

Lesson Two — The Flesh and the Spirit

Day One — The Water of Life

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Day Five — The Long-term Result

Last week we looked at the history behind the story of the battle with Amalek. This week we are going to look at the battle itself. While studying these things, we must remember that *all Scripture is God-breathed and profitable for teaching (doctrine), reproof, correction and training in righteousness so that you and I may be adequately equipped for every good work*. And this storyline concerning Amalek, of whom you may never hear about apart from studying the Bible, is not an exception. The story that concerns itself with the Israelites and the Amalekites is replete with doctrinal value, which should (according to God's desire) reprove each of us, correct our thinking, and child-train us in righteousness (right living).

Today we are going to look at what is at stake in this battle, and what part *unbelief* and *disobedience* plays in the outcome of the battle. Study well.

Day One — The Water of Life

We have seen that Esau was the first born of Isaac. His name was reflective of his physical appearance — he was red and hairy. After he had grown up, it is stated of him that he became a *skillful hunter, a man of the field*; and that he *disdained his birthright* (the first born status which offered him the reception of the promises made to Abraham and Isaac), and *sold the birthright* to Jacob for a bowl of red stew. At the time of this transaction, he was given the name Edom (a name which is made up of the same three Hebrew letters as the name Adam), which means “red.” The recorded facts concerning Esau give the picture that his life represents the fleshly nature of man.

On the other hand, Jacob (Esau's younger twin brother), was a *peaceful man, living in tents* — as did his father, Isaac, and grandfather, Abraham. Jacob, who was also given the name *Israel* by God, desired the birthright because of the spiritual implications therein, and did everything possible to receive firstborn status. The overall picture portrays the fact that the firstborn — the fleshly man — will not be able to receive the rights of the firstborn, but rather that born second — the spiritual man — will receive the rights. The first birth is set aside with respect to the inheritance, the second birth is established.

With the comparison of these two brothers as the backdrop, let's look at the offspring of Esau, the one representing the man of flesh. Hundreds of years pass. Of course, all the while, both Esau's descendants are increasing (as are Jacob's descendants). Let's read about Esau's lineage.

Genesis 36

1 Now these are the records of the generations of Esau (that is, Edom). **2** Esau took his wives from the daughters of Canaan: Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite, and Oholibamah the daughter of Anah and the granddaughter of Zibeon the Hivite; **3** also Basemath, Ishmael's daughter, the sister of Nebaioth. **4** And Adah bore Eliphaz to Esau, and Basemath bore Reuel, **5** and Oholibamah bore Jeush and Jalam and Korah. These are the sons of Esau who were born to him in the land of Canaan. **6** Then Esau took his wives and his sons and his daughters and all his household, and his livestock and all his cattle and all his goods which he had acquired in the land of Canaan, and went to another land away from his brother Jacob. **7** For their property had become too great for them to live together, and the land where they sojourned could not sustain them because of their livestock. **8** So Esau lived in the hill country of Seir; Esau is Edom. **9** These then are the records of the generations of Esau the father of the Edomites in the hill country of Seir. **10** These are the names of Esau's sons: Eliphaz the son of Esau's wife Adah... **12** And Timna was a concubine of Esau's son Eliphaz and she bore Amalek to Eliphaz...

Verse four gives the name of Esau's firstborn son. What was his name?

Now go to v. 12. What is the name of Eliphaz' son?

Today we are going to see how one line of the descendants of Esau — the Amalekites (generally referred in Scripture by their father's name, Amalek) — were the first to oppose the Children of Israel, after they were redeemed out of Egypt and after coming through the Red Sea.

You may remember God had given Abraham a promise of *innumerable descendants*. He also promised to him *a land* and *an inheritance in that land*. However God told Abraham that prior to these promises being realized, his descendants would be sojourners and eventually enslaved in a land not their own; then, after a four hundred year period, He would bring them out of that foreign land and settle them in the land which had been promised to Abraham and his descendants after him (Gen. 15:13-16).

At the end of a four hundred year period (a period which began with the birth of Isaac and ended with the Passover and the Exodus), is where our story picks up. We'll begin there.

The Children of Israel, Jacob's descendants, led by Moses, had been redeemed out of bondage in Egypt by the blood of the Passover lambs. They had come to the Red Sea and successfully crossed the sea, by a miracle of God. Shortly thereafter, they came to a place called Rephidim. Let's read about the scenario leading up to our storyline with the Amalekites.

