

Samuel 1 Chapter 15

א וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמוּאֵל, אֶל-שָׁאוּל, אֲתִי שָׁלַח יְהוָה לְמַשְׁחָךְ לְמֶלֶךְ, עַל-עַמּוֹ עַל-יִשְׂרָאֵל; וְעַתָּה שְׁמַע, לְקוֹל דְּבָרֵי יְהוָה. {ס}

1 And Samuel said unto Saul: 'The LORD sent me to anoint thee to be king over His people, over Israel; now therefore hearken thou unto the voice of the words of the LORD. {S}

ב כֹּה אָמַר, יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת, פִּקְדוֹתַי, אֵת אֲשֶׁר-עָשָׂה עִמָּלֶךְ, לְיִשְׂרָאֵל--אֲשֶׁר-שָׂם לוֹ בַּדֶּרֶךְ, בְּעֵלְתוֹ מִמִּצְרַיִם.

2 Thus saith the LORD of hosts: I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he set himself against him in the way, when he came up out of Egypt.

ג עַתָּה לֶךְ וְהִכִּיתָ אֶת-עִמְלֶךְ, וְהִחַרְמָתָם אֶת-כָּל-אֲשֶׁר-לוֹ, וְלֹא תַחֲמַל, עָלָיו; וְהִמַּתָּה מֵאִישׁ עַד-אִשָּׁה, מִעֵלִיל וְעַד-יוֹנֵק, מִנְּשׁוֹר וְעַד-שָׂה, מִגָּמֶל וְעַד-חֲמוֹר. {ס}

3 Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass.' {S}

ד וַיִּשְׁמַע שָׁאוּל, אֶת-הָעָם, וַיִּפְקְדֵם בִּטְלָאִים, מֵאֲתָיִים אֶלֶף רֶגֶלִי; וְעֶשְׂרֵת אֲלָפִים, אֶת-אִישׁ יְהוּדָה.

4 And Saul summoned the people, and numbered them in Telaim, two hundred thousand footmen, and ten thousand men of Judah.

ה וַיָּבֹא שָׁאוּל, עַד-עִיר עִמְלֶךְ; וַיָּרֶב, בַּנֶּחֱלַי.

5 And Saul came to the city of Amalek, and lay in wait in the valley.

ו וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁאוּל אֶל-הַקֵּינִי לְכוּ סִרוּ רִדּוֹ מִתּוֹךְ עִמְלֶקִי, פֶּן-אֶסְפָּךְ עַמּוֹ, וְאַתָּה עֹשִׂיתָה חֶסֶד

6 And Saul said unto the Kenites: 'Go, depart, get you down from among the Amalekites, lest I destroy you with them; for ye showed kindness to all the children

עִם-כָּל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, בְּעִלּוֹתָם
מִמִּצְרַיִם; וַיִּסַּר קִינִי, מִתּוֹךְ
עַמֶּלֶק.

of Israel, when they came up out of Egypt.' So the Kenites departed from among the Amalekites.

ז וַיִּךְ שָׁאוּל, אֶת-עַמֶּלֶק,
מִחוּלָּה בּוֹאֶךָ שׁוּר, אֲשֶׁר עַל-
פְּנֵי מִצְרַיִם.

7 And Saul smote the Amalekites, from Havilah as thou goest to Shur, that is in front of Egypt.

ח וַיִּתְּפֹשׂ אֶת-אַגַּג מֶלֶךְ-עַמֶּלֶק,
חַי; וְאֶת-כָּל-הָעָם, הַחֲרִים לְפִי-
חֶרֶב.

8 And he took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword.

ט וַיַּחְמַל שָׁאוּל וְהָעָם עַל-אַגַּג,
וְעַל-מִיטֵב הַצֹּאן וְהַבָּקָר
וְהַמִּשְׁנִים וְעַל-הַכֳּרִים וְעַל-כָּל-
הַטּוֹב, וְלֹא אָבוּ, הַחֲרִימָם; וְכָל-
הַמְּלָאכָה נִמְבָּזָה וְנִמַּס, אֹתָהּ
הַחֲרִימוּ. {פ}

9 But Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, even the young of the second birth, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them; but every thing that was of no account and feeble, that they destroyed utterly. {P}

י וַיְהִי, דְּבַר-יְהוָה, אֶל-שְׁמוּאֵל,
לֵאמֹר.

