

# Pulse OF Emunah

ANI  
MAAMIN  
Foundation

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life

LESSONS

## SHOWING RESPECT

At the beginning of the intifada, Rav Tuvia Liefv was invited on a mission to Israel to give *chizuk*. He was joined by 23 members of his *kehillah* in Minneapolis, who wore their black hats throughout the trip so that people would see that “black-hat Jews” care.

One day, they visited a *kibbutz*. In the dining hall, the woman in charge barked at them. Rav Liefv greeted her with “*aleichem shalom*.” She extended her hand. Rav Liefv explained that he doesn’t shake hands with women. “Oh, you are one of those people,” she said.

“Yes,” he replied. “Do you know why?”

“Because you are afraid of me,” she said.

Rav Liefv opened his wallet to show a picture of his wife. “I am happily married to her,” he said. “Do you really think I am afraid? The reason I won’t shake your hand is that I respect you; it is a sign of honor.”

The woman was genuinely surprised; it was the first time she had ever heard such an explanation for this practice. Her demeanor changed. She took the group on a tour of the *kibbutz* and attended to all their needs. As they were about to leave, she said, “Do you want to know why I got so angry? I grew up religious, but at age 17 I ran away from it. When I see people like you, I know I was supposed to be like you.”

Tragically, Yiddishkeit was never explained to this woman in a way that she could appreciate. Had someone helped her achieve understanding, it might have made a major difference in her life. The smallest ray of light can repel much darkness.

*Adapted from A Life Worth Living by Rabbi Shragee Freedman at LivingKiddushHashem.org, with the permission of the publisher*



gem

OF THE WEEK

## UNCEASING DEVOTION

*By Rabbi Moshe Pogrow*

This *parsha* contains the instructions for the building and dedication of the Mishkan, and for the induction of Aharon and his sons into the priesthood. However, these instructions alone cannot actualize the promised goal of Hashem’s Presence dwelling in the midst of the people, as it says: “*V’asu li mikdash v’shachanti b’socham*.” This goal can be attained only by the people’s self-dedication to the ideals of the Jewish calling embodied in the Mishkan, self-dedication that is expressed through the *tamid* service of the *kohanim*. Only such dedication will transform the *mikdash* into the dwelling place of the Shechina.

The establishment of the Temple does not achieve this purpose once and for all, but only makes it possible. The purpose is attained only if it becomes vital and dynamic through the people’s constant acts of self-dedication, through the life rhythm of the nation, as it were.

This is the meaning of the *tamid* offering: the people’s unceasing devotion to the ideals of the Torah, ideals for which the Mishkan was erected. That

*continued on reverse side*

powerful  
PRAYER

KRIAS HATORAH:  
HASHEM’S MESSAGE



There is an essential difference between Krias Hatorah and the other prayers. The others are the call of *klal Yisrael* to Hashem, while the reading of the Torah represents Hashem’s message to His people. Hence, for the other prayers, the *shaliach tzibbur* stands in front of the congregation, to submit its requests to G-d.

But the reading of the Torah is performed on the *bimah* in the midst of the congregation, from an elevated position, as if Hashem had gathered the people in assembly around Him to proclaim His will.

*Adapted from World of Prayer by Rabbi Elie Munk*

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## AMALEK'S AGENDA

*By Rabbi Dovid Sapirman, Dean, Ani Maamin Foundation*

Purim is the celebration of a miraculous victory over Amalek, the nation that descends from Esav's grandson. In order to best appreciate this miracle, a little analysis of Amalek is in order. Since the Torah says that Hashem is at eternal war with Amalek, we understand that Amalek's war with *klal Yisrael* was actually a war against Hashem. As Rav Elchanan Wasserman *zt"l* said, "If Amalek could have placed ladders to climb up to heaven and battle with Hashem, they would have done so. Since that was impossible, they fought the people who represent Him in the world: *Am Yisrael*."

What is Amalek's complaint against Hashem? Amalek wants to live life without any morals or restrictions that would hold back its lusts and whims. Hashem insists on morals, ethics and self-restraint, so Amalek wants to eradicate any reminder of Him from the world. For that reason, Hashem declares that Amalek's memory will be erased from the world, as if it had never existed.