Exodus 17

1 Then all the congregation of the sons of Israel journeyed by stages from the wilderness of Sin, according to the command of the LORD, and camped at Rephidim, and there was no water for the people to drink. **2** Therefore the people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water that we may drink." And Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the LORD?" **3** But the people thirsted there for water; and they grumbled

against Moses and said, “Why, now, have you brought us up from Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?” 4 So Moses cried out to the LORD, saying, “What shall I do to this people? A little more and they will stone me.” 5 Then the LORD said to Moses, “Pass before the people and take with you some of the elders of Israel; and take in your hand your staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. 6 Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink.” And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. 7 And he named the place Massah and Meribah because of the quarrel of the sons of Israel, and because they tested the LORD, saying, “Is the LORD among us, or not?”

At Rephidim there was no water; and the people grumbled against the Lord. There are some interesting facts to consider in these seven verses alone, leading up to our storyline concerning Amalek.

First let’s consider the name of the place they had come to — Rephidim. The word comes from the root *raphad*. The Strong’s number and definition follows:

07502. raphad

to spread a bed; by implication, to refresh: — comfort, make a bed, spread.

Perhaps the fact that the name of the place they had come to, having this meaning, could imply that the people were ready to stop here at Rephidim (a place of beds, a place of rest), and not continue on in their journey towards the Promise Land. We can’t know for sure; but we can know that *all Scripture is profitable for teaching, reproof, correction and training in righteousness*. And this small fact would be no different.

They had come to a place that appeared to offer comfort and relaxation, a place where they could make their beds and take repose; take their ease. The problem was that Rephidim is not the place wherein God desired them to rest. And there was no water there, which is significant, as well. Additionally, little did they know that an enemy lurked just around the corner.

First, let’s deal with the lack of water. Instead of remembering all that God had done for them, then simply asking their Redeemer to provide water for them through Moses, the Children grumbled against Moses, God’s chosen one, and tested God — wondering what His motive might be in bringing them out of Egypt. Hence the place became known as Massah and Meribah, names which mean *they quarreled with God*, and *they tested God*, respectively (Ex. 17:7). Yet God orchestrated this opportunity to use the circumstances to teach His people something about *the rock and water*. He told Moses to “strike the rock,” and when the rock was struck, water gushed forth.

We can know that a rock symbolizes Jesus Christ, the Son of God, God the Son, and that prophetically, we can know that He would be the Stricken Redeemer.

II Samuel 22

32 “For who is God, besides the LORD? And who is a rock, besides our God?

...47 “The LORD lives, and blessed be my rock; And exalted be God, the rock of my salvation...

Psalms 18

2 The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, My God, my rock, in whom I take refuge; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

Matthew 16

18 “And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it.

I Corinthians 10 (Paul, speaking of the generation of Israel redeemed out of Egypt)

4 and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ.

The instructions God gave to Moses was to “strike the rock.” We can know now, that God was giving us a picture of what would happen to the Rock, the Son of God — He would be stricken once, and would become to all who believe in Him the Water of Life.

John 4

13 Jesus answered and said to her [the Samaritan woman at the well], “Everyone who drinks of this water shall thirst again; 14 but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life.”

John 7

37 Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If any man is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. 38 He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.’“

As we close for today, do you have any thoughts, comments, or questions at this point?

We will continue along these lines tomorrow.

Day Two — The First Opponent

Yesterday we saw that the Children of Israel had come to Rephidim — a *place of rest*. Was this the place wherein God wanted them to rest? Or did they prematurely desire rest, thereby letting their guard down? (Herein is a warning to us.)

Rephidim was also a place wherein there was no water, until the Lord provided water for them from a stricken rock. Meanwhile, the Children *quarreled* with Moses and tested God. Therefore the place received two different names — Massah, the meaning of which points to the fact that they *quarreled* with God; and Meribah, the meaning of which points to the fact that they *tested* God.

So here, they

- took premature rest
- quarreled with God, and
- tested Him.

Yet, in His love for Israel, He provided water for them from the rock. And *immediately* thereafter, a battle ensued. Look at the very next verse.

Exodus 17

8 Then Amalek came and fought against Israel at Rephidim.

The Battle with Amalek — A Kingdom at Stake

Lesson Two The Flesh and the Spirit

With Amalek being a descendant of Esau, a man associated with the flesh, and Israel being descendants of Jacob, a man associated with the spirit, what do you think this battle may represent?

At this point, who is the aggressor?

Continuing —

9 So Moses said to Joshua, “Choose men for us, and go out, fight against Amalek. Tomorrow I will station myself on the top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand.” 10 And Joshua did as Moses told him, and fought against Amalek; and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. 11 So it came about when Moses held his hand up, that Israel prevailed, and when he let his hand down, Amalek prevailed. 12 But Moses’ hands were heavy. Then they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it; and Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side and one on the other. Thus his hands were steady until the sun set. 13 So Joshua overwhelmed Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.

