

## Rabbi's Column

Our Purim blizzard is over, so now it is time to go on to Pesach, and hope that the weather doesn't repeat itself (although I have experienced some Seders with massive snowfalls, so who knows). American news may not cover these atrocities, but over this past weekend there were terrorist attacks in Baghdad and Pakistan (I know one is a city and the other is a country, but geography was never my strong suit). A moment of triumph by athletes, and a moment of celebration by children - both were interrupted by horrific acts of mayhem. May God grant all of the survivors strength, and may the people who masterminded such dastardly deeds speedily receive their comeuppance.

The intelligent can be misled, the compassionate taken advantage of, the solid soul may be tricked, and the one who seeks to do good may become too protective. Each of us may at some point sabotage our best efforts, for a number of different reasons. Still, as long as a system has a process of teshuvah in place, goodness and competence may yet be rewarded.

One reason for this perhaps depressing discourse is this week's Torah portion. We read of Aaron and his sons on the most important day of their lives as leaders of the people. They are going to be Kohanim after today. Then Aaron's two sons die, and Aaron is stuck. He is a leader, and he is not able to mourn publicly for his loss, as he is not able (nor is it his desire) to keep the people from returning back to God, which his mourning would interrupt.

I do not even pretend to come close to understanding all the thoughts which ran through his brain through the rest of that day and week. We know he acts protectively towards his other children, hoping to get some protective guidance from God, as it seems obvious in hindsight that somehow he neglected to instill the last bit of common sense which would have protected them in their moment of disaster. The answer God gives to him is Kashrut. When we constantly focus on the difference between that which is acceptable to God and that which is not (whether food or act), then we are less likely to cause ourselves grief.

May the future weeks provide us the reality of remaining aware of God in our lives..