

PARSHAT KI TEITZEI
DEUTERONOMY 21:10-25:19
11 ELUL 5781/19 AUGUST 2021



Moses Blesses Joshua at Rephidim
Lithograph by Marc Chagall

TO OVERCOME DOUBT, REMEMBER

1. “Remember (*zachor*) what Amalek did to you on your journey...blot out the remembrance of Amalek...Do not forget!” (Deuteronomy 25:17-19)
2. Amalek came and fought with Israel at Rephidim. Moses said to Joshua, “Pick some men for us and go out and do battle with Amalek...” (Exodus 17:8-9)
3. The place was named Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled and because they tried God, saying, “Is God among us or not?”
4. To what is the incident of Amalek comparable? To a boiling tub of water which no creature was able to enter. Along came one evildoer and jumped into it. Although he was burned, he cooled it for the others. So, too, when Israel came out of Egypt, and God split the sea before them and drowned the Egyptians within it, the fear of them fell upon all the nations. But when Amalek came and challenged them, although he received his due from them, he cooled the awe of the nations of the world for them. (Midrash Tanchuma)

5. קָרָהּ בַּדֶּרֶךְ (“he encountered you along the way,” Deuteronomy 25:18)
קָרָהּ – to encounter
קָרָהּ – cold, קָרָר – be cold
6. Gematria for *Amalek* is 240; gematria for *safek* (doubt) is also 240.
7. History involves critical attachment; memory involves a deep immediacy. (Leon Wieseltier, commenting on Yosef Yerushalmi’s work *Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory*)
8. In every generation one must see oneself as if he/she personally came out of Mitzrayim. (Passover Haggadah)
9. If you hear a voice within you say “You cannot paint,” then by all means paint, and that voice will be silenced. (Vincent Van Gogh)