

HACKING AGAG TO PIECES

Introduction

- 1) King Saul's disobedience to God's command to annihilate the Amalekites proved to be a critical turning point in his reign and standing before God (1 Samuel 15; esp. v. 28)
- 2) Saul's failure and Samuel's decisive action illustrate the Christian's daily struggle with sin

I) AGAG AND SIN

- A) *Amalekites were descendants of Esau* (Gen. 36:12)
 - 1) Maliciously attacked Israel in the wilderness (Ex. 17:8-16; Deut. 25:17-19)
- B) *Saul commanded to carry out God's punishment on the evil nation* (1 Sam. 15:1-3)
 - 1) Good start (vv. 7-8), but proved disobedient – spared king Agag and best animals (v. 9)
 - 2) Samuel confronts and condemns Saul (vv. 10-11, 17-19, 26)
 - 3) Samuel himself does the work that God had commanded (vv. 32-33)
- C) *The Christian is to put sin to death completely*
 - 1) Conversion to Christ is an execution of the old man of sin (Gal. 5:24; Rom. 6:3-6)
 - 2) But sin will constantly try to revive and ruin us (Rom. 6:11-12)
 - 3) God commands us to put sin to death (Rom. 8:12-13; Col. 3:5-6)
 - 4) Sin must be destroyed ruthlessly and without mercy, but, like Saul, some Christians refuse to put sin to death, sparing it with a stay of execution. How does this happen?

II) THE WAYS SIN IS SPARED

- A) *Deny It* (1 Sam. 15:12-13, 20 – “I have obeyed...”)
 - 1) Some also attempt to conceal the sin (cf. Acts 5:1ff; drunkard, sex offender, etc.)
 - 2) Denying sin is self-deception which will destroy the soul (Prov. 28:13; Jas. 1:21-22)
- B) *Justify It* (1 Sam. 15:14-15 – “spared the best...to sacrifice to the Lord...”)
 - 1) No claimed “good cause or end” can justify sinful, unauthorized activity
 - 2) Some claim: “God would not want me to be unhappy”
 - a) Used to justify divorce, homosexuality, drinking, gambling, abuse, murder, etc.
 - b) True joy is found in the Lord and His ways (Phil. 4:4), not in sin
- C) *Excuse It* (1 Sam. 15:20-21 – “But the people took...”)
 - 1) Blame game is played today, using genetics, culture, victimhood, bad circumstances
 - 2) King David sinned grievously before God, but did not deny, justify, or excuse when confronted with his sin with Bathsheba (2 Sam. 12:13)

III) PUTTING SIN TO DEATH

- A) *Recognize how horrible sin is to a holy God* (Hab. 1:13; 1 Pet. 1:15-16)
 - 1) Keep focus on the cost of sin so as to not feel misplaced pity or sympathy for sin
 - 2) Our sins cost the death of Jesus – meditate on the cross of Jesus (Gal. 6:14)
- B) *Do whatever it takes to avoid sin* (1 Pet. 2:11; 1 Thess. 5:22)
 - 1) Make no provision for the flesh (Rom. 13:14); don't live foolishly or make risky choices
 - a) Remove yourself from circumstances that provide temptation (Matt. 5:27-30)
- C) *Busy self with doing what is right* (Rom. 6:12-13)
 - 1) Draw closer to God (Jas. 4:7-8)
 - 2) Be led by the Spirit (Rom. 8:13-14; Gal. 5:16)

Conclusion

Like Agag, sin is happy if it can be spared to live another day (1 Sam. 15:32), but it will again try to deceive and destroy us if it is not **“hacked in pieces”**! Fight the good fight by confessing your sins and resolving to combat evil around you. Put sin to death and be alive to God in Christ!