



אמרי בנימן

דברי תורה, מחשבה וסיפורים מאוצרו של
הגאון רב בנימן קמנצקי זצ"ל

*A Dvar Torah from the writings of Rav Binyamin Kamenetzky zt"l,
transcribed by his grandson, Rabbi Shmuel Kamenetzky*

5779 - Parshas Vayikra-Zachor - Remember!

Zachor. Remember. It is a word synonymous with many tragic events in our history. In the Shabbos preceding the holiday of Purim, we remember. **We perform the Biblical commandment to remembering to eradicate the name of Amalek**, by reading a short three pesukim after the regular Torah reading.

Megillas Esther too, mentions remembrance. In Chapter 9, verse 28, the Megilla reads: "And these days shall be remembered and celebrated throughout every generation... and their memory shall not cease from their children." Understandably, the Torah deems it extremely important to remember what Amalek has done to us, in order that eradicate the nation of Amalek. But in the short passage regarding remembering Amalek, the Torah concludes, **"Erase the name of Amalek... do not forget."** Is there perhaps a deeper meaning to the words, "Do not forget" and the commandment to "Remember"?

I recently heard the following story from a friend of mine.

A number of years ago, there was a tragedy in the community, when a young family lost a child to AIDS. A gentile babysitter was caring for the child, when she noticed her unresponsive. She immediately called the child's mother and first responders, but unfortunately, they arrived too late to save the child.

Many community member came to visit the family during the week of shiva that followed. My friend came as well, and arrived together with my grandfather, Rav Binyamin Kamenetzky zt"l. He watched as Rav Kamenetzky spent some time with the grieving family, comforting them.

When it was time for him to leave, however, he did not head for the door. He turned instead to a side room, where the loyal and caring babysitter sat alone, still in shock from the trauma she had just experienced. Rav Binyamin, with his inimitable compassion for every person, sat with her for a few minutes. He comforted her and reiterated that this was a divine decree, and she was not at fault for this tragedy.

While many who came to the house also did not forget that about the babysitter, Rav Kamenetzky did more. He remembered.

My grandfather Rav Binyamin Kamenetzky zt"l would point out, that sometimes, although we know and understand facts in the back of our minds, our actions may prove otherwise. **Only 70 years prior to their celebrating at the feast of Achashveirosh, the Jews were chased out of Jerusalem, and wept on the riverbanks of Babylon in the backdrop of the burning Temple.**

Achashveirosh's party celebrated the fact that the second Beis Hamikdash will not be rebuilt. Did the Jewish party-goers forget the events of 70 years prior? Certainly not. **But they did not remember.**

In life, many events happen which we can commit to memory. Yet there is a subtle difference between merely not forgetting, and living our lives based upon remembering. The lesson of Parshas Zachor should remain with us. We must remember the story of Amalek, and we must remember the story of Purim. Not only should we not forget the story of Amalek and its lessons, **but we should remember it as well.**

Good Shabbos!

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