



WHY DESTROY AMALEK'S SHEEP?

The Torah tells us to “obliterate the remembrance of Amalek.” Rashi tells us that this includes even their livestock. Their other possessions, though, can be kept. A famous example of this happened during the Purim story, when Achashverosh transferred the house of Haman (who was from Amalek) to Esther.

From among all of Amalek's possessions, why are the sheep the only ones that need to be killed?

This is because animals can never truly be changed; their original state—and ownership—will always be a part of them. The sheep will always be “that sheep that used to belong to Amalek.” Other objects, however, can—and must—be changed in such a way that they're unrecognizable;

in this way, Amalek's remembrance is erased, but the object can be used for other purposes. And since other objects can be changed, people don't tend to refer to them as “the house that was once Amalek's.” In other words, their existence doesn't serve as a reminder of Amalek. Haman's house was only Haman's house until Achashverosh transferred it; then it became Esther's.

On a spiritual level, objects belonging to the realm of *domem*—inanimate objects such as stones and metal—correspond to the *avodah* of *kabolas ol*—*avoda* done with complete submission to Hashem, with no life force and no input from the individual on how the *avoda* should be done. The evil forces of Amalek can have no ownership over this lofty level of *avoda*.