



REBBETZIN SHIRA

SMILES

Faculty, OU Israel Center

Tribute to the Trio

In a deeply powerful scene, Moshe Rabbeinu is found with his hands held high on top of the mountain praying for the people gripped in a raging battle with Amalek below. Ahron and Chur stood on either side of Moshe Rabbeinu holding his hands aloft (*Shemot 17:10*). Rashi teaches that Chur was the son of Moshe's sister, Miriam. What more do we know about Chur? What is the symbolism of his joining with Ahron to support the hands of Moshe Rabbeinu?

Rabbi Roberts in *Through the Prism of Torah* explains that Ahron and Chur personified contrasting character traits. Ahron was a peacemaker, he constantly looked for ways to create harmony among his people. Indeed, he was ready to compromise his own values to achieve this goal, as we see in the story of the sin of the golden calf. Chur,

on the other hand, was a person who stood strong in his values, unbending and resolute in his beliefs. Chazal teach that Chur tried to challenge the people when they wanted to build the calf and they subsequently killed him. Chur, a descendent of Yehudah, was a person who was inflexible and strong like a lion. Truly, a combination of both qualities is necessary. In interpersonal relationships it is wise to follow Ahron's path, to compromise and make peace whenever possible. However, in the service of Hashem and reinforcing *kevod shamayim*, one needs to follow Chur's example and be resolute in his values. These two special people joined Moshe Rabbeinu to activate the merits of these approaches as he implored Hashem to have mercy on His people and vanquish Amalek, physically and spiritually.



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Rav Schwab in *Maayan Beit Hashoeva* notes that the word 'echad' is repeated in describing each person standing on either side of Moshe Rabbeinu (*Shemot* 17:12). This emphasis reflects the unique *middah* of each one, singular to their personalities. Moshe Rabbeinu, standing between them, synthesized the two.

Rav Druk in *Aish Tamid* understands this three-way dynamic from quite a different angle. Amalek was the personification of evil, driven to destroy the spiritual world of the Jewish People. This war was about keeping the Hashem's nation and their world intact. A Jew's sphere revolves on three major principles, *Torah, avodah and gemilut chasadim*. Rav Druk maintains that each of these was represented by Moshe, Ahron and Chur. Moshe Rabbeinu symbolized the world of Torah, as he was the one who brought Torah down to *Am Yisrael*. Ahron *HaKohen* officiated in the *avodah* of the *mikdash*. Chur, son of Miriam the midwife, embodied *chesed*. In this episode, the Torah teaches us to unite these three pillars to protect and solidify our worlds, both on a national level as well as on a personal one. ■

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