

## PARSHAT TETZAVEH-ZACHOR, 2009-5769

### Rabbi Aharon Ziegler

“ZACHOR” Remembering the deeds of Amalek—is one of the six Zechirot, which we are required to remember and never to forget. The fact that Amalek had the ability to attack us following the spectacular events that enabled us to leave Mitzrayim, was a consequence of Israel’s failure to study the Torah sufficiently, as stated in Midrash Tanchuma (Parshat Beshalach). Thus, one of the things that the epoch of Amalek cautions us is to remember the preciousness of Torah.

Remembering Yetziat Mitzrayim, another one of the Zechirot, brings us to appreciate and be thankful to HaShem for redeeming us from a most degrading slavery in Egypt. At the Pesach Seder we see ourselves as if **we, personally**, were redeemed, and not only our ancestors. Remembering and appreciating the kindness that someone did for us is a form of Hakarat Hatov, a lesson for us to internalize and practice in our daily lives.

In the Purim story this lesson plays a crucial focal point in our Geulah. Mordechai exposes a plot to kill King Achashverosh. The plotters are hanged and Mordechai’s **good deed is recorded in the Book of Zichronot (Chronicles)**. This narrative appears unimportant until much later when Achashveirosh, **unable to sleep**, he feels something bothering him; as if, there is something he has neglected to do. So, he has the Book of Chronicles read to him. When hearing of Mordechai’s actions, he immediately realizes his neglect towards Mordechai. He arranges for Mordechai to be led through the streets of Persia with great honor. This leads to Mordechai’s ascent to power (Esther Ch. 6).

A similar event unfolds in the story of Yosef. The butler and the baker have dreams that Yosef interprets. Yosef correctly predicts that the baker will be hanged and that the butler will be restored to his position in the palace. A seemingly insignificant story mentioned in Parshat Vayeshev, until years later, when Par’oh is **unable to sleep** and seeks to have his dreams interpreted. Here the butler steps in, telling Par’oh of Yosef’s great interpretive skills (Miketz, 41:9-13).

Note, that both the butler and Achashveirosh remember a past good deed **only when it serves to benefit them**. King Achashveirosh was told of Mordechai’s heroism immediately after it took place, yet, he chose to ignore it up until that famous **sleepless night**. Only when in personal anxiety and turmoil does he remember Mordechai. This is also true in the story of Yosef. Although Yosef had requested that the butler remember him, “KI IM ZECHARTANI (40:14), the butler fails to do so “VE’LO ZACHAR OTO” (40:23). Only later, before Par’oh, does he admit his negligence and oversight when he states: “ET CHATA’AI ANI MAZKIR HAYOM”, my sin I remember today. He realized it was a sin not to remember the greatness of Yosef and the good deed that Yosef had done for him.

On the Yom HaDin, HaShem will hold us accountable not only for the sins we did or the Mitzvot we didn’t do, but even for the good deeds of others that we forgot to repay or

even acknowledge. That is meant when we say that HaShem is **“ZOCHER  
HA’NISH’KOCHOT”**, meaning that He doesn’t forget what I should have remembered.