1st Seder Weekly Divrei Torah
A BAIS MEDRASH PROGRAM FOR MEN

PARSHAS ZACHOR – *TOV* AND *RA*

Rabbi Shlomo Caplan

"I am Hashem and there is no other, Who forms light and creates darkness, Who makes peace and creates evil" (Yeshaya 45:7).

Just as Hashem created light and darkness so too Hashem created evil. Only due to the creation of evil would man have the opportunity to choose between that which is intrinsically good and that which is evil. And not only did He create a force of evil, He also embodied it in a physical form: The primordial Nachash. After the sin of Adam and Chava eating from the Eitz Hadaas, the Nachash was manifest as the metaphysical Satan and went undercover – into the human psyche. Nevertheless, this evil sought a physical expression.

After Avraham and Yitzchak established a firm foundation for the forces of good, the Satan emerged in the physical form of Eisav. Eisav was evil even while still a fetus in his mother's womb. As Rashi states, Eisav sought to break out every time that his mother passed a site of avodah zara. This physical expression of evil became even stronger when Eisav begat Elifaz who begat Amalek. From then on Amalek became the ultimate personification of *Ra* – evil.

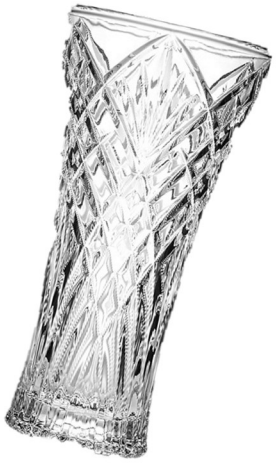
Amalek as a nation waited until Bnei Yisrael emerged from the bondage of Mitzrayim enroute to Kabbalas Hatorah. Then, true to their mission, they pounced upon Bnei Yisrael in order to prevent the Torah from being brought down into this world, since Torah is the antidote to *Ra*. Henceforth the persistent war between *Tov* and *Ra* on an international scale became the battle between Bnei Yisrael and Amalek. Thus, the Torah commands us, "You shall eradicate the memory of Amalek from under the heaven; you shall not forget" (Devarim 25:19).

When Shaul Hamelech was commanded to wage war against Amalek and destroy them, he dropped the ball by allowing Agag, King of Amalek, to survive. Many years later his great grandson Haman arose with a plan to kill every single Jew: men, women and children. Haman Ha'amaleki was the embodiment of the primordial *Ra*, and his sole mission was to eliminate all *Tov* as manifest in Am Yisrael. Fast forward 2500 years, and once again Amalek rears its ugly head in the form of Adolf Hitler *yemach shemo*, who was fiendishly determined to eliminate every Jew and everything Jewish. In classic Amalek fashion he declared: "The Jews have inflicted two wounds on mankind: circumcision on its body and conscience on its soul. The war for domination of the world is waged only between the two of us… the Germans and the Jews. Everything else is deception." (See Mishulchan Shlomo Vol. 1 pg. 263 as quoted from Sparks of Glory.)

The purpose of Yemos Hamashiach is to bring this primordial battle to a close. Then the entire world will be filled with the knowledge of Hashem as the water fills the seas, and all Ra will cease to exist. *Bimheira beyameinu, Amein*.

HALACHA Q&A FROM RABBI YISROEL UNGAR

Please contact R' Ungar (Ymungar@gmail.com) with questions or comments



QUESTION: This year we are buying glass vases and filling them with all sorts of goodies for משלוח מנות. Are we obligated to טובל the vases before filling them? Are we allowed to טובל them?

ANSWER: You do not have to טובל them. In fact, toiveling them will not even help, and the recipient would have to טובל it again. Normally, before using a metal or glass כלי for food, טבילה is necessary. However, that is only true when the כלי is halachically a כלי סעודה, meaning it is used for eating or cooking. When a כלי is being used as merchandise or as a present it is not yet considered a כלי סעודה and does not need טבילה. A store owner who sells all types of כלים may not do his customers a favor by toiveling them before the customers buy them. Once a customer pays, even if it was with a credit card over the phone, the store owner may then טובל it for them. If one insists on toiveling the vase before giving it as משלוח מנות, then one can be מזכה the vase to the recipient through a third party, by asking them to lift it up with intention to be קונה it for them. Even if you have many vases to give out, the third party can lift them all and be קונה for all of your planned recipients.

SOMETHING TO PONDER: If you bake a cake in a pan and then give the cake in the pan to your friend does the pan need טבילה? Here you actually baked in it and didn't just store food in it.