What would happen when Moses held his hands up?

What would happen when Moses dropped his hands?

What do you think the symbolism may be of Moses on the hill holding his hands up during the battle?

What might the picture be of the help Aaron and Hur provided?

According to v. 13, how did Joshua overwhelm Amalek?

In essence, how did the victory come about? What were the “ingredients” for victory?

In the way of a side note, read this verse.

Ephesians 6

17 And take ... the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Relate all of this to the battle of the spirit and flesh for us.

At the end of the battle in Exodus chapter seventeen, God spoke the following to Moses —

Exodus 17

14 Then the LORD said to Moses, “Write this in a book as a memorial, and recite it to Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven.” 15 And Moses built an altar, and named it The LORD is My Banner; 16 and he said, “The LORD has sworn; the LORD will have war against Amalek from generation to generation.”

In your own words, write out what God tells Moses about the Amalekites.

What do you think v. 16 implies in the spiritual sense?

Amalek was the first nation who opposed Israel in their trek to the Promised Land. There is a bit more information concerning this particular battle that is not recorded in Exodus chapter seventeen. Moses reported this information to the second generation in the Book of Deuteronomy some forty years after the battle had taken place. As more than a matter of record, this was told to the second generation just prior to their entering the Promised Land. Here is what is recorded from Moses’ discourse to the second generation:

Deuteronomy 25

17 “Remember what Amalek did to you along the way when you came out from Egypt, 18 how he met you along the way and attacked among you all the stragglers at your rear when you were faint and weary; and he did not fear God. 19 Therefore it shall come about when the LORD your God has given you rest from all your surrounding enemies, in the land which the LORD your God gives you as an inheritance to possess, you shall blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven; you must not forget.

According to this record, how did Amalek attack Israel in the battle which is recorded in Exodus chapter seventeen? What was his method of attack (v. 18)?

According to what Moses told this second generation, what was God’s very clear command to the Israelites concerning Amalek, once they entered the land to receive their inheritance (v. 19)?

In making application to our own lives, what can we learn about this attack?

This forms a very good lesson for us. The nation who was descended from the man who embodies the flesh — Esau — was the first to come against the nation who was descended from the man who embodies the spirit — Israel (remember Jacob’s name was changed to Israel). This reveals to us that our #1 enemy will be the flesh. The flesh will wage war against the spirit. And as we will see, it will be an ongoing battle! But we are to give no room for the flesh to have advantage (cf. Rom. 13:14).

With these things in mind, let’s go on to see what more we can learn about the ongoing battle between Amalek and Israel, remembering that this enmity reflects the ongoing battle between our flesh and our spirit.

Let’s drop back behind the Book of Deuteronomy, back behind telling the second generation of these things, and understand more of what took place with the first generation. Shortly after this first battle with Amalek in Exodus chapter seventeen, the Children of Israel were taken to Mt. Sinai for about a year where God taught them and strengthened them so that they would be able to do all that He had purposed for them to do. When that year was up, and God had brought the Children into an understanding of the reason for their having been redeemed out of Egypt, they were ready to be taken into the Promised Land. Then, once the spies returned with the fruits of the land and their report, they would have come into a mature knowledge, and would have been fully equipped. They only had to *believe and obey*.

But there was a problem — as a whole, they didn’t have a heart to believe and obey. And once they got to the doors of the Promised Land, Kadesh Barnea, they refused to go in. They desired to send in spies first, rather than simply believe God, obey Him, and go in and take the land. After seeking permission, God allowed them to send in twelve spies, a leader from each of the twelve tribes. Forty days later, when the spies brought back their report, they also brought back fruit from the land. Ten spies gave a false report — *we cannot go in and take possession of the land*. Here is the essence of the report of the ten:

Numbers 13

25 When they returned from spying out the land, at the end of forty days, 26 they proceeded to come to Moses and Aaron and to all the congregation of the sons of Israel in the wilderness of Paran, at Kadesh; and they brought back word to them and to all the congregation and showed them the fruit of the land. 27 Thus they told him, and said, “We went in to the land where you sent us; and it certainly does flow with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. 28 Nevertheless, the people who live in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified and very large; and moreover, we saw the descendants of Anak there. 29 Amalek is living in the land of the Negev and the Hittites and the Jebusites and the Amorites are living in the hill country, and the Canaanites are living by the sea and by the side of the Jordan.”

