

## OBEDIENCE is better than SACRIFICE

“The word of the Lord came to Samuel: **‘I regret that I have made Saul king, for he has turned back from following me and has NOT PERFORMED MY COMMANDMENTS’**” (I Samuel 15:11).

The story of the Amalekites is a key piece to understanding the grand picture—that causes God to say what He says and do what He does.

“The Lord said to Moses, ‘Send some men to explore the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the Israelites’” (Numbers 13:1).

From each of the twelve tribes, a man was chosen. Upon their return, they reported back saying, “We went into the land to which you sent us, and it does flow with milk and honey! Here is its fruit. **But the people who live there are powerful, and the cities are fortified and very large. We even saw descendants of Anak there. The Amalekites live in the Negev; the Hittites, Jebusites and Amorites live in the hill country; and the Canaanites live near the sea and long the Jordan... All the people we saw there are of great size. We saw the Nephilim there (the descendants of Anak come from the Nephilim). We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them**” (Numbers 13:27-29, 32b-33).



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Something has gone awfully wrong! Who are these “Nephilim”?

“The sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose... **The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and ALSO AFTERWARD, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of man and they bore children to them.** These were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown” (Genesis 6:2, 4).

After the flood, Nephilim appeared on the earth **again**. The forbidden mixing of the sons of God with mankind producing off-spring that is not of God continued. This mixed relationship was intentional as rogue sons of God worked to establish an opposing force on earth of powerful demi-gods—Nephilim, their off-spring—**their new family**.

Who were these **rogue sons of God who spawned the Nephilim after the flood?**

“Then **all the trees of Eden, the choicest and best of Lebanon** [members of God’s headquarters in heaven], all the trees that were **well-watered** [filled with God’s Holy Spirit, rich in the knowledge of the ways of God], were **consoled in the earth below**. Those who lived in its shade, its allies among the nations, had also gone down to the grave with it, joining those killed

by the sword. Which of the trees of Eden can be compared with you [son of God ruling over Egypt] in splendor and majesty? **Yet you, too, will be brought down with the trees of Eden to the earth below;** you will lie among the uncircumcised [the wicked], with those killed by the sword. 'This is Pharaoh and all his hordes, declares the Sovereign Lord'" (Ezekiel 31:16b-18).

The fall of these sons was an intense and painful blow to God. He loved them. From time unknown, He was surrounded by these loyal and faithful sons. He gave them knowledge beyond mortal grasp, wisdom straight from the deepest reservoirs of God's soul, judgment fair and true and they grew into the finest image of tall, imperishable cedar trees. But, they became proud and their pride spurred self-direction, self-reliance and the craving to be worshiped.

"On the day it [the son of God ruling of Assyria, the great cedar tree of Lebanon] was brought down to the grave, **I covered the deep springs with mourning for it;** I held back the streams, and its abundant waters were restrained. Because of it I clothed Lebanon with gloom, and all the trees of the field withered away. I made the nations tremble at the sound of its fall when I brought it down to the grave with those who go down to the pit" (Ezekiel 31:15-16a).

The tall cedars, God's inner circle of great leaders fell, but not without a fight; a raging battle continues in the heavens and on the earth. The Nephilim, those people of "great size" were the off-spring of an unholy union intentionally spawned to oppose God and His people.

The grand picture comes into focus and every detail becomes crystal clear when God said to King Saul, "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. **Now go and strike Amalek and devote to destruction ALL that they have. Do not spare them, but kill both man and woman, child and infant, ox and sheep, camel and donkey**'" (I Samuel 15:2-3).

The Nephilim and their off-spring are not children of God. They cannot be saved and God wants nothing that belongs to His opposition.

"And Samuel came to Saul, and Saul said to him, 'Blessed be you to the Lord. I have performed the commandment of the Lord.' **And Samuel said, 'What then is this bleating of the sheep in my ears and the lowing of the oxen that I hear?'** Saul said, 'They have brought them from the Amalekites, for **the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen to sacrifice to the Lord your God,** and the rest we have devoted to destruction'" (I Samuel 15:13-14).

King Saul failed to see the grand picture that reveals why God commands what He does and acts accordingly. These Amalekites were the off-spring of those who rage against Him. They are the earthly members of a hostile heavenly coalition. God will destroy every trace of them, for He knows that this rogue coalition will battle until **all of mankind—God's children, are destroyed and replaced with their hybrid off-spring.**

"The offspring of the wicked will never be mentioned again. Prepare a place to slaughter his sons for the sins of their forefathers; they are not to rise to inherit the land and cover the earth

with their cities. 'I will rise up against them,' declares the Lord Almighty. 'I will cut off from Babylon her name and survivors, her offspring and descendants,' declares the Lord (Isaiah 14:20b-22).

Then Samuel said to Saul, "Stop! I will tell you what the Lord said to me this night." And he said to him, "Speak" (I Samuel 15:16).

"And he sent you on a mission, saying, '**Go and completely destroy those wicked people, the Amalekites; wage war against them until you have wiped them out. 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?**'" (I Samuel 15:18-19)

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. 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**" (I Samuel 15:20-21).

King Saul allowed the people to cause him to fail in completing his mission in every detail by keeping what they thought was the best of the spoil, which they declared to be sacrificed to God. These animals, property of a hybrid people, were seen as "the best" in the eyes of the people, but **in the eyes of God, they were defiled.** Both King Saul and the people could not see the grand picture. To listen and obey the instructions of God is what is required of God's followers. Today, we see through a glass darkly. The many pieces to the grand picture will come together in absolute clarity in the Millennium. Our vision remains blurred on many spiritual matters. It is better to trust God, listen and obey. Obedience is better than sacrifice.

