

שופטים. הלכות סליחים פ"ה

הדוכן (כ"א)

ב והדוך לזכור לו דרך ה' וזהו המצוי ב...
 ו כל סליחות שכתבתי וזהו המצוי ב...
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הוא אמר ללמד את ישראל וזהו המצוי ב...
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מסנה ד

בו ביזם בא יהודה נר עמוני וקמד לקניקו דבית
 הפדנשי. אפר לקם: קח אני לרא בקהלי אפר לו
 בן גלילאי: אפר אפרת. אפר לו רבי יהושע: קמר
 אפרת. אפר לו בן גלילאי: הקחוב אפר (דברים כג. ט):
 לא יבא עמוני ומואבי בקהל ה' גם דור עשירי
 וגומר. אפר לו רבי יהושע: וכי עמונים ומואבים
 בקקונו הו: קבר עלה סנסריב קלף אשור ובלפל
 אח קל האמות, עגאמר וישעיה י. ט: קאסיר גבלות
 עמים נעתודתיקם שושתי נאוריד קביר יושבים.
 אפר לו בן גלילאי: הקחוב אפר (דברים כג. ט):
 גאמר בן אשיב את שבות דני עמוני. וקבר קורו.
 אפר לו רבי יהושע: הקחוב אפר (עמוס ט. ד):
 קשבתי את שבות עמי יסאלי (ניהודנה). נצדון
 לא שבו. האידוהו לרא בקהל.

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R. Soloveitchik
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 Fate and Destiny, pp. 65-66

Divine providence is testing us once again via the crisis that has overtaken the land of Israel. Let it be clearly stated: The matter does not just affect the political future of the land of Israel. The designs of the Arabs are directed not just against the political sovereignty of the State of Israel but against the very existence of the Yishuv in the land of Israel. They wish to destroy, heaven forbid, the entire community, "both men and women, infant and suckling, ox and sheep" (1 Samuel 15:3). At a Mizrahi convention I cited the view expressed by my father and master [R. Moses Soloveitchik] of blessed memory, that the proclamation, "The Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation" (Exodus 17:16) does not only translate into the communal exercise of waging obligatory war against a specific race but includes as well the obligation to rise up as a community against any people or group that, filled with maniacal hatred, directs its enmity against Knesset Israel. When a people emblazons on its banner, "Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance" (Psalms 83:5) it becomes, thereby, Amalek.²³ In the 1930s and 1940s the Nazis, with Hitler at their head, filled this role. They were the Amalekites, the standard-bearers of insane hatred and enmity during the era just past. Today their place has been taken over by the mobs of Nasser and the Mufti. If we are silent now as well, I know not the verdict that will be issued against us by the God of justice. Do not rely on the "liberal" world's sense of equity. Those same righteous liberals were around fifteen years ago, and they looked with indifference upon the extermination of millions of people; they did not even lift a finger. If, heaven forbid, yet a second spectacle of blood were to take place before their very eyes, it is likely that they would not even lose a night's sleep over it.

Fake and Destiny, pp. 92-95

25 Maimonides, Laws of Kings and Their Wars 5:4, writes the following regarding the seven nations of Canaan: "It is a positive commandment to destroy the seven nations, as it is said: 'But thou shalt utterly destroy them' (Deuteronomy 20:17). If one does not kill any of them that falls into one's power, one transgresses a negative commandment, as it is said: 'Thou shalt save nothing that falls into one's power, one transgresses a negative commandment, as it is said: 'Thou shalt save nothing that breatheth' (Deuteronomy 20:16). But their memory has long since perished." The Radbaz, in his commentary ad loc., notes that the source for Maimonides' concluding comment, "But their memory has long since perished," is the statement of Rabbi Joshua in Mishnah Yadayim 4:4: "Sennacherib, king of Assyria, came up and intermingled all the peoples."

It is, however, striking and passing strange that Maimonides, in setting forth the commandment to wipe out Amalek, does not add the concluding phrase, "But their memory has long since perished." Thus states Maimonides in Laws of Kings and Their Wars 5:5: "Similarly it is a positive commandment to destroy the remembrance of Amalek, as it is said: 'Thou shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek' (Deuteronomy 25:19). It is also a positive commandment to remember always his evil deeds and the waylaying [he resorted to], so that we keep afresh the hatred manifested by him, as it is said: 'Remember what Amalek did unto thee' (Deuteronomy 25:17). The traditional interpretation of this injunction is: 'Remember,' by word of mouth, 'Do not forget,' out of mind, that it is forbidden to forget his hatred and enmity." It would appear from Maimonides' statements that Amalek is still in existence, while the seven nations have descended into the abyss of oblivion.