The ten spies went on to say:

31 ... “We are not able to go up against the people, for they are too strong for us.” 32 So they gave out to the sons of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, “The land through which we have gone, in spying it out, is a land that devours its inhabitants; and all the people whom we saw in it are men of great size. 33 There also we saw the Nephilim (the sons of Anak are part of the Nephilim); and we became like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight.”

Notice v. 29. Who is first mentioned as living in the land?

But two of the spies, Joshua and Caleb, gave a true report — *we can and must go in and take the land*. Here is the essence of their report:

Numbers 13

30 Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, “We should by all means go up and take possession of it, for we shall surely overcome it.”

And,

Numbers 14

6 And Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, of those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes; 7 and they spoke to all the congregation of the sons of Israel, saying, “The land which we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land. 8 If the LORD is pleased with us, then He will bring us into this land, and give it to us — a land which flows with milk and honey. 9 Only do not rebel against the LORD; and do not fear the people of the land, for they shall be our prey. Their protection has been removed from them, and the LORD is with us; do not fear them.”

In the end, the nation as a whole believed the false report given by the ten. Too bad! Their decision to disbelieve and disobey had horrible ramifications, both *short term* and *long term*.

In the end, the Lord pronounced judgment against Israel for their unbelief and disobedience, telling them to turn back to the wilderness for the remainder of a forty-year period, until the entire first generation died off, save Joshua and Caleb. God told them that they could not go into the land of their calling, but that He would bring their children into the Promised Land.

But the next morning, the people decided to do what God had originally told them to do rather than turn back into the wilderness, presuming that God would change His mind about the matter and would deliver them into the land. Let’s read about it:

Numbers 14

40 In the morning, however, they rose up early and went up to the ridge of the hill country, saying, “Here we are; we have indeed sinned, but we will go up to the place which the LORD has promised.” 41 But Moses said, “Why then are you transgressing the commandment of the LORD, when it will not succeed? 42 Do not go up, lest you be struck down before your enemies, for the LORD is not among you. 43 For the Amalekites and the Canaanites will be there in front of you, and you will fall by the sword, inasmuch as you have turned back from following the LORD. And the LORD will not be with you.” 44 But they went up heedlessly to the ridge of the hill country; neither the ark of the covenant of the LORD nor Moses left the camp. 45 Then the Amalekites and the Canaanites who lived in that hill country came down, and struck them and beat them down as far as Hormah.

According to v. 43, what nation is mentioned as those who would oppose them from going into the land?

According to the end of that verse, why would they fall by the sword?

Before we close for today would you put some thought to what you have learned today? Would you write out what you can personally learn from this? If all Scripture is profitable, what would profit us by knowing and applying these lessons to our lives?

Day Three — The Ongoing Command

Yesterday we looked at what happened in the wilderness when the Children of Israel came to the doors of the Promised Land — they refused to believe and obey the Lord concerning their entrance into the land. This had great ramifications for them. Those who had been redeemed from Egypt with the purpose of being taken into the Promised Land, therein realizing God's purpose concerning an inheritance in that land, were turned back into the wilderness for the remainder of a forty-year period. During the ensuing years, the entire generation died, save two, the two faithful spies.

The second generation, led by Joshua, was allowed to go into the Land, realizing God's purpose concerning an inheritance in that land.

Now, let's jump ahead in history about another 400 years. We come to the middle of the reign of the first earthly king over God's people — King Saul. In studying this, we must not forget what God had previously told Israel at two specific times concerning Amalek. He had told Israel that:

- God will have war with Amalek from generation to generation (Ex. 17:16),
- The Children of Israel should blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven, and
- They must not forget (Ex. 25:19)!

God's attitude toward Amalek was something that they should have continued to remember, as the first five books of Scripture were read regularly in their hearing. In fact, we can see that, at one point in time, Saul *did* fight against Amalek and prevailed. Let's read about it.

I Samuel 14

47 Now when Saul had taken the kingdom over Israel, he fought against all his enemies on every side, against Moab, the sons of Ammon, Edom, the kings of Zobah, and the Philistines; and wherever he turned, he inflicted punishment. 48 And he acted valiantly and defeated the Amalekites, and delivered Israel from the hands of those who plundered them.

But there is a sad truth revealed in the very next chapter. About half way into Saul's reign, Samuel, the prophet of God, was sent with a message to Saul concerning the Amalekites. Saul's disobedience concerning this message had terrible ramifications for Saul.

