

The Battle with Amalek— A Kingdom at Stake Part Three

1). We will be continuing today with the message series on the Battle with Amalek...and you might be wondering *at what point we will actually begin talking about Amalek!* Well today is the day! The last two weeks set a foundation for us, a foundation that is essential to have in place if we are to understand the picture that God paints FOR US through the study of the historical events recorded in the Scriptures concerning Amalek. So, let's review what we've covered so far:

- Man was created to rule over this earth. Man was created to rule in Satan's stead, because Satan had disqualified himself due to his disobedience.
- Satan immediately set forth to cause the woman and man to disobey God, knowing full well that disobedience leads to disqualification.
- Satan successfully deceived the woman by two means—first, he planted doubt in her mind concerning what God had really said...and second, he told the woman that God's expressed consequence of "you will die if..." was not really true. In other words, she could do what she wanted and she wouldn't die, even though God said she would if she disobeyed.
- So man was disqualified, and God then voices His plan to bring about a Redeemer...a Redeemer that would bring man back into the position for which he was originally created—to rule. This Redeemer would be "the seed of the woman," so Satan set out to destroy any possibility of this Redeemer being born by sending his angels to cohabit with the women, producing the Nephilim, a mix between angels and humans.
- The Nephilim were on the earth prior to the Flood, and they were on the earth after the Flood. In particular, they were in the land that God promised to Abraham's descendants (through Isaac and Jacob.) The Nephilim were the giants in the land that the spies (on behalf of the first generation of Israel) saw and feared. This fear led to unbelief, which ultimately caused the first generation to disobey God and be disinherited from the land.
- We also learned that God speaks to us through His Word in many ways, one major way being by the use of types and anti-types. This is the idea of patterns, examples, and shadows...historical events recorded in a particular way so that God can draw from them spiritual lessons and doctrines to teach His people. This is the way that we learn God's spiritual truths...and it is also the way that we keep a system of checks and balances in the structure of learning. The type and the anti-type must fit together...each one reflects back on the other, making a perfect fit.
- We looked at a primary doctrine that teaches us that God takes away the first in order to establish the second. Esau and Jacob were the primary example, in that Esau (Isaac's firstborn) gave up his birthright to his younger brother in exchange for something that

would immediately satisfy his flesh. The story plays out in what appears to us to be deception (Jacob donning Esau's clothes & a garment of hairy skin to imitate his brother, before his father, and receive the blessings of the firstborn).

- This is not deception as we would understand it, for the picture is that of Christ (God the Son) coming in the likeness of sinful flesh in order to redeem that birthright that Adam lost due to his feeding of the flesh. Christ received the Father's blessing by this action...an action that was done in accord with the Word of God, given through Israel (seen as Rebekah's commands and willingness to receive the curse on behalf of her son Jacob--Israel took the blame for Jesus.)

2). Now, to get to the topic at hand, we need to know and understand that God clearly shows us in His Word that *walking in the flesh is the same as walking in disobedience to God's commands*. So let's go back to the Old Testament—

- This was clearly portrayed to us in the lives of the Children of Israel, as they came to Kadesh Barnea, choosing not to believe God's clear word concerning the land. Let's look at Exodus 13—

Exodus 13:5

And it shall be when the Lord brings you to the land of the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Amorite, the Hivite and the Jebusite, which He swore to your fathers to give you, a land flowing with milk and honey...

- God said He would give them the land. He also said that they would be victorious against the people dwelling in the land and they shouldn't fear them—

Numbers 13:5-10

5 Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces in the presence of all the assembly of the congregation of the sons of Israel. 6 And Joshua the son of Num 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.' 10 But all the congregation said to stone them with stones.

- But instead of believing God, the people of Israel chose to listen to the deceived and unbelieving leaders (the greater majority) and desired instead to go back to Egypt, go back to the home of their birth, the place of their bondage.
- Please do not forget why we need to know these things! Because—

1 Corinthians 10:6

6 Now these things happened as examples for us, that we should not crave evil things, as they also craved...

- God also clearly shows us that *walking in the flesh is the same as walking in disobedience to God's commands* in the account of Saul, the first king over Israel. Saul did not heed the voice of the Lord when told that he was to kill all of the Amalekites—

1 Samuel 15:18

[Samuel speaking to Saul]...**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.'**

1 Samuel 15:20-21

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 choices of the things devoted to destruction, to sacrifice to the Lord your God at Gilgal."

