

From the Rabbi's Desk
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Stories with a Twist [44]

They Should Not Have Rejected Her! (Insights into Sanhedrin 99b)

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Background to Our Story

Amalek



<http://www.wikipedia.org/>

According to the Book of Genesis and 1 Chronicles, Amalek was the son of Eliphaz and the grandson of Esau (Gen. 36:12; 1 Chr. 1:36); the chief of an Edomite tribe (Gen. 36:16). His mother was a Horite, a tribe whose territory the descendants of Esau had seized. According to the genealogy in Gen. 36:12; 1 Chr. 1:36. Amalek is a son of Esau's son Eliphaz and of the concubine Timna, a Horite and sister of Lotan. Gen. 36:16 refers to him as the "chief of Amalek" thus his name can be understood to be a title derived from that of the clan or territory over which he ruled.

Genesis 36

¹ *This is the line of Esau — that is, Edom.*

² *Esau took his wives from among the Canaanite women — Adah daughter of Elon the Hittite, and Oholibamah daughter of Anah daughter of Zibeon the Hivite — ³ and also Basemath daughter of Ishmael and sister of Nebaioth. ⁴ Adah bore to Esau Eliphaz; Basemath bore Reuel;*

¹² *Timna was a concubine of Esau's son Eliphaz; she bore Amalek to Eliphaz. Those were the descendants of Esau's wife Adah.*

²² *The sons of Lotan were Hori and Hemam; and Lotan's sister was Timna*

²⁹ *These are the clans of the Horites: the clans Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah,*

⁴⁰ *These are the names of the clans of Esau, each with its families and locality, name by name: the clans Timna, Alvah, Jetheth, ⁴¹ Oholibamah, Elah, Pinon,*

Exodus 17:8-15

⁸ Amalek came and fought with Israel at Rephidim. ⁹ Moses said to Joshua, "Pick some men for us, and go out and do battle with Amalek. Tomorrow I will station myself on the top of the hill, with the rod of God in my hand." ¹⁰ Joshua did as Moses told him and fought with Amalek, while Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. ¹¹ Then, whenever Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed; but whenever he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. ¹² But Moses' hands grew heavy; so they took a stone and put it under him and he sat on it, while Aaron and Hur, one on each side, supported his hands; thus his hands remained steady until the sun set. ¹³ And Joshua overwhelmed the people of Amalek with the sword.

¹⁴ Then the Lord said to Moses, "Inscribe this in a document as a reminder, and read it aloud to Joshua: I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven!"

¹⁵ And Moses built an altar and named it Adonai-nissi.

¹⁶ He said, "It means, 'Hand upon the throne of the Lord!' The Lord will be at war with Amalek throughout the ages."

? According to the Biblical story, why did Amalek fight with Israel at Rephidim?

Deuteronomy 25:17-19

¹⁷ Remember what Amalek did to you on your journey, after you left Egypt — ¹⁸ 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 your rear. ¹⁹ 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 heaven. Do not forget!

The Text: Sanhedrin 99b

תִּמְנָע בַּת מְלָכִים הוּאִי, דְּכָתִיב: "אֱלוֹף לוֹטָן, אֱלוֹף תִּמְנָע". וְכָל "אֱלוֹף" מְלָכוּתָא בְּלֵא תִּמְנָע הִיא.

בְּעֵינָא לְאִיגְיֹרֵי. בְּאֵתָהּ אֶצֶל אַבְרָהָם יִצְחָק וְיַעֲקֹב וְלֹא קִבְּלוּהָ. הִלְכָה וְהִיָּתָה פִּילָגֶשׁ לְאַלְפִּיז בֶּן עֵשָׂו. אָמְרָה: "מוֹטֵב תְּהֵא שְׂפָחָה לְאוֹמָה זוֹ, וְלֹא תְהֵא גְבוּרָה לְאוֹמָה אַחֲרָת". גִּפְק מִיָּנָה עֲמֶלְקָ, דְּצִעְרִינָהוּ לְיִשְׂרָאֵל. מֵאִי טַעְמָא? דְּלֹא אִיבְעִי לְהוּ לְרַחֲמָהּ

Timna was the daughter of kings, as it is written: "The chief of Lotan" (Genesis 36:29), and: "The chief of Timna" (Genesis 36:40), and each chief is a member of a monarchy, albeit without a crown.

[Timna] sought to convert. She came before Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and they did not accept her.

She went and became a concubine of Eliphaz, son of Esau, and said, referring to herself: It is preferable that she will be a maidservant for this nation, and she will not be a noblewoman for another nation. Ultimately, Amalek, son of Eliphaz, emerged from her, and afflicted the Jewish people. What is the reason that the Jewish people were punished by suffering at the hand of Amalek? It is due to the fact that they should not have rejected her.



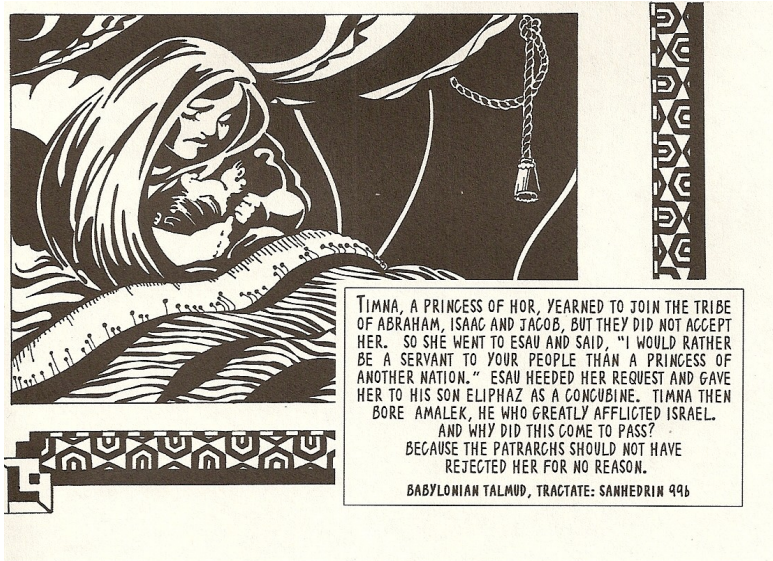
Explaining the Story - What is going on in our story? (Explain the sequence of events)

Comprehension & Analysis Questions

? According to our story, why was Timna interested in converting to the faith of Abraham?

? According to our story, why did Abraham Isaac and Jacob reject her?

? According to our story, why did Timna become a concubine to Eliphaz?



? Look at the picture above. How does Timna look? Why do you think she looks the way she does?

“The Twist” – Or the Lessons We Can Learn from the Text

! Timna begot Amalek... Baseless rejection always begets resentment and many times begets hatred! - A lesson we should never forget!