10 Then came the word of the LORD unto Samuel, saying:

יא נַחֲמֹתִי, כִּי-הִמְלַכְתִּי אֶת-
שָׁאוּל לְמֶלֶךְ--כִּי-נִשְׁבַּ מְאַחֲרִי,
וְאֶת-דְּבָרִי לֹא הִקִּים; וַיַּחֲר,
לְשְׁמוּאֵל, וַיִּזְעַק אֶל-יְהוָה, כָּל-
הַלַּיְלָה.

11 'It repenteth Me that I have set up Saul to be king; for he is turned back from following Me, and hath not performed My commandments.' And it grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the LORD all night.

יב וַיִּשְׁכֵּם שְׁמוּאֵל לְקִרְאֹת
שָׁאוּל, בַּבֹּקֶר; וַיִּגַּד לְשְׁמוּאֵל
לֵאמֹר, בָּא-שָׁאוּל הַכְּרַמְלָה

12 And Samuel rose early to meet Saul in the morning; and it was told Samuel, saying: 'Saul came to Carmel, and, behold, he is setting

וְהָיָה מַצִּיב לוֹ יָד, וַיֵּסֶב וַיַּעֲבֹר,
וַיֵּרֶד הַגִּלְגָּל.

him up a monument, and is gone about, and passed on, and gone down to Gilgal.'

יג וַיָּבֹא שָׁמוּאֵל, אֶל-שָׁאוּל;
וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ שָׁאוּל, בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה
לַיהוָה--הִקִּימְתִּי, אֶת-דָּבָר
יְהוָה.

13 And Samuel came to Saul; and Saul said unto him: 'Blessed be thou of the LORD; I have performed the commandment of the LORD.'

יד וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁמוּאֵל, וּמָה קוֹל-
הַצֹּאן הַזֶּה בְּאָזְנִי, וְקוֹל הַבָּקָר,
אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי שֹׁמֵעַ.

14 And Samuel said: 'What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?'

טו וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁאוּל מֵעַמְלֵקִי
הַבִּיאוּם, אֲשֶׁר חָמַל הָעָם עָלַי-
מִיֵּטֶב הַצֹּאן וְהַבָּקָר, לְמַעַן זָבַח,
לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ; וְאֶת-הַיּוֹתֵר,
הִחָרַמְנוּ. {פ}

15 And Saul said: 'They have brought them from the Amalekites; for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed.' {P}

טז וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁמוּאֵל, אֶל-שָׁאוּל,
הִרְף וְאֶגִּידָה לְךָ, אֶת אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר
יְהוָה אֵלַי הַלַּיְלָה; וַיֹּאמְרוּ
(וַיֹּאמֶר) לוֹ, דַּבֵּר. {ס}

16 Then Samuel said unto Saul: 'Stay, and I will tell thee what the LORD hath said to me this night.' And he said unto him: 'Say on.' {S}

יז וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁמוּאֵל--הֲלוֹא אָמ-
קָטַן אַתָּה בְּעֵינַיִךְ, רֹאשׁ שְׁבִטֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל אַתָּה; וַיִּמְשַׁח יְהוָה
לְמַלְךָ, עַל-יִשְׂרָאֵל.

17 And Samuel said: 'Though thou be little in thine own sight, art thou not head of the tribes of Israel? And the LORD anointed thee king over Israel;

יח וַיִּשְׁלַח יְהוָה, בְּדָרְךָ;
וַיֹּאמֶר, לְךָ וְהִחָרַמְתָּה אֶת-
הַחַטָּאִים אֶת-עַמְלֵק, וְנִלְחַמְתָּ

18 and the LORD sent thee on a journey, and said: Go and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites, and fight against them until they be

consumed.
בו, עד כלותם אתם.

יט וְלָמָּה לֹא-שָׁמַעְתָּ, בְּקוֹל
יְהוָה; וַתַּעַט, אֶל-הַשָּׁלַל, וַתַּעַשׂ
הָרַע, בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה. {ס}

19 Wherefore then didst thou not
hearken to the voice of the LORD,
but didst fly upon the spoil, and
didst that which was evil in the
sight of the LORD?' {S}

כ וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁאוּל אֶל-שָׁמוּאֵל,
אֲשֶׁר שָׁמַעְתִּי בְּקוֹל יְהוָה, וְאַלֶּיךָ,
בַּדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר-שָׁלַחְנִי יְהוָה;
וְאַבִּיָא, אֶת-אַגַּג מֶלֶךְ עַמְלִיק,
וְאֶת-עַמְלִיק, הַחֲרַמְתִּי.