- Saul instead killed *most of* the Amalekites, keeping alive the king, Agag. Saul also allowed his men to keep some of the spoil in order to sacrifice it back to the Lord. So did Saul really obey the Lord? Well, he *mostly* obeyed, right? Isn't *mostly* good enough? Was God pleased with that? Let's see—

1 Samuel 15:22-23

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 witchcraft, and insubordination is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, He has also rejected you from being king."

- Because Saul did not obey God *completely* and *totally*, God called him rebellious and insubordinate. God said that Saul rejected the word of the Lord, even though you and I may see and think that Saul was *mostly* obedient. But really, what we think doesn't matter...it only matters what God thinks.
- So God was not pleased with Saul at all. And because of this action on Saul's part, God withdrew Saul's anointing as king over Israel (but remember, Saul stayed in power for another 40 years after this. He was a disobedient and disqualified ruler, but still a ruler nonetheless.) So Saul thought it fine to defend his actions, and then blame it on someone else (his men did it, he said!). *He thought it was OK to sacrifice rather than to obey.*

3). Now, let's take a closer look at an event that transpired with the first generation of Israel as they journeyed from Egypt, but had not yet gotten to Kadesh Barnea (wherein they disobeyed God for the last time). This event shows us a direct connection to the Amalekites, and why they were so despised by God. Listen to the story.

Exodus 17:1-16

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 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?"

8 Then Amalek came and fought against Israel at Rephidim.

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.

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."

- Israel came to a place called Rephidim, and even though there was no water for them to drink, they stopped there, complaining to and testing God.
- While *at this place*, the first enemy of Israel, the Amalekites snuck up on Israel, from the rear, *when they least expected it*, and attacked those who were weak and weary.
 - Two things to note. First, Amalek was Esau's grandson. Amalek was born to Timna and Eliphaz—Eliphaz was born to Esau and his Canaanite wife. Amalek absolutely embodies the picture of the flesh (*remember that we learned last week that Esau typifies the man of flesh?*)
 - Secondly, the name “Rephidim” means ‘the place of beds.’ Let's see the word picture here: Israel stayed at the place of beds, RESTING, while their enemy came up and attacked them.
 - While at a place of “beds,” Israel rested before they actually got to their place of rest, which was the land that they were headed to.
 - SO FOR US, if we rest now, before we actually get to our place of rest (the 7th day Rest) then we are susceptible to our enemy coming up and attacking us. *So be alert. Do not be drowsy.*
 - ALSO, FOR US, if we choose to complain and grumble at the Lord, we are also susceptible to attack. Such grumbling and complaining will distract us...and make us a prime target for the Amalek within each one of us.
- Notice that at Rephidim God afforded the people *all that they needed* to be victorious in the battle against *their first enemy*:
 - 1) He brought forth water from the rock for physical refreshment,
 - 2) Joshua was in the battle with them killing the enemy with the edge of the sword,
 - 3) Moses was on the mountain praying for them!
 - Each one of these specific provisions given to Israel for their battle **pictures** God's provision for us through Christ in **our** continual battle against the flesh.
 - 1) He brings forth water from the rock for spiritual refreshment,
 - 2) Jesus is in the battle with us killing the enemy with the edge of the sword, which is His Word,
 - 3) Jesus is also on the mountain continually interceding for us!
- 4). Now after this battle, God makes a specific command to Moses regarding Amalek—

Exodus 17: 14b, 16

...“Write in a book as a memorial, and recite it to Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven.” 16 “The Lord has sworn; the Lord will have war against Amalek from generation to generation.”