I Samuel 15

1 Then Samuel said to Saul, "The LORD sent me to anoint you as king over His people, over Israel; now therefore, listen to the words of the LORD. 2 Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'I will punish Amalek for what he did to Israel, how he set himself against him on the way

while he was coming up from Egypt. 3 Now go and strike Amalek and utterly destroy all that he has, and do not spare him; but put to death both man and woman, child and infant, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.”

Write out the very clear command from the Lord to Saul through the Prophet Samuel.

Let's see what Saul did.

Continuing —

4 Then Saul summoned the people and numbered them in Telaim, 200,000 foot soldiers and 10,000 men of Judah. 5 And Saul came to the city of Amalek, and set an ambush in the valley. 6 And Saul said to the Kenites, “Go, depart, go down from among the Amalekites, lest I destroy you with them; for you showed kindness to all the sons of Israel when they came up from Egypt.” So the Kenites departed from among the Amalekites. 7 So Saul defeated the Amalekites, from Havilah as you go to Shur, which is east of Egypt. 8 And he captured Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword. 9 But Saul and the people spared Agag and the best of the sheep, the oxen, the fatlings, the lambs, and all that was good, and were not willing to destroy them utterly; but everything despised and worthless, that they utterly destroyed.

Did Saul obey the command of the Lord? (The answer is either Yes or No? From the Lord's perspective, there is no middle ground.)

How was it that Saul did not obey the Lord? Where did he go wrong? What two things did he do which were disobedient to the Lord's clear command?

That night God revealed to Samuel what Saul had done (or not done).

Continuing —

10 Then the word of the LORD came to Samuel, saying, 11 “I regret that I have made Saul king, for he has turned back from following Me, and has not carried out My commands.” And Samuel was distressed and cried out to the LORD all night. 12 And Samuel rose early in the morning to meet Saul; and it was told Samuel, saying, “Saul came to Carmel, and behold, he set up a monument for himself, then turned and proceeded on down to Gilgal.” 13 And Samuel came to Saul, and Saul said to him, “Blessed are you of the LORD! I have carried out the command of the LORD.” 14 But Samuel said, “What then is this bleating of the sheep in my ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?” 15 And Saul said, “They have brought them from the Amalekites, for the people spared the best of the sheep and oxen, to sacrifice to the LORD your God; but the rest we have utterly destroyed.”

Look who Saul said acted in disobedience (v. 15). Who was it?

How does v. 15 compare to what is stated in v. 9?

Continuing —

16 Then Samuel said to Saul, “Wait, and let me tell you what the LORD said to me last night.” And he said to him, “Speak!” 17 And Samuel said, “Is it not true, though you were little in your own eyes, you were made the head of the tribes of Israel? And the LORD anointed you king over Israel, 18 and the LORD sent you on a mission, and said, ‘Go and utterly destroy the sinners, the Amalekites, and fight against them until they are exterminated.’ 19 Why then did you not obey the voice of the LORD, but rushed upon the spoil and did what was evil in the sight of the LORD?”

According to Samuel’s words at the end of v. 19, how did God view this partial obedience?

Continuing —

20 Then Saul said to Samuel, “I did obey the voice of the LORD, and went on the mission on which the LORD sent me, and have brought back Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. 21 But the people took some of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the choicest of the things devoted to destruction, to sacrifice to the LORD your God at Gilgal.”

Saul repeats his accusation of the source of disobedience in v. 21. What was the reason Saul gave in the way of justifying the disobedience?

Continuing in I Samuel 15—

22 And Samuel said, “Has the LORD as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams. 23 For rebellion is as the sin of divination, and insubordination is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He has also rejected you from being king.”

Verses 22, 23 are extremely important verses for us to understand. Therefore, we need to pause and think about what Samuel said. Please write it down, either in your own words, or quote it exactly. We just need to ponder the importance of these distinctions.

Once Samuel had told Saul that the Lord had rejected him from being king, Saul seemed as though he would repent. But as we shall see, the repentance was really feigned.

Continuing —

24 Then Saul said to Samuel, “I have sinned; I have indeed transgressed the command of the LORD and your words, because I feared the people and listened to their voice. 25 “Now therefore, please pardon my sin and return with me, that I may worship the LORD.” 26 But Samuel said to Saul, “I will not return with you; for you have rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD has rejected you from being king over Israel.” 27 And as Samuel turned to go, Saul seized the edge of his robe, and it tore. 28 So Samuel said to him, “The LORD has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today, and has given it to your neighbor who is better than you. 29 And also the Glory of Israel will not lie or change His mind; for He is not a man that He should change His mind.”

What two things did Saul ask Samuel to do in v. 25?

There is a description of God in v. 29, which tells of a part of God’s character. What does it say?

