
Becoming Christlike – Learning How from Old Testament Kings and Prophets

Session 23 – I Samuel 19 (Israel, us, 2023)

The recent events in Israel (Oct. 7th, 2023, began) with the invasion by Hamas have been extremely concerning, draining, and emotionally exhausting. Our hearts go out to the families of those innocent civilians who have been killed, tortured and all who are in pain. It is all very difficult to deal with.

We know that God’s Word contains all things that pertain to life and godliness. There is nothing that is not covered in God’s Word.

So that we can understand, God, ourselves, life. These events can give us a window into understanding the very basics and essentials of life.

The heart of man has not changed. We know from Jeremiah 17 that the heart of man is deceitful above all things.

People are easily deceived, misled, and go down the wrong path. Humans can and do commit horrendous acts against other humans. What we have just witnessed in Israel is not new.

2 Kings 15:16

16 At that time Menahem sacked Tiphshah and all who were in it and its territory from Tirzah on, because they did not open it to him. **Therefore he sacked it, and he ripped open all the women in it who were pregnant.**

The Israelite king who attacked a city on the Euphrates river in his desire to expand the Israelite empire in Solomon-like fashion. He was obviously not a good king. It brings tears to one’s eyes to contemplate what people can do. Was there any military reason to do such a horrendous thing to pregnant women?

Human beings have a brain which is an organ. A part of the brain is the mind, which is part of the soul. The brain processes information that is input. Then because of what is in it, what is in the heart, people act out of that content.

Remember in Deuteronomy the admonition about teaching children?

Deuteronomy 11:18,19

18 “You shall therefore lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.

19 And ye shall teach them your children, talking of them, when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

The Word is to be built in the heart of a child ALL THE TIME so that the child has that continual input to live out.

Instead of having God’s Word built in them, Hamas children are taught by their parents to hate Israel and to believe that Israel is evil and needs to be destroyed. They are brainwashed so they act out on that as adults. Remember all these people do not have holy spirit within them,

including Menahem. In Old Testament times kings did this type of atrocity to instill fear and terrorize surrounding countries. This was written 3,000 years ago and people are still committing this kind of atrocity in 2023. This is still going on and will continue till the return of Christ.

II Kings 8:7-11

7 Now Elisha came to Damascus. Ben-hadad the king of Syria was sick. And when it was told him, “The man of God has come here,” **8** the king said to Hazael, “Take a present with you and go to meet the man of God, and inquire of the Lord through him, saying, ‘Shall I recover from this sickness?’” **9** So Hazael went to meet him, and took a present with him, all kinds of goods of Damascus, forty camels’ loads. When he came and stood before him, he said, “Your son Ben-hadad king of Syria has sent me to you, saying, ‘Shall I recover from this sickness?’” **10** And Elisha said to him, “Go, say to him, ‘You shall certainly recover,’ but^a the Lord has shown me that he shall certainly die.” **11** And he (Elisha) fixed his gaze and stared at him, until he (Hazael) was embarrassed. And the man of God wept.

There are many instances when men of God wept. This is not just a teary-eyed moment but gut-wrenching weeping at what you see, at what you know people are experiencing, the pain, the suffering. Jeremiah wept. We know that Jesus wept over Jerusalem.

12 And Hazael said, “Why does my lord weep?” He answered, “**Because I know the evil that you (Hazael) will do to the people of Israel. You will set on fire their fortresses, and you will kill their young men with the sword and dash in pieces their little ones and rip open their pregnant women.**”

Indeed, Hazael went back and assassinated the King of Syria and became king. God knew and told Elisha that this new king was going to do all this evil to the people of Israel.

13 And Hazael said, “What is your servant, who is but a dog, that he should do this great thing?” Elisha answered, “The Lord has shown me that you are to be king over Syria.”

We saw Hamas set cities on fire and burn people.

We saw Hamas kill young men.

We saw Hamas kill children and behead them.

Killing pregnant women, raping and who knows what other atrocities they have done.

Humans did these same things and other atrocities. Why? Human beings either pursue God or pursue their own ways. Human beings can fill their minds with the truth of God’s Word, or they can be filled with error and hatred and all that goes with it.

Before we get back to I Samuel 19...

Just think of rulers in recent history in the last hundred years and how many deaths they were responsible for! These are all 20th Century examples of pure evil.

Who	When	Where	How Many Killed
Mao	1949 - 1976	China – starvation, persecution, prison labor, mass	40-80 Million

		executions	
Stalin	Lived till 1953	Ukraine - Gulags and forced labor, took all the food	1.6 million
Khmer Rouge	1976-1979	Cambodian genocidal program targeted certain ethnicities	1.5 – 3 million
Ruwanda	April – July 1994	Ruwandan genocide	500,000-800,000
Armenian Genocide	WWI	Armenian genocide sent out in marches to the Syrian desert	1 million

Think about how easily we forget these things. In the US in 2023 many don't even remember the World Trade Center bombings in 2001. God repeatedly told the Children of Israel to REMEMBER, REMEMBER the great things he had done for them because people so easily forget and repeat mistakes.