One may query: Why didn't Maimonides apply R. Joshua's principle that "Sennacherib, king of Assyria, came up and intermingled all the peoples" to Amalek as he did to the seven nations? The answer to this question is very simple. Scripture testifies that Amalek is still in existence. Note what the Torah states: "The Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation"

(Exodus 17:16). If that is the case, then it is impossible that Amalek be completely destroyed before the coming of the Messiah. As the sages state: "The [divine] throne will not be whole and the [divine] Name will not be whole until the descendants of Amalek are completely blotted out" (Midrash Tanhuma on Ki Teze, end; and Raah on Exodus 17:16). But—where is he? I once heard the following answer from my father and master [R. Moses Soloveitchik] of blessed memory, namely, that any nation that conspires to destroy Knesset Israel becomes, according to the halakhah, Amalek. My father and master added: We have been charged with two commandments concerning Amalek. The first is the obligation to blot out his memory. This obligation devolves upon every person with reference to an individual Amalekite and is set forth in the verse "Thou shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek" (Deuteronomy 25:19). The second is the readiness to do battle as a community against the people Amalek. This requirement is set forth in the verse, "The Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation" (Exodus 17:16). Thus, if any people seeks to destroy us, we are commanded to do battle against it when it rises up against us, and this battle of ours is an obligatory war (milhemet mitzva) on the basis of the verse from Exodus, "The Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation." However, the obligation to wipe out individual Amalekites, as set forth in the verse from Deuteronomy, applies only to genealogical descendants of Amalek. Now it is true that Maimonides' ruling also includes the obligation to blot out individuals, an obligation which does not apply to any nation other than Amalek, even if that nation seeks to destroy the Jewish people [and this obligation is no longer in force, since there are no longer any identifiable genealogical descendants of Amalek]. Nevertheless, since the obligation to do battle against Amalek as a people would apply to such a nation, Maimonides did not use the phrase "But its [Amalek's] memory has long since perished." There still exists a category of Amalek (as a people) even now after the peoples have been intermingled (and there are no longer any individual Amalekites).

Perhaps the above is the basis for the ruling of Maimonides in Laws of Kings and Their Wars 5:1 that a defensive war waged by the Jewish people against an aggressor is an obligatory war. Such a war falls under the rubric of "The Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation." To be sure, Maimonides in his ruling singles out the war against Amalek for special mention [which would indicate that the war against Amalek and a defensive war against an aggressor are two separate categories]. Nevertheless, one may maintain that a war waged by the Jewish people against an aggressor who seeks to destroy it still belongs to the category of the war against Amalek. Note carefully the sugya in Sotah 44b, s.v. *Amar R. Yohanan*.

Who's an Amalekite?

Kalman Neuman's review of my book "Reckless Rites: Purim and the Legacy of Jewish Violence" was sensitive and searching ("To Be Blotto, or To Blot Out?" July 10), but I would like to clarify two points. First, I certainly did not "take exception" to the definition of Amalek presented by Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik in his 1956 sermon "Kol Dodi Dofek." As a historian, I simply linked Soloveitchik's identification there of Nasser and the mufti of Jerusalem as Amalekites with the 1948 motivational sermon delivered by "the Nazir" David Cohen



to students of Yeshivat Mercaz Harav on their way to fight in Israel's War of Independence. Whatever "the Rav," as Neuman insists on calling him, demanded of the NRP in the wake of Sabra and Shatilla in 1982 is as relevant to the understanding of his 1956 sermon as Ariel Sharon's 2005 position on Gaza is to his strategic views when he was Begin's defense minister.

