



# Sermon Tidbits

AUGUST 24, 2015

## Parashat Ki Teitzei

### Encouraging Others to Attack Israel

How he met you by the way (Deuteronomy 25:18)

אשר קרך בדרך (דברים כה:יח)

In 2003, as Shlomo Leibovitch was driving his family home from a Bar Mitzvah celebration, the car was attacked on one of Israel's major highways by an Islamic Jihad terrorist cell, [killing the Lebovitch's seven-year-old daughter Noam](#) and critically wounding three-year-old Shira. In 2008 the family sued Iran for sponsoring the terrorist group that attacked them. They won a total judgment of \$67 million in damages, though not surprisingly, Iran never paid its debt. As we rightly focus our attention on the Iranian nuclear program, it is important to remember that Tehran is also the chief sponsor of global terrorism, paying others to kill thousands of innocent civilians in Israel and around the world.

Iran did not devise the notion of encouraging other nations and groups to attack Israel. That dubious distinction goes to Amalek, the nation that attacked the Children of Israel in the desert immediately following the Exodus from Egypt. While the actual story of the attack appears in Exodus (17:8-16), the commandment to remember Amalek (also known as Parashat Zachor) appears in Ki Teitzei (Deuteronomy 25:17-19) "Remember what Amalek did to you by the way as you came forth out of Egypt; how he met you by the way..." Rashi quoting the Midrash Tanchuma, offers several possible interpretations for the unusual verse *asher karcha baderech*. While we normally translate the phrase to mean, "How he met you on the way," the word *karcha* carries a number of different connotations. The Midrash suggests that the word alludes to the word *kar* (cold), implying that Amalek "cooled off" the nation of Israel, so that other nations would attack it. "Said Rabbi Chunia: To what parable can this be compared? To a boiling bathtub that no one dared enter. Along came one rogue and jumped in. Although he himself was burned, he cooled off [the tub] for others to enter." Following the Exodus, other nations were understandably reluctant to attack the Children of Israel, lest they suffer the same fate as Egypt. While Amalek itself was defeated, they demonstrated that it was possible to attack the Jews, thereby succeeding in their ultimate goal of "cooling off" the Israelites and encouraging other countries to attack the Jewish people.

Today, Iran follows in the footsteps of Amalek, not only encouraging others to attack Israel, but actually facilitating those attacks with military training, weapons and money. Iran has [backed a number of attempted attacks](#) specifically against Israel over the past several weeks. According to [the Times of Israel](#), "The IDF is preparing for a possible ground operation on the Syrian side of the Golan Heights in the event of sustained rocket strikes or coordinated terror attacks against Israel either by Sunni jihadists or Hezbollah operatives. The number of Islamists flooding into the area close to the border with Israel has the IDF on high alert..." Israeli officials highlighted Iran's role in funding the terrorist groups' recent efforts. Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu said, "What we have said all along has turned out to be accurate," referring to his opposition to the nuclear agreement between world powers and Tehran. "The money that will flow to Iran-sponsored terrorist organizations will be used for one stated purpose—to destroy Israel." Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Ya'alon echoed Netanyahu's sentiments saying that, "All is not quiet on the Golan front, and those who seek for it not to be quiet are the Iranians, who are trying to send proxies to conduct terror attacks against us. Representatives of the [Iranian] Revolutionary Guards are in fact waiting for the implementation of this bad deal with world powers, in order to bring more money to Hezbollah, more to other terror groups—in both the Golan Heights and the Palestinian arena."

In its first year, the agreement signed with Iran will unfreeze up to \$100 billion that has been held up in foreign accounts by a sanctions regime that took over 20 years to put in place. That means that if Iran only spends 5% of the \$100 billion to finance terrorist activities similar to the group that attacked the Leibovitch family (along with so many others) in 2003, it could nearly double its support for terrorist activities while still having \$95 billion left over. We must stop this deal for the hundreds of families of Israeli victims of terror, who must forever live with the consequences of that money. And, we must act for the future victims of terrorism who will suffer similar fates at the hands of Iranian-backed terrorists if we don't stop this bad deal. ■

## Helping a Neighbor in Need

**You shall surely help him to lift them up again (Deuteronomy 22:4)**

**הקם תקים עמו (דברים כב:ד)**

As ISIS spread across Syria and threatened to spill into neighboring Jordan, the Hashemite Kingdom turned to Israel for help. Last month, Israel quietly agreed to help its neighbor as it, “donated retired American-made Cobra attack helicopters to Jordan’s air force in order to help the country defend itself against the Islamic State terror group,” the *Algemeiner Journal* [reported](#). The helicopters, which had been decommissioned by the Jewish state in favor of modern Apache helicopters, will go a long way toward helping Jordan secure its border against an influx of Islamic extremists.

While Israel is certainly interested in combatting the spread of ISIS, the desire to help a neighbor is also firmly rooted in two commandments in Parashat Ki Teitzei. In the commandment to return lost objects (*hashavat aveidah*) Moses teaches, “You shall not see your brother’s ox or his sheep driven away and hide yourself from them; you shall surely bring them back to your brother...” (22:1) Moses also relays a similar commandment to assist an animal failing under a crushing burden. “You shall not see your brother’s ass or his ox fallen down by the way, and hide yourself from them; you shall surely help him to lift them up again.” (22:4) Both commandments obligate us to help a neighbor in need, who either has suffered, or is in danger of suffering a loss. Explaining the rationale for these commandments, *Sefer Hachinuch* (Commandment 80) writes, “The root of this commandment [to unload an overloaded animal] is to teach ourselves the attribute of compassion, which is a desired trait. It is unnecessary to say that it is an obligation to have compassion on a person who is in physical pain. Rather, it is a mitzvah to have compassion and save even someone who is anguish about [possible] monetary loss as well.”

Recently, Israel’s assistance to Jordan has expanded beyond the transfer of the Cobra helicopters, and seems to indicate a new level of partnership and cooperation between the two countries. I24 News [reported](#) that, “Israel will supply Jordan with strategic and tactical unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) in order to help combat the Islamic State.” According to local media reports, a new agreement with Jordan “will include Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) Heron TP strategic and Elbit Systems Skylark tactical drones.” In addition, “Israel is ready to meet any Jordanian request to help fight off Islamist insurgents who have overrun part of neighboring Iraq. [Israeli Strategic Affairs Minister, Yuval] Steinitz said potential Israeli assistance could include sending troops or arms, though he saw that as unlikely. ‘If, God forbid, there is a need, if such a request comes, if there is an emergency situation, then of course Israel will extend all help required. Israel will not allow groups like ISIS to take over Jordan.’”

Israel and Jordan signed a peace treaty in 1994 and maintain close government-to-government ties. As Israel, with America’s encouragement, shares intelligence and quietly aids Jordan’s military, hopefully the efforts to help a neighbor in need will continue to strengthen the bond between the two nations. ■

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