of action is to remain strong in Torah, *Tefilah*, prayer, and *Gemilus Chassadim*, acts of kindness, and all activities that allow us to increase our awareness of the presence of G-d in our midst.



AMUD-A-WEEK SCHEDULE TAANIS 30A

Short & Sweet - R' Seth Trevino

Siyum & Shabbos of Chizuk coming up! See back page



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Short & Sweet

RABBI YITZCHOK SHIMON HESS



After Klal Yisroel experienced the tremendous miracle of the splitting of the sea and the drowning of the Egyptians, they expressed their gratitude to Hashem by singing the song of *Az Yashir*. The women, led by Moshe's sister Miriam, also joined in the singing of the Shira, as the Pasuk says, "[A]nd Miriam the Prophetess took the tambourine in her hand, and all the women went out after her with their tambourines and with dancing, and Miriam answered them in this song..." However, the wording of the Pasuk is intriguing, as it says **וּתַעַן לָהֶם מִרְיָם**, "and Miriam answered them". Why does it say that she "answered" the song, and not simply state that she said it as well? Moreover, the word **"להם"** is masculine. The Torah should have used the word **"להן"** which is feminine, since she was singing the song to the women.

Rav Chaim Soloveitchik (d. 1918) answers that in order for a *Davar Sh'Bikdusha* to be said there must be at least 10 men present. Women cannot be counted to complete the Minyan, however, if there is a minyan of men present, the women recite the *Davar SheBikdusha* along with them. The song of *Az Yashir* recited by Bnei Yisroel at the splitting of the sea had the status of a *Davar Shebikdusha* and required a minyan of men to recite it together. The women were only able to take part in the song by joining the minyan and reciting it together with them. That is why the Pasuk says **"וּתַעַן לָהֶם מִרְיָם"** – "and Miriam answered to them," meaning Miriam and the women recited the song by joining the men and answering the song along with them. This is also why it uses the masculine **"להם,"** as the intention is that the women "answered" the men.

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What Would You Say?



RABBI ELIYAHU CHAIM GOLDSTONE

Recap: A boy fainted during a bar mitzvah. Despite his uncle claiming he'd be fine with some fresh air, Sam called an ambulance. Paramedics took him to the hospital, even though he was responsive by the time they arrived. Is Sam liable to pay the \$2000 hospital bill?

Answer: The intent of this article is not to discuss whether fainting is halachically considered a life-threatening situation. Assuming it is not, we will discuss the civil obligation of repayment.

The Gemara in Baba Kama (55b) lists *Grama*, or indirect damages, and says that although there is no enforceable liability, one has a moral obligation to repay. Included in the list is a *Moser*, or someone who reports on his friend's assets to an individual who will improperly repossess them. Our case should not be worse than this, i.e. he did not charge the boy's family directly, he merely caused them to be levied a charge through a third party. As such, it would appear that the liability for the hospital bills is not civilly enforceable. Regarding a moral obligation, the Mieri (ad loc) writes that if there was no intent for damage, there is no moral obligation. The Chazon Ish (B.K. 5:4) appears to concur with this ruling. Clearly, Sam had the boy's best interests at heart and would not be obligated to repay.

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Kasha Korner

RABBI CHEZKY FREUND



In this week's parsha, where do we see a small way that the Egyptians were similar to the Bnei Yisroel at Har Sinai?

LAST WEEK'S KASHA:

Q. *One of the three things that Beni Yisroel didn't change while in Mitzrayim was their manner of dress. If so, why were they told to "borrow" the clothes of the Egyptians on their way out?*

A: There are a number of answers given to this question.

1. The Chasam Sofer suggests that since the Bnei Yisroel would wear the clothes as a remembrance of the miracle of leaving Egypt, it would be permitted.
2. In another place the Chasam Sofer writes that the distinction of Jewish clothing in Egypt was the length, not the style (Jewish clothing was cut longer). Therefore, he suggests that a careful reading of the verse would indicate that the clothes of an adult Egyptian were used for the Jewish children.
3. Other sources suggest that once the Jewish People were no longer dwelling amongst the Egyptians there would be no issue with wearing such clothing.
4. The Imrei Pinchas suggests that before the Bnei Yisroel left Egypt some of the Egyptians actually started to dress in Jewish-style clothing and the Bnei Yisroel only took these clothes.

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Short Story

The Tears of a Fellow Jew

A rich businessman came to the Chasam Sofer, crying that while he was once one of the most successful traders in the city, he had made a few bad deals that wiped him out financially. He requested advice and a bracha from the tzaddik. The Chasam Sofer said that he heard about his terrible situation, but he also heard that he has a brother who lived in poverty and that he doesn't help his brother. "Please forgive me," said the man, "but right now I am not in any position to help. If Hashem helps me get back on my feet, I promise I will help my brother."

The Chasam Sofer replied, "Your way of thinking is incorrect. Hashem told Moshe that "He also heard the groaning of Bnei Yisroel in Egypt", implying that someone else besides Him heard the cries. Who else could it be? It must be that even though each Jew was going through his own terrible pain, he managed to feel the pain of his fellow Jew, and tried to lessen it in any way. It was because of that merit that Hashem said that He, too, will listen to their tears, and redeem them.

"Even though you are in a difficult situation," said the Chasam Sofer, "go help your brother in any way you can. In this merit you will be rescued from your troubles."



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