

Is Adonai Among Us, or Not?

“⁷ The name of the place was called Massah and Meribah, because of the quarreling of Bnei-Yisrael, and because they tested Adonai saying, “Is Adonai among us, or not?” ⁸ Then the Amalekites came and fought with Israel at Rephidim.” (Ex. 17:7-8)

Evidently, when our people questioned whether or not *Adonai* was with them, then *Amalek* came. Did the Amalekites come by happenstance? You and I often entertain the notion that whatever battles comes at us is a matter of chance – bad luck! With our Lord there is no bad (“*Now this is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you—that God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all*” [1 John 1:5]) and there is also no such thing as luck. The fact, as stated in the text, is that immediately after the Children of Israel question God’s Presence then the Amalekites came. The text in Deuteronomy 25:18 makes a strong connection between happenstance and *Amalek*. *Amalek* is the descendant of falsehood (see Breslov.org) and happenstance (“*how he [Amalek] happened (karcha) upon you...*”). *Amalek* is the false notion that everything that happens to us is happenstance.

We must carefully consider whether or not the Lord has indeed provided the victory in Messiah *Yeshua* over the notions of chance (happenstance) and the questioning of whether or not the Lord is with us. *Yeshua* said “*lo (Hinei), I am with you always, even to the end of the age*” (Matt. 28:20). Therefore, there should be no doubts about His Presence in our lives – He is always with us! If we forget then we doubt and we then verbalize that doubt.

For this reason *Adonai* has declared a perpetual war against *Amalek*: “¹⁴ *Adonai* said to Moses, “Write this for a memorial in the book, and rehearse it in the hearing of Joshua, for I will utterly blot out the memory of the Amalekites from under heaven.” ¹⁵ Then Moses built an altar, and called the name of it *Adonai-Nissi* [God is my standard or banner]. ¹⁶ Then he said, “By the hand upon the throne of *Adonai*, *Adonai* will have war with *Amalek* from generation to generation.” Verses 14 to 16 just “happens” to be the *maftir* portion of this Torah Portion. Traditionally the Bar/Bat Mitzvah is required to read, as a minimum, the *maftir* portion. The *maftir* is the “last word” of that particular Parshah. *Adonai*’s last word to us is to remember that He is in total opposition to all that *Amalek* stands for. The Lord wants to completely eradicate (blot out) the memory of *Amalek* from our lives. There should be no more doubt about His involvement in our lives: “⁷ For God has not given us a spirit of fear (timidity) but of power and love and self-discipline” (2 Tim. 1:7).

We are to uproot complacency and doubt from our lives, and especially apathy (e.g., the Lord is not attentive with the details of our daily lives). In Jewish writings: “*The inner Amalek is unholy cynicism. That little voice inside each of us that derides, belittles and attacks truth and goodness; our irrational tendency to mock people who act morally, to be cynical when we see altruism, to doubt our own or other's sincerity - these are the modern day Amalekites. They wage a lethal war with our soul. If we let it, cynicism can kill our every attempt to improve ourselves and smother any move towards refining our character and expressing our soul.*” We are prone to flirting with ideas, philosophies, worldly concerns, and our own free will: ‘We know what to do’, we say; ‘I’ have it all under control; ‘I’ do not give the Lord what He wants, but what ‘I’ think He should get (or deserve). Thus, we flirt with *Amalek* once again. We compromise and disobey. Why? Maybe it is because *Amalek* is pleasant to our senses. We believe we are an enlightened society, we have greater education, we have better ideas, ‘I’ cannot learn from *your* experience, ‘I’ must experience it myself, and ‘I’ will succeed where you failed. All this can ultimately lead to complete rejection of His ways with the consequence of being ourselves rejected.

“² Thus says Adonai-Tzva’ot: ‘I remember what Amalek did to Israel, how he set himself against him on the way while he was coming up from Egypt. ³ Now go and strike down Amalek and put all he has under the ban of destruction—so have no pity on him; but kill both men and women, children and nursing infants, oxen and sheep, camels and donkeys...⁹ But Saul and the people spared Agag as well as the best of the sheep, the cattle, even the fatlings and the lambs, and all that was good, since they were not willing to utterly destroy them; everything that was worthless and feeble, they destroyed completely...²¹ But the people took some of the spoil, sheep and oxen—the best of what was under the ban of destruction—to sacrifice to Adonai your God in Gilgal.” ²² Samuel said:

“Does Adonai delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of Adonai? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, to pay heed than the fat of rams. ²³ For rebellion is like the sin of divination (witchcraft) and stubbornness is like iniquity and idolatry. Since you have rejected Adonai’s word, He has also rejected you as king.”

Let us strive to remove (blot out) completely the false notions of chance (happenstance) instead of it being the consequences of disobedience, of being abandoned by Him. The notions of: complacency, doubt, compromise, apathy, and having an alternative and “better” idea than what He has already said to us. I know we can overcome by the *“Blood of the Lamb, the words of our testimony (about that Blood), and loving our own lives (loving our own way)” (Rev. 12:11)* so there is a better way.

Let me close with the words of the Apostle Paul in Ephesians 1:15-23

“¹⁵ Therefore, ever since I heard of your trust in the Lord Yeshua and of your love for all the kedoshim (God’s people), ¹⁶ I never stop giving thanks for you as I mention you in my prayers—¹⁷ that the God of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah, our glorious Father, may give you spiritual wisdom and revelation in knowing Him. ¹⁸ I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what is the richness of His glorious inheritance in the kedoshim, ¹⁹ and what is His exceedingly great power toward us who keep trusting Him—in keeping with the working of His mighty strength. ²⁰ This power He exercised in Messiah when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in heaven. ²¹ He is far above any ruler, authority, power, leader, and every name that is named—not only in the olam ha-zeh but also in the olam ha-ba. ²² God placed all things under Messiah’s feet and appointed Him as head over all things for His community—²³ which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.”