Samuel said, "Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as much as in obeying the voice of the Lord? **Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice,** and to listen is better than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, **he has also rejected you from being king**" (I Samuel 15:22-23).

"**What makes you think I want all your sacrifices?**" says the LORD. "I am sick of your burnt offerings of rams and the fat of fattened cattle. I get no pleasure from the blood of bulls and lambs and goats" (Isaiah 1:11).

"Hear the word of God... listen to the law of our God" (Isaiah 1:10).

"**Does the LORD take delight in thousands of rams,** in ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I present my firstborn for my rebellious acts, The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He has told you, O man, what is good; and **WHAT DOES THE LORD REQUIRE OF YOU** but to **DO JUSTICE,** and **TO LOVE KINDNESS,** and **TO WALK HUMBLY WITH YOUR GOD?**" (Micah 6:7-8)

God does not change. He has told us what is required of us. Adhere to His instructions for His way is righteousness. “For it is not those who hear the law who are righteous in God's sight, but it is **THOSE WHO OBEY THE LAW WHO WILL BE DECLARED RIGHTEOUS**” (Romans 2:13).

In the 21st century, God has not left the believers alone. He has given us His Holy Spirit and a mediator, a Son—His only Heir, a tested stone **to lean on**. The kingdom of Israel will remember their God in the latter days. They will call out to Him and lean on Jesus, their Savior. “Who is this coming up from the wilderness **leaning on her beloved?**” (Song of Solomon 8:5)

“Jesus replied, **‘Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.** Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching. **THESE WORDS YOU HEAR ARE NOT MY OWN; THEY BELONG TO THE FATHER WHO SENT ME**” (John 14:23-24).

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and **DO NOT LEAN ON YOUR OWN UNDERSTANDING. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight**” (Proverbs 3:5-6).

Christ was personally selected by God and placed into the kingdom of Israel to be the ruler of **God's new ruling body**.

“I myself will take a shoot from the very top of a cedar and plant it; I will break off a tender sprig from its topmost shoots **and plant it on a high and lofty mountain** [government]. **On the MOUNTAIN HEIGHTS** [government] **OF ISRAEL**, I will plant it; **it will produce branches and bear fruit and become a splendid cedar**” (Ezekiel 17:22-23).

Unlike the sons of God from God's inner circle, Christ will not fail. He is the tested stone. “Therefore, this is what the Sovereign LORD says: ‘Look! I am placing a foundation stone in Jerusalem, **a firm and tested stone.** It is a **precious cornerstone** that is **safe to build on.** **WHOEVER BELIEVES NEED NEVER BE SHAKEN**” (Isaiah 28:16).

Christ is the Son of God of whom our Creator is well-pleased. “Therefore **God exalted him to the highest place** and **gave him THE NAME THAT IS ABOVE EVERY NAME**, that at **the name of JESUS every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth**, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:9-11).

The old heavenly ruling body of rogue sons of God is being crushed and destroyed. The new heavenly ruling body is being built. “The voice of **the LORD breaks the cedars**; Yes, **the LORD breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon**” (Psalm 29:5).

“For **the Lord of hosts will have a day of reckoning against everyone who is proud and lofty and against everyone who is lifted up**, that he may be abased. **HE WILL CUT DOWN THE TALL CEDARS OF LEBANON AND ALL THE MIGHTY OAKS OF BASHAN.** Against all the lofty mountains [governments], against all the hills [lower level governments] that are lifted up” (Isaiah 2:12-14).

**“The RIGHTEOUS MAN** will flourish like the palm tree; **he will grow like a cedar in Lebanon. PLANTED IN THE HOUSE OF THE LORD, they will flourish in the COURTS OF OUR GOD.** They will still yield fruit in their old age; They shall be full of sap and very green” (Psalm 92:12-15).

**“I [God] will be like the dew to ISRAEL;** he will blossom like the lily, and **HE WILL TAKE ROOT LIKE THE CEDARS OF LEBANON. His shoots will sprout,** and his beauty will be like the olive tree and **his fragrance like the cedars of Lebanon”** (Hosea 14:5-6).

The core of this new ruling body comprises of the Supreme God, Jesus Christ and the bride/church/saints from Israel. Through the twelve gates of Israel, the repentant will enter. **“He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son”** (Revelation 21:7).

Who today understands this incredible offer—**the invitation to replace the rogue ruling sons of God in heaven with repentant mankind from all nations** who are invited, as blood members, into the repentant, God-fearing and God-serving kingdom of Israel?

**“Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb. And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain [government] great and high, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God. It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. It had a great, high wall with twelve gates, and with twelve angels at the gates. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel... I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple”** (Revelation 21:9b-12, 22). The New Jerusalem is Christ’s bride comprised of many people all **grafted into the kingdom of Israel having entered through any one of the twelve gates and God our Creator and Christ, together are the temple.** This city of people has God and Christ residing among them.

Until that glorious time arrives and during this deceitful and evil age, seek an intimate relationship with God. Listen and obey Him. Keep His commandments **carefully.** Walk humbly with God, thanking Him daily for His grace and remember the sacrifice of Christ; his suffering that he bore to give us the gift of eternal life. It is Christ who shares his rulership with us.

There would be no need for sacrifice, if we would only listen and obey.

*Compiled by Janette Andrejowich*