

Remember (zakhor) what Amalek did to you on your journey, after you left Egypt; how, undeterred by fear of God, he surprised you on the march, when you were famished and weary, and cut down all the stragglers in the rear. Therefore, when the Lord your God grants you safety from all your enemies around you, in the land that the Lord your God is giving you as a hereditary portion, you shall blot out the memory of Amalek from under the heaven. Do not forget! --- Deuteronomy 25:17-19.

You shall blot out the memory of Amalek... A people so devoid of natural religion as to kill non-combatants had forfeited all claim to mercy. --- Rabbi Joseph Hertz, The Pentateuch, p 856

*You shall not hate an Edomite, for he is your brother -- good or bad, he is your brother. "You shall not abhor an Egyptian, for you were a sojourner in his land " -- good or bad, for among them you lived many years. But as for Amalek - Remember what Amalek did to you -- they were and remain the persecutor of the weak. --- **Pesikta Rabbati** 47b*

On the 1995 Oklahoma City terrorist bombing - Closure surely is a balm for grief, and we can only hope that the mutilated families will find it. But if the rest of us are now lulled into complacency by a well-conducted trial's fair outcome, that's not closure - it's amnesia. Timothy McVeigh didn't come from nowhere. --- Frank Rich, The New York Times, June 5, 1997, after McVeigh was convicted for murder in the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing

And Haman said to King Ahasuerus: "There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the other peoples in all the provinces of your kingdom, and their laws are different from those of any other people and who do not obey the King's laws. It is not in your Majesty's interest to tolerate them. If it please the king, let it be written that they be destroyed..." --- Esther 3:8-9

Grant them civil rights? I see no other way of doing this except to cut off all their heads on one night and substitute other heads without a single Jewish thought in

them. --- Johann Fichte, a leading philosopher of the German Enlightenment, and first rector of the University of Berlin, 1762 - 1814

The Jew serves (the anti-Semite) as a pretext; elsewhere his counter-part will make use of the Negro or the man of yellow skin. --- Jean-Paul Sartre, Anti-Semite and Jew, p. 54

Essentially, all agree that what the Amalekites did was utterly reprehensible. Yet, it never could have happened if the Israelites had not brought their vulnerability upon themselves. In this regard, the saintly Lithuanian sage, Rabbi Israel Meir haKohen, known as the “**Chafetz Chayyim**,” deemed the quarrelsome state of the Israelite community, with its incessant internecine feuding, as the causative factor in bringing about Amalek's attack. He asserts, "Had the Israelites but been unified as a community, the divine clouds would surely have shielded them from all harm". The homilist concludes his observations with an appeal for unity among his contemporaries, bidding them to heed the truth of the promise that “...as long as Israel remains united, Amalek has no power over them.” --- Rabbi Elijah Schochet, “Amalek, The Enemy Within”

...he surprised you. (Hebr: **kor'kha**) Rabbi Judah reads this as: he took advantage of your impurity. For we find a similar word used in Deut. 23:11: "If anyone among you has been rendered unclean by a nocturnal emission (**mikreh**), he must leave the camp..." (This is probably an indirect reference to rape of the women.)

Rabbi Nechemya reads **kor'kha** as referring to **kriah**, reading, and took the verse to be saying: “How he read up” on the Israelites. What did Amalek do? He went to the archives of Egypt, and took from them the genealogical rolls with the names of the Israelites recorded. Then he stationed himself outside the cloud of glory which protected the Israelites, and would read and call out the names: “Reuben! Shimon! Levi! Yehudah! I am your brother; come forth, because I wish to do business with you!” And when one of the Israelites whose name was thus called out went forth, Amalek killed him.

The (other) rabbis read **kor'kha** as referring to **kar**, cool, meaning: “Amalek cooled you.” What does this mean? Amalek made Israel appear the nations as

cool (i.e., weak) in battle. As Rav Huna said: It is like a pool of scalding water into which no creature dares to descend. Then one vile person came, and though he knew he would be burned, sprang right into the pool, so that all who watched saw it as lukewarm. So too, when Israel came out of Egypt, fear of their burning zeal fell upon all the nations of the earth...but after Amalek came and made war upon Israel, though he got the scalding he deserved, still he made Israel appear cool in battle in the eyes of the other nations. --- all based on **Midrash Tanchuma** 9 and Pesikta d'Rav Kahana 3:14)