Secondly, my attempt to situate Baruch Goldstein's 1994 massacre of 29 Palestinians within a Purim tradition of hostility to Amalekites (and not to "gentiles" as Dr. Neuman claims) not only reaches back to Refidim and Shushan and medieval Europe, but also draws on prior events in late 20th-century Hebron itself. Neuman correctly notes that "members of the 'Jewish underground' in the early 1980s did not have to wait until Purim to plant bombs in Arab buses." But he seems to have forgotten my discussion of the 1982 report by the Karp Commission, which dealt with the manner in which exuberant festivity was used by Jews from Kiryat Arba as a means of evicting the Arab upholsterer who occupied the ground floor of Beit Hadassah — until his ceiling happened to collapse under the weight of spirited dancing during Purim of 1981.

Five years later Jewish settlers paraded through Hebron on Purim carrying puppets of various images from the book of Esther, including that of Haman the Agagite (= Amalekite). When they arrived at Beit Romano one of the settlers, as reported by Ori Nir in Ha'aretz, placed a keffiyah on the hanging effigy of Haman. Local Arabs, who by then clearly understood what this meant, took offense, and a representative of the military government demanded that the keffiyah be removed. It is not unlikely that Goldstein, who moved from the United States to Kiryat Arba in 1983, participated in the 1986 Purim parade. It is even more likely that sometime before 1994 Goldstein, who was a graduate of Yeshiva University, read "Kol Dodi Dofek."

Elliott Horowitz
Jerusalem

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Protect Sharon From the Right

By Jeffrey Goldberg

NORVA, West Bank of Iraq ago, at a West Bank settlement outpost surrounded by barbed wire and guarded by dyspeptic German shepherds, I attended a joyful event: a brit milah, the circumcision of an eight-day-old boy. This outpost was home to just a handful of families, but more than 100 people came to celebrate with the boy's parents.

Many of the visitors made the rough trek through Arab villages to get to this hill. These young settlers are the vanguard of radical Jewish nationalism, the flame-wearing, rifle-carrying children of their parents' mainstream settlements, which they despise for their bourgeois affections — red-tile roof chalets, swimming pools, pizzas — and their misplaced fealty to the dictates of the government in Jerusalem. These new pioneers set out for the Samaria mountains and the hills of Hebron, where they live in log cabins and broken-down trailers, in settings sufficiently biblical and remote to allow for the cultivation of a new variant of apocalyptic zealotry.

The model's table stood at the rear of a double-wide trailer that serves as the outpost's synagogue. I stood by the door, near the tables holding plates of hummus and bottles of schmoppa. I fell into conversation with an acquaintance of mine, a woman named Ayelet, who is in her late teens, pregnant, the daughter of a former assistant professor of history at City College. She is a resident of an outpost in the radical settler heartland near Nablus. We were interrupted by the newborn's father, a goat farmer, as he began giving a d'var Torah, an interpretation of a Bible passage. He turned, rather quickly, to the threat posed by the Amalekites, the eternal enemy of the Jews, a tribe that, according to the Bible, attacked Moses and the Children of Egypt on the exodus from Egypt.

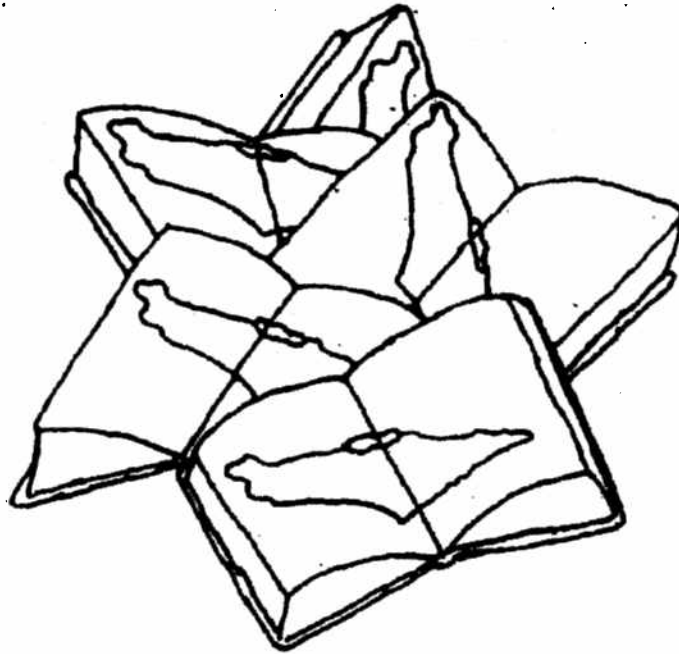
"Amalek," in the language of the settler hardcore today, often stands for the Arabs, the existential enemy of the Jews. "I am looking at our life today, and what Amalek wants to do is swallow up the people of Israel," the father said. "This is the snake. This is the snake."

