

Parshas Beshalach by Rabbi Eliyahu Kirsh

Kli Yakar on Amalek: Hands of Evil, Hands of Virtue

The Kli Yakar quotes the Yalkut Shimoni [Beshalach 262] that Amalek is like a fly. The Kli Yakar explains that the nature of a fly is to look for a whole or crack and make the whole or crack even bigger. We see how flies are attracted to food already starting to spoil. The yetzer hara works in a similar way. He will not start up with a complete tzaddik. He looks for someone who already has a 'crack' and then tries to make the crack bigger. Our rabbis tell us in Yoma 39a that when one makes himself impure with sin a little bit, he is made more impure. A seemingly small sin is the opening for the yetzer hara to lead one into much bigger sins. When Am Yisroel was complete with emunah in Hashem, Amalek found Am Yisroel invincible. However, once Am Yisroel started questioning Hashem's abilities, Amalek found its crack to invade. Therefore the Torah tells us that Amalek attacked in Rephidim. The Kli Yakar points out that Rephidim and Peridim have the same letters. This teaches us that Rephidim was not just the name of a place but a state of separation from Hashem. Also the lack of water signifies their weakness in Torah learning as Chazal frequently compared Torah to water. We see the same idea applied later in history when Haman, a descendent of Amalek stated to Achashverosh in Esther 3:8, 'there is one nation scattered and separated', meaning from each other and the Shechinah.

The Kli Yakar then discusses the role of hands in battling Amalek. The Torah was given from Hashem's hands to Moshe's 'hands' to Moshe's. *Tefilah*, prayer is helped *Birkas Kohanim*, the blessings of the Kohanim which is done by lifting the hands. Furthermore Chesed, kindness is accomplished so often with the hands. So in the three pillars upon which the world stands, hands play a significant role. We see that Moshe davened with Aharon and Chur supporting his hands. Each of these personalities had a special motif and a special bracha for Bnai Yisroel. Moshe, personifying Torah brought the Mon to Am Yisroel as Chazal say the Torah was given to eaters of Mon. The well of water, symbolizing chesed, was brought about by Miriam who gave food and comfort to the babies born in Mitzrayim against Paroh's wishes. Chur was Miriam's son and he stood at Moshe's side in the battle against Amalek, thus bringing Miriam's special motif into the battle. Aharon, the Kohen Gadol and the father of all Kohanim symbolized Avoda, prayer and the sacrificial service and it was

in his merit that we had the *annanei hakavod*, clouds of glory. In our battle all three personalities stood together, thus creating both a physical and metaphysical union appropriate for such a battle.

We see from the above mentioned ideas the power of hands. Almost all of what we do involves our hand either directly or indirectly. We can use our hands to be evil like Amalek or to be Tzadikim who bring the Shechinah down to our world. The choice and the power are 'in our hands'.

Kli Yakar on Amalek: Moshe's Hands Were Spread Out in Faith Until the End of History

Am Yisroel was attacked by Amalek at two major points in our history. The first time was in the very beginning, soon after we left Mitzrayim. The second time was in the days of Mordecai and Esther by Haman who was a descendent of Amalek plotted genocide against the entire Am Yisroel.

From the verse and hands were emunah, spread in faith *od bo hahsemesh*, until the sun came down [Shemos 17:12], the Kli Yakar understands that it was in Moshe's merit that we were saved in the days of Mordechai and Esther. Haman was originally happy that the lots he drew to determine the day of genocide would fall in the Adar since this was the month of Moshe's demise. However, Chazal tell us that Haman did not know that this was also the month of Moshe's birth.

The Kli Yakar also understand this phrase, *od bo hashsemesh*, until the setting of the sun in another way. At the end of the forty year period, Moshe was eager to carry out Hashem's will to avenge Midyan for causing Bnai Yisroel to sin. Even though Moshe knew that at the end of this operation that he would leave the world, he did not delay its being carried out. He was completely motivated to see Hashem avenged. He was completely engrossed in giving honor to Hashem down to his last moments, till his 'sun set'.

The Kli Yakar then writes that this verse is hint to Moshiach as well. He quotes a verse from the prophet Nachum 1:3: Hashem's way is in *Sufa* and *Searah*. The Kli Yakar explains that *Sufa* is a hint to Moshe who was

places into the *suf* reeds by hi mother and *Searah* is a hint to Eliyahu Hanavi who went up in a storm at the end of his time on earth. We understand from this verse that Moshe will accompany Eliyahu when Moshiach arrives. Our verse is to be understood that Moshe's hands were faithful till the sun sets and a new day dawns. On this day all of the evil and lies that Amalek had been perpetrating throughout history will be vanquished and the light of Torah, represented by Moshe Rabbeinu will shine forth. Hashem's glory will be clearly visible to the entire world and Hashem's Torah will light the way for all of its inhabitants. May we merit seeing all of this speedily in our days. Amen.