

Amalek: Remembering the Arch-Enemy of the Jewish People

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SETTING THE STAGE

1. We are commanded to remember what Amalek did to us. To what end?
2. How are individuals or a nation to go about preserving a memory of something that none of them have actually witnessed?
3. One Mitzvah or Two--Is there a difference between "Remember" and "Do not forget"?

NEW VOCABULARY

Zakhor זכור

DEEPENING UNDERSTANDING

Text 1: Yerushami

- What is the role of memory in preserving identification with the Jewish People?
- What might be the consequences of not reserving memory?

Text 2-3: Shemot 17, Devarim 25

- What is to be remembered?
- What is the vehicle for the preservation of memory?
- Are there contemporary ramifications for each?

CHALLENGES AND RESOLUTIONS

Text 4: Ramban

- How can we succeed in blotting out all memory if we are instructed to never forget?

Text 5: Greenberg

- What about "forgive and forget"? Isn't it best to let go and move on?

Text 6: Linzer

- Is there something about this mitzvah that makes it particularly challenging for us to fulfill?
- Is there another way to understand the mitzvah?

Text 8: Glick

- What is the role of ritual in preserving memory?

ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS

*Preservation of memory is a central focus of Jewish Living.

*Memory fills multiple Jewish needs:

- Direction and Hope
- Prevention
- Inspiration
- Identity
- Comfort

*Ritual preserves, enhances and adapts memory