I turned to Ayelet. She wore a long skirt, her hair was covered, and she carried an M-16. I asked her if she thought Amalek was alive today. "Of course," she said, and pointed out the door, toward an Arab village in the distance. "The Amalekite spirit is everywhere. It's not just the Arabs."

Who else, then? "Sharon isn't Amalek," she said, "but he works for Amalek."

I had met some Ayelet before with a rifle. She told me it belonged to her husband, Ahiva, who couldn't be here, because he was in court in Jerusalem. He was, she said vaguely, answering charges related to his

Jeffrey Goldberg is a staff writer for The New Yorker.



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Wole Soyinka forgiven for de mark his 70th b Mr. Soyinka — i erature as well of prestigious an reputation as t parts, and in a n age life span achievement s though, it's nece. When he was without trial fo peace with Biafr spent 24 month ment in a 4-by roomably dwe ten on toilet pa ink and smaggl has been arreste since then, most rally demandin Nigeria's presi sango, whose re- lished to have in Mr. Soyinka b times (I studie bridge during a and, he recalls, i his head at leas tortuously in 1977 absence for trar death by the bra Gen. Sani Abach African democn face, they being In the mid-70 civil rights lead Roy Inoh, raf Amin's murde Uganda out of sense of racial a relentlessly ca Amin's overthro castigated him Mr. Soyinka re his charity, star

Mark Pearson

work for Kach, the racist movement founded by the late Meir Kahane.

I asked her if she would use the M-16 only against Arabs, or against Jews who came to tear down her outpost. "God forbid," she said. "We wouldn't want to hurt a Jewish soldier."

What about a Jewish prime minister?

"Sharon is forfeiting his right to live," she said.

I asked her if she would like to kill him.

"It's not for me to do. If the rabbis say it, then someone will do it. He is working against God."

Over the past year, I've heard at least 14 young Orthodox settlers — in outposts, and in yeshivas in the West Bank and Jerusalem — express with vehemence a desire to murder Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and his men, in particular the deputy prime minister, Ehud Olmert, and the defense minister, Shaul Mofaz. I've met several more who actively pray — and, I suspect, work — for the destruction of the Dome of the Rock, the Muslim shrine on Jerusalem's Temple Mount. And I have met dozens more who would not sit shiva, certainly not for the Dome, but not for their prime minister, either.

The threat of the radical right has become a matter of terrible urgency in the Israeli government. Avi Dichter, the chief of the Israeli internal security service, has been for months running around — to borrow a phrase from George Tenet — with his hair on fire over the threat. He has warned of the potential for attacks against the Dome of the Rock and the Al Aqsa Mosque, on the Temple Mount; such a strike, he said, would set off global war between Muslim and Jew — a goal the radical yeshivas of the West Bank share with Al Qaeda.

Mr. Dichter told a Knesset committee last month that his agents believe there are 150 to 200 settlers hoping to kill Mr. Sharon. A member of the committee asked, "If we were talking about Palestinians and not Jews, would you place these people in administrative detention?" Mr. Dichter answered, "Absolutely."

Now, there is surely something

strange about an Israel in which Ariel Sharon, the invader of Lebanon and the father of settlements, is in mortal danger from the right. And it should be noted that Mr. Sharon's withdrawal plan has flaws and limitations. Yet what is most interesting here is that the settlers grasp something about the plan that Mr.

Israel's greatest threat may come from within.

Sharon's critics on the left do not, which is that Mr. Sharon poses a greater threat to theologically motivated settlers than even Yitzhak Rabin.

The difference between Mr. Rabin — who was murdered on the altar of settlement nine years ago — and Mr. Sharon is the difference between bilateralism and unilateralism. Mr. Rabin's plan depended on Yasser Arafat, and he undoubtedly would have come to see Mr. Arafat as no partner for peace. But there is only one indispensable man in Mr. Sharon's plan, and that is Mr. Sharon himself. If Mr. Sharon evincates a settlement — and if the city does not respond by falling — the logic of dismemberment may take hold; a majority of Israelis already support the unilateral shutting of many settlements.