20 And Saul said unto Samuel:
'Yea, I have hearkened to the voice
of the LORD, and have gone the
way which the LORD sent me, and
have brought Agag the king of
Amalek, and have utterly destroyed
the Amalekites.

כא וַיִּקַּח הָעָם מִהַשָּׁלַל צֹאן
וּבָקָר, רֵאשִׁית הַחֲרָם, לְזִבְחַ
לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ, בְּגִלְגָּל. {ס}

21 But the people took of the spoil,
sheep and oxen, the chief of the
devoted things, to sacrifice unto the
LORD thy God in Gilgal.' {S}

כב וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁמוּאֵל, הַחֲפֹץ
לַיהוָה בְּעֹלוֹת וּזְבָחִים, כְּשֹׁמֵעַ,
בְּקוֹל יְהוָה: הֲנֵה שֹׁמֵעַ מִזְבַּח
טוֹב, לְהִקְנִיב מִחֶלֶב אֵילִים.

22 And Samuel said: 'Hath the
LORD as great delight in burnt-
offerings and sacrifices, as in
hearkening to the voice of the
LORD? Behold, to obey is better
than sacrifice, and to hearken than
the fat of rams.

כג כִּי חַטָּאת-קָסָם מָרִי, וְאֹון
וּתְרָפִים הַפָּצָר: יַעַן, מֵאִסַּת
אֶת-דְּבַר יְהוָה, וַיִּמָּאֲסֶךָ,
מִמֶּלֶךְ. {ס}

23 For rebellion is as the sin of
witchcraft, and stubbornness is as
idolatry and teraphim. Because
thou hast rejected the word of the
LORD, He hath also rejected thee
from being king.' {S}

כד וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁאוּל אֶל-שָׁמוּאֵל
חַטָּאתִי, כִּי-עֲבַרְתִּי אֶת-פִּי-יְהוָה
וְאֶת-דְּבָרֶיךָ: כִּי יִרְאֵתִי אֶת-

24 And Saul said unto Samuel: 'I
have sinned; for I have
transgressed the commandment of
the LORD, and thy words; because

הָעָם, וְאֶשְׁמַע בְּקוֹלָם.

I feared the people, and hearkened to their voice.

כה וְעַתָּה, שָׂא נָא אֶת-חַטָּאתִי;
וְשׁוּב עָמִי, וְאֶשְׁתַּחֲוֶה לַיהוָה.

25 Now therefore, I pray thee, pardon my sin, and return with me, that I may worship the LORD.'

כו וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁמוּאֵל אֶל-שָׁאוּל,
לֹא אָשׁוּב עִמָּךְ: כִּי מָאַסְתָּה,
אֶת-דְּבַר יְהוָה, וַיִּמָּאֶסְךָ יְהוָה,
מִהָיֹת מֶלֶךְ עַל-יִשְׂרָאֵל. {ס}

26 And Samuel said unto Saul: 'I will not return with thee; for thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD hath rejected thee from being king over Israel.' {S}

כז וַיֹּסֶב שָׁמוּאֵל, לָלֶכֶת; וַיַּחֲזֶק
בְּכַנְף-מְעִילוֹ, וַיִּקְרַע. {ס}

27 And as Samuel turned about to go away, he laid hold upon the skirt of his robe, and it rent. {S}

כח וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו, שָׁמוּאֵל, קִרַּע
יְהוָה אֶת-מַמְלַכְוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל
מֵעַלֶיךָ, הַיּוֹם; וַנִּתְּנָה, לְרֵעֶךָ
הַטּוֹב מִמָּךְ. {ס}

28 And Samuel said unto him: 'The LORD hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, that is better than thou. {S}

כט וְגַם נִצַּח יִשְׂרָאֵל, לֹא יִשְׁקַר
וְלֹא יִנָּחַם: כִּי לֹא אָדָם הוּא,
לְהִנָּחֵם.

29 And also the Glory of Israel will not lie nor repent; for He is not a man, that He should repent.'

ל וַיֹּאמֶר חַטָּאתִי--עַתָּה כַּבִּדְנִי
נָא נֶגֶד זִקְנֵי-עָמִי, וְנֶגֶד יִשְׂרָאֵל;
וְשׁוּב עָמִי, וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִיתִי לַיהוָה
אֱלֹהֶיךָ.

30 Then he said: 'I have sinned; yet honour me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people, and before Israel, and return with me, that I may worship the LORD thy God.'

