

Saul & Amalekites  
1 Samuel 15  
January 21st, 2024

1 Samuel 15:1-7

And Samuel said to Saul, "The LORD sent me to anoint you king over his people Israel; now therefore listen to the words of the LORD. 2 Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'I have noted what Amalek did to Israel in opposing them on the way when they came up out of Egypt. 3 Now go and strike Amalek and devote to destruction[a] all that they have. Do not spare them, but kill both man and woman, child and infant, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.'" 4 So Saul summoned the people and numbered them in Telaim, two hundred thousand men on foot, and ten thousand men of Judah. 5 And Saul came to the city of Amalek and lay in wait in the valley. 6 Then 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 people of Israel when they came up out of Egypt." So the Kenites departed from among the Amalekites. 7 And Saul defeated the Amalekites from Havilah as far as Shur, which is east of Egypt.

I. Don't Make Yourself an Enemy of God, Or Your Day of Destruction Will Come

Deuteronomy 25:17-18

17 Remember what the Amalekites did to you along the way when you came out of Egypt. 18 When you were weary and worn out, they met you on your journey and attacked all who were lagging behind; they had no fear of God.

"When a city is in danger of falling, people do not simply wait there to be killed; they get out... Only people who do not get out, such as the city's defenders, get killed" John Goldingay

"We must also recognize that the language of warfare had a conventional rhetoric that liked to make absolute and universal claims about total victory and completely wiping out the enemy. Such rhetoric often exceeded reality on the ground . . . This is not to accuse the biblical writers of falsehood, but to recognize the literary conventions of writing about Warfare." Christopher J.H. Wright

1 Samuel 15:8-11

8 And he took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive and devoted to destruction all the people with the edge of the sword. 9 But Saul and the people spared Agag and the best of the sheep and of the oxen and of the fattened calves[a] and the lambs, and all that

was good, and would not utterly destroy them. All that was despised and worthless they devoted to destruction.<sup>10</sup> The word of the LORD came to Samuel: <sup>11</sup> “I regret that I have made Saul king, for he has turned back from following me and has not performed my commandments.” And Samuel was angry, and he cried to the LORD all night.

1 Samuel 15:19-23

<sup>19</sup> Why then did you not obey the voice of the LORD? Why did you pounce on the spoil and do what was evil in the sight of the LORD?” <sup>20</sup> And Saul said to Samuel, “I have obeyed the voice of the LORD. I have gone on the mission on which the LORD sent me. I have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and I have devoted the Amalekites to destruction. <sup>21</sup> But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the best of the things devoted to destruction, to sacrifice to the LORD your God in Gilgal.” <sup>22</sup> And Samuel said, “Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams. <sup>23</sup> For rebellion is as the sin of divination, and presumption is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, he has also rejected you from being king.”

## II. Partial Obedience is Disobedience

1 Samuel 15:24-31

<sup>24</sup> Saul said to Samuel, “I have sinned, for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD and your words, because I feared the people and obeyed their voice. <sup>25</sup> Now therefore, please pardon my sin and return with me that I may bow before the LORD.” <sup>26</sup> And 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.” <sup>27</sup> As Samuel turned to go away, Saul seized the skirt of his robe, and it tore. <sup>28</sup> And Samuel said to him, “The LORD has torn the kingdom of Israel from you this day and has given it to a neighbor of yours, who is better than you. <sup>29</sup> And also the Glory of Israel will not lie or have regret, for he is not a man, that he should have regret.” <sup>30</sup> Then he said, “I have sinned; yet honor me now before the elders of my people and before Israel, and return with me, that I may bow before the LORD your God.” <sup>31</sup> So Samuel turned back after Saul, and Saul bowed before the LORD.

## III. We Need a Better King