As we continue reading through the text, we come to the heart of the reason for Saul’s feigned repentance. It is in v. 30.

Continuing —

30 Then he said, “I have sinned; but please honor me now before the elders of my people and before Israel, and go back with me, that I may worship the LORD your God.” 31 So Samuel went back following Saul, and Saul worshiped the LORD.

32 Then Samuel said, “Bring me Agag, the king of the Amalekites.” And Agag came to him cheerfully. And Agag said, “Surely the bitterness of death is past.” 33 But Samuel said, “As your sword has made women childless, so shall your mother be childless among women.” And Samuel hewed Agag to pieces before the LORD at Gilgal.

Why did Saul want Samuel to go back with him to the city?

Who ended up killing the king of the Amalekites, in obedience to the Lord?

Continuing —

34 Then Samuel went to Ramah, but Saul went up to his house at Gibeah of Saul. 35 And Samuel did not see Saul again until the day of his death; for Samuel grieved over Saul. And the LORD regretted that He had made Saul king over Israel.

Would you go back and underline the first part of v. 35? We will need to remember that a little later.

Tomorrow we will continue with our story. Remember, a kingdom is at stake!

Day Four — The Result of Obedience or Disobedience

Yesterday we looked at I Samuel chapter fifteen wherein Saul disobeyed the clear and distinct command of the Lord concerning the utter destruction of Amalek. God viewed Saul's disobedience as *evil in His sight* — which is the way we should also view partial obedience. Partial obedience is not obedience at all. It is *evil in the sight of God*.

Remembering that Amalek represents for us the man of flesh, the command to *utterly destroy Amalek* represents a spiritual truth to us. It is very succinctly stated in Romans chapter thirteen —

Romans 13

14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.

What is the clear command within this verse?

There are many verses that say this same thing in different ways; but the bottom line is this — we are to put to death the things of the flesh, and make no provision for its lusts! The pictures given to us in both of the stories — the Children of Israel and their ongoing battle with Amalek, as well as the story of Saul losing his right to be king — demonstrate to us what God wants us to do with things concerning the lusts of the flesh, and subsequently, the ramifications of not *fully* obeying.

God wants us to completely destroy the lusts of the flesh. Anything short of this is *evil in the sight of the Lord*. We will talk more about that in the next lesson, but for now, let's get back to Saul and what happened next.

Apparently, immediately after the incident took place in chapter fifteen, God told Samuel to go to the house of a particular family in Israel, because He had chosen another man who would become king. (This man would not only be from a different lineage than Saul's, but also from a different tribe than Saul.) You can read the details of this in the first portion of chapter sixteen if you like, but for now let's just get the minimal facts.

I Samuel 16

13 Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him [David] in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward. And Samuel arose and went to Ramah.

14 Now the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD terrorized him. 15 Saul's servants then said to him, "Behold now, an evil spirit from God is terrorizing you."

David, the youngest son of Jesse, was anointed by Samuel to be the next king. Again, all of this took place about twenty years into Saul's forty-two year reign. God allowed Saul to continue on the throne until David was prepared to become king (which awaited that day when David had a group of trained men who would make up his administration).

But about half way into through Saul's reign, God took away His Spirit from Saul, and put His Spirit upon David. Verses 14 and 15 tell what happened to Saul as a result. What was it?

Let's piece a few things together here. Compare I Samuel 16:14, 15 to I Samuel 15:23 (p. 35). What do you see in the way of comparison?

From this we can see that the sin of rebellion opens a person up to the direct attack of Satan. God withdrew His Spirit and sent an evil spirit to torment Saul. Disobedience has devastating results, doesn't it?

Now let's fast-forward about twenty-years.

During the ensuing years, from the incident in chapter fifteen to the end of Saul's reign, Saul never saw Samuel again, not even once (I Sam. 15:35). Finally Samuel died, and all of Israel mourned the death of this great prophet (I Sam. 25). Meanwhile, Israel was embroiled in battles. And finally, near the end of Saul's reign, David fought against the Amalekites on one front, having victory over them (I Sam. 27:8, 9), while Saul faced the Philistines on another front, facing ultimate defeat (I Sam. 28). At this point in time Saul was so fearful of the Philistines that he actually went headlong into witchcraft, calling Samuel up from the dead in order to seek his advice. (Remember that rebellion is as the sin of divination and Saul had been rebellious toward the Lord's command twenty years earlier.)

We are going to read the passage wherein this took place. Please read and study this passage carefully. It is printed double-spaces with wider margins, so that you can make study notes.