Which is why the Orthodox right is in panic. The rabbi of the Old City of Jerusalem, Avigdor Nevenzhal, announced in June that anyone who gives up a part of the land of Israel — even a single settlement — to a non-Jew could be the target of a religiously sanctioned murder. The official spokesman of the Jewish community in Hebron, David Wilder, wrote in June: "Nobody wants violence. Especially against our own brethren. But it's time to wake up. The reality is, if Sharon insists on trying to implement his 'Jewish transfer' from our homes and land, it's going to happen."

In the summer of 1985, Yitzhak Ra-

bin was more or less alone. The man who led the Israeli Army to victory in the Six-Day War — making possible the settlement movement in the first place — was called a Nazi at public rallies; radical Orthodox rabbis cursed him; and much of world Jewry was silent. Today, once again, the atmosphere is one of tolerance for murder. "God's name is being invoked against Sharon, but where are the rabbis?" asked Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League and one of the few American Jewish leaders to take heed of Mr. Dichter's warning.

The extremist yeshivas that give rise to fundamentalist tangery are financed in part by Orthodox Jews in America. Several Orthodox rabbis in America took the lead in demonizing Mr. Rabin. And Meir Kahane, the inspiration for so much fanaticism, was an Orthodox rabbi from Brooklyn.

The mainstream Orthodox rabbinate — in America and in Israel — failed nine years ago to defend Yitzhak Rabin against extremism. It could be doing a great deal more today to prevent the murder of Ariel Sharon.

E-mail: hlgears1

Maureen Dowd
Thomas L. Friedman
18 October, writes

Billiard dental plat

In the nineteenth century the Hyatt brothers wanted to make billiard balls but needed a substance less expensive and more readily available than ivory. Their experiments gave the world celluloid — the grandfather of plastic — in 1870.

But there was more in store than a cheaper game of pool. Commercial success for plastics expanded with the first

R. Samsom Raphael Hirsch,
Comm on Ex 17:14

אם זכר עמלק. It is not Amalek who is so pernicious for the moral future of mankind but זכר עמלק, the glorifying of the memory of Amalek which is the danger. So long as the annals of humanity cover the memory of the heroes of the sword with glory, so long as those that throttle and murder the happiness of mankind are not buried in oblivion, so long will each successive generation look up in worship to these "great ones" of violence and force, and their memory will awaken the desire to emulate these heroes, and acquire equal glory by equal violence and force. Only when the divine laws of morals have become the sole criterion as to the worth of the greatest and smallest of men, and no longer in inverse proportion but in direct proportion to greatness and power do the demands of morality grow, and the greater and more powerful a man is, the less any lapse in the laws of morality is excused, then and then only will the reign of Amalek cease for ever in the world. That this is the final goal of God's management and direction of the history of the world is expressed here after the first weakening of Amalek, "I will utterly obliterate the keeping up the remembrance of Amalek from as far as the heavens reach." So also in Ps. IX, 7, the thought is poignantly expressed, that only with the doing away with the remembrance of devastation and conquests will the perpetrators of these deeds disappear **אמר זכרם מהם**!

זכר עמלק

דרשות יד. המין המסור אל-עמי אג. קב

זכר עמלק סתת השמים.

כי זכר עמלק שיהיה חסאים מן הארץ כתיב ולא יתמו חסאים, וגם על המוסר, והשבתי היא רעה מן הארץ אמרים חרל, שיהיו ולא ידקרו, וגם בעמלק מנעם חנודה בעיקר את הזכר עמלק, מה שנעשה העמלקות לזכר, לקולטורא, לאדיאל נאצל, לרעיון נשגב, לחכמה עילאת, ואם זכר עמלק זה מנעם עלינו לנכות.

Because... it is written "let sins be consumed out of the earth" and not "let the sinners."... And as for Amalek too, the Torah stresses mainly the "remembrance of Amalek," when Amalek turns into a memory, a culture, a lofty ideal, a sublime notion.... It is this remembrance of Amalek that we are commanded to blot.

How do you define "Amalek" today?

What do you see as the implications of such a definition?

Are you comfortable with the Torah's obligation to destroy Amalek? How do you understand it?