עי' אשרי האיש מועדים פרק מ"ז סעי' ט' ועי' שיעורי הלכה מר' פעלדער ה' טבילת כלים פרק ז' סעי' ח'. כלי סחורה אין חיוב לטובלה עי' יו"ד סימן ק"כ בט"ז ס"ק י' ועי' ספר טבילת כלים פרק ח' הערה ט' שכ' שה"ה בכלי מתנה שדינו כמו כלי סחורה.

THE THIEF AND THE TODDLER

Questions for discussion at your Shabbos table by Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

We recently learned about the Ten Commandments, where it says, “Lo signov”— “You shall not steal.” Our sages explain that this particular “lo signov” refers to kidnapping, which is a capital offense and carries the death penalty. This brings us to the following story.

Chaim was a wealthy man. One day in Eretz Yisroel, a tzedakah collector came to his door holding his young child on his shoulders. Chaim asked the collector if he would like something to drink, and the man agreed.

Chaim went to get him a drink. When he returned, he could not believe his eyes: the collector had taken an extremely expensive diamond bracelet that was lying on the table and put it into his pocket.

Chaim immediately said, “Please return the bracelet right away.” The man replied, “What are you talking about? I don’t know what you mean.”

Realizing that he wasn’t getting anywhere, Chaim acted on instinct. He grabbed the man’s toddler from his shoulders and said, “I am not giving you back your child until you return the bracelet that I saw you take.”

Seeing that he had no choice, the collector conceded. He reached into his pocket and took out the bracelet he had stolen. Chaim then returned the child, and the man left.

Later, Chaim began to question his actions. He remembered that there is a prohibition against kidnapping and wondered whether he had done the right thing. By taking and holding the child in order to retrieve the bracelet, had he violated the prohibition of kidnapping? Even though his goal was to recover his stolen property, was he permitted to act in that way?

He brought this question to Rav Zilberstein. What do you think? See Chashukei Chemed Bava Kama page 383.

Regarding last week’s question about the shopping cart, Rav Zilberstein (Chashukei Chemed, Nedarim p. 336) answers as follows: Whenever a sale is completed, there are two parties involved: the seller and the buyer. When a buyer picks up an item in order to purchase it, the halacha is that the buyer can still back out. However, at that point, the seller must be committed to the sale and can no longer back out. In our case, when the messenger picked up all the items and filled the cart, he was picking them up on behalf of the sender, his friend. At that point, even though the buyer does not yet own the items, the seller is already committed to selling them to the sender. Therefore, all the items that were picked up were acquired on behalf of the sender, and the messenger may not use them for himself, because the seller was committed to the sender. Rav Zilberstein writes that there is a consideration that the messenger and the sender might need to split the shopping cart. However, he concludes with “tzaruch iyun” (the matter requires further analysis). Certainly, the messenger cannot keep the entire cart for himself. It most likely all belongs to the sender, though there is a possibility that they would need to split it.

YOU WON’T BE ABLE TO FUNDRAISE

Rav Shimon Katz, Rosh Yeshivas Keser David in Telz-Stone, told an amazing story of Rav Shlomo Brevda's sensitivity to other people's plights.

Over the years, Rav Katz had been a talmid of Rav Brevda, and had asked his advice on many issues. When Rav Katz's father fell ill, he consulted Rav Brevda on many issues of how best to care for him. One day, Rav Brevda brought him an envelope containing a large amount of money, as a donation for the yeshivah. Rav Katz was surprised, since he had not discussed the yeshivah's finances with Rav Brevda, nor asked for his help. Rav Brevda then explained that he understood that with Rav Katz's responsibilities in caring for his ailing father, he would not be able to make his usual fundraising trip to America. Rav Brevda did not wait to be asked for help. When he saw a need, he stepped forward.

From Rav Shlomo Leib Brevda, Published By Feldheim. Reprinted With Permission from Table Talk.

The Brisker Rav's Riddle (source: Emailim BaTorah)

In the תורה, we find that there were only two items placed in the חצר המשכן, the מזבח and the כיור. There was a third item in the חצר which is not mentioned anywhere. What was it?

It says in this week's Parsha, שמות כ"ט : ד: ***את אהרן ואת בניו תקריב אל פתח אהל מועד *ורחצת אתם במים***
***"זו טבילת כל הגוף" - רש"י**

The Brisker Rav (zt"l) said, being they had to טובל at the פתח אהל מועד, there must have been a מקוה close to the פתח אהל מועד (in the חצר)

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Good Shabbos!