I Samuel 28

NOTES:

1 Now it came about in those days that the Philistines gathered their armed camps for war, to fight against Israel. ...

3 Now Samuel was dead, and all Israel had lamented him and buried him in Ramah his own city. And Saul had removed from the land those who were mediums and spiritists. 4 So the Philistines gathered together and came and camped in Shunem; and Saul gathered all Israel together and they camped in Gilboa. 5 When Saul saw the camp of the Philistines, he was afraid and his heart trembled greatly. 6 When Saul inquired of the LORD, the LORD did not answer him, either by dreams or by Urim or by prophets.

7 Then Saul said to his servants, "Seek for me a woman who is a medium, that I may go to her and inquire of her." And his servants said to him, "Behold, there is a woman who is a medium at En-dor." 8 Then Saul disguised himself by putting on other clothes, and went, he and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night; and he said, "Conjure up for me, please, and bring up for me whom I shall name to you." 9 But the woman said to him, "Behold, you know what Saul has done, how he has cut off those

who are mediums and spiritists from the land. Why are you then laying a snare for my life to bring about my death?” 10 And Saul vowed to her by the LORD, saying, “As the LORD lives, there shall no punishment come upon you for this thing.”

11 Then the woman said, “Whom shall I bring up for you?” And he said, “Bring up Samuel for me.” 12 When the woman saw Samuel, she cried out with a loud voice; and the woman spoke to Saul, saying, “Why have you deceived me? For you are Saul.” 13 And the king said to her, “Do not be afraid; but what do you see?” And the woman said to Saul, “I see a divine being coming up out of the earth.” 14 And he said to her, “What is his form?” And she said, “An old man is coming up, and he is wrapped with a robe.” And Saul knew that it was Samuel, and he bowed with his face to the ground and did homage.

15 Then Samuel said to Saul, “Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?” And Saul answered, “I am greatly distressed; for the Philistines are waging war against me, and God has departed from me and answers me no more, either through prophets or by dreams; therefore I have called you, that you may make known to me what I should do.” 16 And Samuel said, “Why then do you ask me, since the LORD has departed from you and has become your adversary? 17 And the LORD has done accordingly as He spoke through me; for the LORD has torn the kingdom out of your hand and given it to your neighbor, to David. 18 As you did not obey the LORD and did not execute His fierce wrath on Amalek, so the LORD has done this thing to you this day. 19 Moreover the LORD will also give over Israel along with you into the hands of the Philistines, therefore tomorrow you and your sons will be with me. Indeed the LORD will give over the army of Israel into the hands of the Philistines!”

20 Then Saul immediately fell full length upon the ground and was very afraid because of the words of Samuel; also there was no strength in him, for he had eaten no food all day and all night.

This is the second way in which the sin of rebellion became like divination (witchcraft). The first time was immediately after Saul acted rebelliously, when God sent an evil spirit to torment Saul in chapter sixteen; and finally here in chapter twenty-eight, Saul actually falls headlong into witchcraft, by going to a witch to contact the dead. Amazing!

Compare the end of v. 3 to v. 7. What do you see in the comparison?

As we can see, rebellion eventually causes a person to take actions that they had previously determined **not to do**. While Saul tried to hide himself from committing such a sin, he was eventually found out. Go back and underline v. 17.

Even though this was about twenty years beyond that which took place in chapter fifteen, let's compare a few facts. Look back on p. 36 and reread I Samuel 15:24-29; and underline vv. 27 and 28. Look at the identical wording. What is identical in wording?

Now reread I Samuel 15:29. Even though God waited twenty years to bring about what He said would happen, did He change His mind?

In I Samuel 28:18, twenty years later, Samuel (back from the dead), reminds Saul of the reason God would “tear the kingdom away” from Saul. What was the reason?

We will pick up here tomorrow. This is an ongoing story, even reaching into the Book of II Samuel. Tomorrow we will see the final result of Saul's stubborn rebellion.

May I leave you with these two thoughts for today? In the long-run:

- **the cost of disobedience is *always* more than what a person will want to pay;**
- **the cost of obedience, though it may seem like a high cost today, it is *always* worth it in the end.**

Meditate on these thoughts today.

Day Five — The Long-term Result

Yesterday we viewed the events which took place the day before Saul's death. Today we will look at the details surrounding his death. We will begin in the last chapter of I Samuel and move into the first chapter of II Samuel.¹ Before we get started, will you go back and reread I Samuel 28:15-19 at the end of yesterday's homework? Please do that now.

¹ Due to the added detail of these events in II Samuel chapter one, I am not sure why there is a book break here. There was no break in the earliest Hebrew texts. The break came with the printing of the Septuagint.