- Is there an ongoing battle even now, with Amalek? YES! The battle with Amalek rages on! Even though there appears to be no people group named “the Amalekites” on the earth any longer, *the battle continues with the Amalekite within, that which is our flesh that battles against our spirit*, and it is and will be from generation to generation.
 - It is the same sort of thing as the author of Hebrews saying that he has *much to say about Melchizedek*, even though there were only two mentions of the man Melchizedek in the whole of Scripture, prior the writing of the Book of Hebrews. It is what the man Melchizedek represents— the future work of Christ as King/Priest in the coming age about which there is so much to say.
 - In the same way, there is much that can be said concerning this man, Amalek, and who he represents in the way of the type.
- In this same way, we have much to say about Amalek! Amalek represents the man of flesh, and the ongoing battle that each and every Christian has with his own flesh. And we must understand what this enemy can do to us. What harm he can inflict...and what loss he can cause us to suffer.

5). Going back to the picture of Israel once again, let’s make a personal application of their story—

- We should not think that we can take our rest now. But rather, we should seek to drink deeply from the Well of Life, *waiting obediently* and *being on guard* until that coming day, when we will enter the 7th Day Rest in the heavenly country to which God has called us!
- We should know that the battle between our flesh and our spirit is an ongoing battle, and that this enemy will desire and seek to work in conjunction with the other two enemies – the devil and the world. Whether working alone, or in conjunction with another, or all three enemies teaming up together, when we are weary and weak (and/or grumbling and complaining), one or two or three enemies will seek to wreak havoc in our spiritual lives while we are on our journey to the city to which God has called us.

5). So let’s consider our three enemies. Today we’ll cover the first one, the devil, and will continue with the other two—the flesh and the world—next week.

- Enemy number one: **The Devil!**

1 Peter 5

8 Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

- If we are not careful, if we do not KNOW God's Word, we Christians can come to a point wherein we are unwittingly doing the work of Satan!
 - Any time we are not doing the work of God, then what are we doing? Whose work are we doing? This may sound harsh, but think about it. Didn't Jesus say in Matthew 12:30, "**He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not gather with Me scatters.**"
 - There is no middle ground here, is there? If there is, where is it? Where is the middle ground wherein it is OK to stand? Not really for Jesus, but not really against Him... Not really doing His work, but not really doing Satan's either? Does that ground exist? We are truly in one camp or in the other.
 - As an example of this, let's look at the event that took place in Matthew chapter 16 where Jesus was asking His disciples "Whom do people say that I am?" Some answered one way, some answered another. But finally Jesus got to the real issue of the matter and asked, "**But who do you say that I am?**" And Simon Peter answered and said, "**Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.**"
 - Wow, what a statement! And Jesus commended him by saying:

Matthew 16:17-19

"Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. 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 will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

- In the very next statement, Jesus warned the disciples that they should tell no one that He was the Christ. And at that time, Jesus Christ began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day. And Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "God forbid it, Lord! This shall never happen to You."
 - Jesus turned and said to Peter, "**Get behind Me, Satan! You are an [offense] to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's.**"
 - From the pinnacle down to the dirt, ouch! Peter was doing the work of Satan *at that moment*, And yes, Peter was saved at that point. But he was doing the work

of Satan at that point. Similarly, we must too be so careful not to do the work of Satan.

- Listen to what John writes to his fellow Christians—

1 John 3:7-10

7 Little children, let no one deceive you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous; 8 the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, that He might destroy the works of the devil. 9 No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. 10 By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother.

- John is not dealing with the non-saved in his epistles. He is telling Christians how to maintain FELLOWSHIP with God.
- The way to deal with the enemy the devil is given to us in Scripture:

James 4:7

Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

- Resist the devil. *Resist him...do not fight against him*. The battle is between God and Satan and we are to allow God to fight for us. *It is His battle*.

And in the same way we must battle our flesh and the world...we must resist the flesh, and we must resist the world, and we must allow God to battle them for us. He has told us that we will be victorious and that we will inherit the land that He is bringing us to...but we must believe and act upon what He has said in order to receive it. We must not get weary, we must not get drowsy, and we must not become grumblers. We must overcome. We'll finish this up next week.