לא וַיָּשֻׁב שָׁמוּאֵל, אַחֲרֵי שָׁאוּל;
וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה שָׁאוּל, לַיהוָה. {ס}

31 So Samuel returned after Saul; and Saul worshipped the LORD. {S}

לב וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁמוּאֵל, הֲגִישׁוּ אֵלַי

32 Then said Samuel: 'Bring ye hither to me Agag the king of the

אֶת-אַגַּג מֶלֶךְ עַמְלֵק, וַיִּלְכְּ אֵלָיו,
אַגַּג מַעְדַּנֹת; וַיֹּאמֶר אַגַּג, אֲכַן
סָר מֵר-הַמָּוֶת. {ס}

Amalekites.' And Agag came unto him in chains. And Agag said: 'Surely the bitterness of death is at hand.' {S}

לֹג וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמוּאֵל--כֹּאֲשֶׁר
שִׁכְלָה נָשִׁים חֲרָבָךְ, כֵּן-תִשְׁכַּל
מִנָּשִׁים אִמְךָ; וַיִּשְׁסֹף שְׁמוּאֵל
אֶת-אַגַּג לִפְנֵי יְהוָה, בְּגִלְגָּל.
{ס}

33 And Samuel said: As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women. And Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the LORD in Gilgal.

וַיִּרְבּוּ בַנְחַל אָמֹר רַבִּי מָנִי עַל עֵסְקִי נַחַל בְּשָׁעָה שְׁאִמֵּר לוֹ רָאָה הַקְדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא לְשֹׂאוֹל לָךְ
וְהִכִּיתָ אֶת עַמְלִיק אָמֹר וּמָה נָפֶשׁ אַחַת אָמֹרָה תוֹרָה הִבָּא עֲגָלָה עֲרוּפָה כָּל הַנְּפָשׁוֹת הַלָּלוּ
עַל אַחַת כְּמָה וְכָמָה

“And Saul came to the city of Amalek and he strove in the valley” (I Samuel 15:5).
Rabbi Mani said: This means that Saul strove with God, as it were, concerning the
matter of the valley. At the time when the Holy One, Blessed be He, said to Saul:
“Now go and attack Amalek and proscribe all that belongs to him; do not pity him,
but kill men and women alike, infants and sucklings alike, oxen and sheep alike,
camel and donkey alike” (I Samuel 15:3), Saul countered and said: Now, if on
account of one life that is taken the Torah said to bring a heifer whose neck is
broken to a barren valley, all the more so must I have pity and not take all these
Amalekite lives.

וְאִם אָדָם חָטָא בְּהִמָּה מָה חָטָאָה וְאִם גְּדוּלִים חָטְאוּ קִטְנִים מָה חָטְאוּ יִצְאָה בֵּת קוֹל וְאָמֹרָה
לוֹ אֵל תְּהִי צְדִיק הַרְבֵּה

And he further reasoned: If the men have sinned, in what way have the animals
sinned? Why, then, should the Amalekites' livestock be destroyed? And if the
adults have sinned, in what way have the children sinned? A Divine Voice then
came forth and said to him: “Do not be overly righteous” (Ecclesiastes 7:16)

2. Devarim 2:24-26

כד קוּמוּ סֵעוּ, וְעִבְרוּ אֶת-
נַחַל אַרְנוֹן--רְאֵה נְתַתִּי בְיָדְךָ
אֶת-סִיחֹן מֶלֶךְ-חֶשְׁבּוֹן
הָאֱמֹרִי וְאֶת-אֶרְצוֹ, הַחֵל
רֶשׁ; וְהִתְגַּר בּוֹ, מִלְחָמָה.

24 Rise ye up, take your journey, and
pass over the valley of Arnon; behold, I
have given into thy hand Sihon the
Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land;
begin to possess it, and contend with
him in battle.

כה הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה, אֲחִיל תֵּת
פַּחַדְךָ וַיִּרְאָתְךָ, עַל-פְּנֵי
הָעַמִּים, תַּחַת כָּל-הַשָּׁמַיִם--
אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁמְעוּן שְׁמִיעָךָ, וְרָגְזוּ.

25 This day will I begin to put the dread
of thee and the fear of thee upon the
peoples that are under the whole
heaven, who, when they hear the
report of thee, shall tremble, and be in
anguish because of thee.'

וְחָלוּ מִפָּנֶיהָ.