Where did Samuel say that Saul and his sons would be the next day?

Let's look at the details as to how this came about.

I Samuel 31

1 Now the Philistines were fighting against Israel, and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines and fell slain on Mount Gilboa. **2** And the Philistines overtook Saul and his sons; and the Philistines killed Jonathan and Abinadab and Malchi-shua the sons of Saul. **3** And the battle went heavily against Saul, and the archers hit him; and he was badly wounded by the archers. **4** Then Saul said to his armor bearer, "Draw your sword and pierce me through with it, lest these uncircumcised come and pierce me through and make sport of me." But his armor bearer would not, for he was greatly afraid. So Saul took his sword and fell on it. **5** And when his armor bearer saw that Saul was dead, he also fell on his sword and died with him. **6** Thus Saul died with his three sons, his armor bearer, and all his men on that day together. **7** And when the men of Israel who were on the other side of the valley, with those who were beyond the Jordan, saw that the men of Israel had fled and that Saul and his sons were dead, they abandoned the cities and fled; then the Philistines came and lived in them.

8 And it came about on the next day when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. **9** And they cut off his head, and stripped off his weapons, and sent them throughout the land of the Philistines, to carry the good news to the house of their idols and to the people. **10** And they put his weapons in the temple of Ashtaroath, and they fastened his body to the wall of Beth-shan. **11** Now when the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead heard what the Philistines had done to Saul, **12** all the valiant men rose and walked all night, and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Beth-shan, and they came to Jabesh, and burned them there. **13** And they took their bones and buried them under the tamarisk tree at Jabesh, and fasted seven days.

What happened in v. 3?

What did Saul say to his armor-bearer in v. 4?

Since his armor-bearer would not do what Saul asked, what did Saul do?

In vv. 8-10, what did the Philistines do to the dead?

With that being the end of the Book of I Samuel, one might think that that is the end of the Saul's story. But there is another bit of information we need to have in order to see what *the full ramifications are of disobedience to God's expressed commands*. Let's continue reading in II Samuel chapter one.

II Samuel 1

1 Now it came about after the death of Saul, when David had returned from the slaughter of the Amalekites, that David remained two days in Ziklag. 2 And it happened on the third day, that behold, a man came out of the camp from Saul, with his clothes torn and dust on his head. And it came about when he came to David that he fell to the ground and prostrated himself. 3 Then David said to him, "From where do you come?" And he said to him, "I have escaped from the camp of Israel." 4 And David said to him, "How did things go? Please tell me." And he said, "The people have fled from the battle, and also many of the people have fallen and are dead; and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead also." 5 So David said to the young man who told him, "How do you know that Saul and his son Jonathan are dead?" 6 And the young man who told him said, "By chance I happened to be on Mount Gilboa, and behold, Saul was leaning on his spear. And behold, the chariots and the horsemen pursued him closely. 7 And when he looked behind him, he saw me and called to me. And I said, 'Here I am.' 8 And he said to me, 'Who are you?' And I answered him, 'I am an Amalekite.' 9 Then he said to me, 'Please stand beside me and kill me; for agony has seized me because my life still lingers in me.' 10 So I stood beside him and killed him, because I knew that he could not live after he had fallen. And I took the crown which was on his head and the bracelet which was on his arm, and I have brought them here to my lord."

11 Then David took hold of his clothes and tore them, and so also did all the men who were with him. 12 And they mourned and wept and fasted until evening for Saul and his son Jonathan and for the people of the LORD and the house of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword. 13 And David said to the young man who told him, "Where are you from?" And he answered, "I am the son of an alien, an Amalekite." 14 Then David said to him, "How is it you were not afraid to stretch out your hand to destroy the LORD'S anointed?" 15 And David called one of the young men and said, "Go, cut him down." So he struck him and he died. 16 And David said to him, "Your blood is on your head, for your mouth has testified against you, saying, 'I have killed the LORD'S anointed.'"

According to v. 1, from where had David come, and what had he been doing?

Interesting!

On the third day a young man came to David. Briefly re-tell the report he gave to David in vv. 4-10?

In v. 10, the young man did two things. What two things did he do?

1)

2)

In v. 13, David asked the young man where he came from. What was his answer?

Then what question did David ask of the young man (v. 14)?

So what did David do to this Amalekite? Do you think he was justified in doing so? Why or why not?

Now consider what the personal application of this story may be for you. Write down your thoughts.

See you in class.

Lecture Notes

The Battle with Amalek —
A Kingdom at Stake

Lesson Two
The Flesh and the Spirit