When Kaiser Wilhelm visited Palestine in 1898, Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld *zt"l* did not go out to greet him, because he had a tradition from his rebbe, Rav Yehoshua Leib Diskin *zt"l*, that the Germans are the true Amalekim. Indeed, Hitler *yemach shemo* resented the Jews for introducing morality to the world.

When Yitzchak Avinu blessed Yaakov, he said, "The voice is the voice of Yaakov, but the hands are the hands of Esav." Chazal explain that when the voice of Yaakov is heard in shuls and *batei midrash*, the hands of Esav have no power. If not, however, the hands of Esav can overpower Yaakov. Tefillah is the most effective method we can use to gain an awareness of Hashem in His world.

Now we can understand why, during the first war with Amalek, Moshe Rabbeinu went up the mountain and stretched out his hands in fervent prayer for all *klal Yisrael* to see. As long as they looked and thought about Hashem, they were victorious. When he rested his hands and they stopped looking up towards Hashem, they faltered.

When Mordechai was informed about the decree of annihilation, he went out into the street and began to cry out. Those screams were *tefillah*. He wanted to inform *klal Yisrael* that the only antidote to Amalek's threat was *tefillah*. Indeed, all the Jews immediately began fasting and praying to Hashem.

The Megillah sums of the story of Purim as "the story of the fasts and their outcry." The story of Purim is the story of a Holocaust averted through a wave of national *teshuvah* and *tefillah*. May we, too, be *zoche* to daven with full hearts, and to merit Hashem's heavenly protection from all our enemies. 🕯

is why the command of the *tamid* offering immediately follows the *shivas yemei hamilu'im*, in direct connection with them.

*Klal Yisrael* were to offer up *kevasim bnei shana*, a symbol of the nation. At the hour of their birth as a nation, they stood before Hashem as the "sheep of His flock." They attained national existence only by entrusting their destiny to their Shepherd.

What they vowed to do at the solemn hour of their birth they shall carry out as long as they exist. *Klal Yisrael* must never think it has outgrown the Shepherd's guidance. It remains forever in its youth, like the yearling sheep.

It is crucial to note the contrast between the "lamb" of Jewish symbolism and the "lamb" of another, non-Jewish view. In the non-Jewish view, the lamb is a symbol of passive suffering, in which a person considers his own martyrdom as the ideal of his life's mission. By contrast, in Jewish thought, the lamb symbolizes the eternal freshness of youth, with which a person entrusts himself to the guidance of his Shepherd and through that finds the essence of his life, an essence forever joyful.

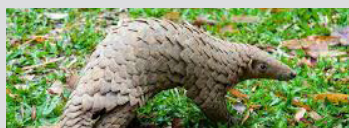
At the hour of its historical birth, the nation's task was to surrender itself to Hashem's guidance – primarily with respect to its fate, which is in G-d's hands. After that, however, its task was to fulfill its destiny, not just by passively accepting its fate, but by actively endeavoring to carry out its assigned mission in its way of life under G-d's guidance. 🕯

*Based on the commentary of Rav Shmshon Raphael Hirsch zt"l on Chumash, with permission from the publisher.*



## wonder WORLD

### A MAMMAL WITH SCALES



#### How do pangolins protect themselves?

The pangolin is officially a mammal; it is warm-blooded, has a backbone, and feeds its children milk. Other mammals, however, have hair or fur. The pangolin is the only one with scales, which are usually only found in reptiles. The scales are made of keratin, like our fingernails. When in danger, pangolins curl up into an impenetrable ball. Their tough claws help dig into termite mounds and anthills. They then use their sticky tongues, which can be longer than their bodies, to latch onto and pull out their meals. They have small eyes and cannot see well, but make up for it with their extraordinary sense of smell. Pangolins live in burrows in the ground. 🕯

*Adapted from the Niflaos HaBoreh Explorer series by Rabbi Yaakov Lubin*

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