כו וְאֶשְׁלַח מַלְאָכִים מִמִּדְבַּר קִדְמוֹת, אֶל-סִיחוֹן מֶלֶךְ חֶשְׁבוֹן, דְּבַרִי שָׁלוֹם, לֵאמֹר. **26** And I sent messengers out of the wilderness of Kedemoth unto Sihon king of Heshbon with words of peace, saying:

3. Midrash Tanchuma Tzav 3:1

אָמַר לוֹ הַקְדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא שְׂיַחֲרִים אוֹתָם, שְׁנֵאָמַר: כִּי הַחֲרָם תַּחֲרִימִם (דְּבָרִים כ, יז). וּמִשָּׁה לֹא עָשָׂה כֵן, אֲלֹא אָמַר, עֲכָשׁוּ אֲנִי הוֹלֵךְ וּמִכָּה מִי חֲטָא וּמִי שֶׁלֹּא חֲטָא. אֲלֹא בְּשָׁלוֹם אֲנִי בָא עֲלֵיהֶם, שְׁנֵאָמַר: וְאֶשְׁלַח מַלְאָכִים מִמִּדְבַּר קִדְמוֹת, דְּבַרִי שָׁלוֹם, אֶעֱבְרָה בְּאַרְצְךָ (שם ב, כו-כז). כִּיֹּן נִשְׂרָאָה שֶׁלֹּא בָא לְשָׁלוֹם, הִכָּהוּ, שְׁנֵאָמַר: וַיַּכּוּ אוֹתוֹ וְאֶת בָּנָיו וְאֶת כָּל עַמּוֹ (במדבר כא, לה). אָמַר הַקְדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא, אֲנִי אֲמַרְתִּי, כִּי הַחֲרָם תַּחֲרִימִם, וְאַתָּה לֹא עָשִׂיתָ כֵן. חַיִּיךָ, כָּשֶׁם שְׁאָמַרְתָּ, כֹּךָ אֲנִי עוֹשֶׂה, שְׁנֵאָמַר: כִּי תִקְרַב אֶל עִיר לְהִלָּחֵם עֲלֶיהָ, וְקִרְאתָ אֵלֶיהָ לְשָׁלוֹם (דְּבָרִים כ, י). לָכֵן נֵאָמַר: דְּרָכֶיהָ דְּרָכֵי נְעִים וְכָל נְתִיבוֹתֶיהָ שָׁלוֹם (משלי ג, יז).

the Holy One, blessed be He, had said that he should destroy them, as stated “you shall utterly destroy them.” However, Moses did not do so. Rather he said, “Am I to go and smite who has sinned and who has not sinned? Instead, let me come against them in peace, as stated (in Deut. 2:26-27), “Then I sent messengers from the Desert of Kedemoth [unto King Sihon of Heshbon] with words of peace [...]. I will traverse your land.” When he saw that he did not come in peace, he smote him, as stated (in Numb. 21:35), “So they smote him, his children, and all his people.” The Holy One, blessed be He, said to him, “I Myself told you (in Deut. 20:17), ‘No, you shall utterly destroy them,’ but you did not do this. By your life, just as you have said, so will I do.” Thus it is stated (in Deut. 20:10), “When you draw near unto a city to fight against it, you shall offer terms of peace unto it.” Therefore, it is so stated (in Prov. 3:17), “The ways [of wisdom] are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.”

4. Rambam Hilchos Melachim 6

War is not conducted against anyone in the world until they are first offered peace (and refuse it), whether this is a Discretionary War or a War of Mitzvoh, as

it says, “when you come close to the city to fight with it, you shall call to it to make peace” (Deut. 20:10). If they make peace and accept the Seven Commandments incumbent upon the Sons of Noah (Gentiles), none of them are killed....

If they do not come to peaceful terms or they make peace but do not accept the Seven Commandments, we engage in war against them and slay all their adult males. We take all their money and children as spoils. We do not kill the women or minors... To what do we refer? To a Discretionary War with one of the other nations. **However, with one of the Seven Nations or with Amalek** who do not make peace, we leave no soul alive, as it says, “so you shall do with everyone...only of the cities of the nations...do not leave alive any soul” (Deut. 20:15-16), and regarding Amalek it says, “erase the memory of Amalek” (Deut. 25:19). How do we know that this is referring to those who do not make peace with us? For it says, “there was no city which came to peace with the Children of Israel except the Chivites, dwellers of Givon. Everything, they took in the war. For from G-d their hearts were strengthened to the call of war with Israel, so that they may be destroyed.” (Joshua 11:19-20). They were offered peace, and refused.

5. Tehillim 29:11

יְהוָה עֹז לְעַמּוֹ יִתֵּן יְהוָה אֱבֹרָה אֶת־עַמּוֹ בַּשָּׁלוֹם:

May the LORD grant strength to His people; may the LORD bestow on His people wellbeing.