Islam goes back to Ishmael.

Genesis 16:12

11 And the angel of the Lord said to her, "Behold, you are pregnant and shall bear a son. You shall call his name Ishmael,^s because the Lord has listened to your affliction.

12 He shall be a wild donkey of a man, his hand against everyone and everyone's hand against him, and he shall dwell over against all his kinsmen."

Unfortunately that prophecy has come true with Arabs and all their descendants. Mohammed in the 6th century and the rise of Islam. Islam wants to eradicate all Jews and Christians. They are clear and unapologetic about their desire to eliminate Christians and Jews.

Dr. Bill Warner – Videos on Political Islam (Here is one)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x0W0yqfdg54>

Let's simplify this. Life is simple. We don't need academic degrees to understand it. Think about the first century. They didn't have concordances or even the written Word. They had letters from Paul, word of mouth, and examples of people living the Word.

Acts 19:8-12

8 And he entered the synagogue and for three months spoke boldly, reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of God. **9** But when some became stubborn and continued in unbelief, speaking evil of the Way before the congregation, he withdrew from them and took the disciples with him, **reasoning daily** in the hall of Tyrannus.^s **10** **This continued for two years, so that all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.**

11 And God was doing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, **12** so that even handkerchiefs or aprons that had touched his skin were carried away to the sick, and their diseases left them **and the evil spirits came out of them.**

20 So the word of the Lord continued to increase and prevail mightily.

Why? Because they were living it daily. Teaching it and following the example of those living it daily.

The Bible tells us who God is, who the Devil is (in the Old Testament they were blinded to the spiritual reality behind the devil.) Who Christ was and is in us. Who we are. We all have free will to decide who we are going to line up behind.

I Samuel 16 & 18 we saw the devil spirit entering Saul. This was possible because the door was wide open due to his lying etc. He was opposed to God by his jealousy over God's anointed one, David. He is totally self-interested and is going to do anything to get what he wants.

I Samuel 18: 6-12

6 As they were coming home, when David returned from striking down the Philistine, the women came out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with songs of joy, and with musical instruments.^a **7** And the women sang to one another as they celebrated,

“Saul has struck down his thousands, **and David his ten thousands.**”

8 And Saul was very angry, and this saying displeased him. He said, “They have ascribed to David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed thousands, and what more can he have but the kingdom?” **9** And Saul eyed David from that day on.

10 **The next day a harmful spirit from God rushed upon Saul,** and he raved within his house while David was playing the lyre, as he did day by day. Saul had his spear in his hand. **11** And Saul hurled the spear, for he thought, “I will pin David to the wall.” But David evaded him twice.

The harmful spirit is from the devil, not God. It is phrased this way because in the OT they were not aware of the devil or his workings.

12 Saul was afraid of David because the Lord was with him but had departed from Saul.

We see the attributes of the devil play out in a human being who is not in control of his own mind. The devil goes right along with the thought patterns that are in the individual. With Saul it was hatred, anger, fear, pride, jealousy so the devil steps right in to utilize this to try to kill David, God's anointed one.

I Samuel 19: 1-4

1 And Saul **spoke to Jonathan his son and to all his servants, that they should kill David.**

Now it is no longer secret. He is not ashamed or embarrassed but declaring this publicly.

But Jonathan, Saul's son, delighted much in David. **2** And Jonathan told David, “Saul my father seeks to kill you. Therefore be on your guard in the morning. Stay in a secret place and hide yourself.

God via Jonathan is trying to save the life of David, who is God's anointed king.

3 And I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where you are, and I will speak to my father about you. And if I learn anything I will tell you."

Now we have a Godly interruption delivered by Jonathan.

4 And Jonathan spoke well of David to Saul his father and said to him, "Let not the king sin against his servant David, because he has not sinned against you, and because his deeds have brought good to you

Jonathan is pointing out to his father...why are you going to kill this innocent one who has been helping you and helping Israel? Just because of your jealousy and lust for power?

5 For he took his life in his hand and he struck down the Philistine, and the Lord worked a great salvation for all Israel. You saw it and rejoiced. Why then will you sin against innocent blood by killing David without cause?"

It is insane. Which is exactly what people are without the Word in their mind. They are incapable of sound thinking. We have such people around the world and in our own country in response to the atrocities of Hamas in Israel shouting to free Jerusalem and Israel from the Jews and give it to the Palestinians. Which is absolutely insane.

Ephesians 4:17,18

17 Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, **in the futility of their minds. 18** They are **darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. 19** They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity.

The mind with our own thinking, inclinations, our own way is futile, empty. It results in disaster and tragedy. The mind without the Word dwelling in it is open to demonic influence, illogical, harmful, hateful, devilish thinking which we are seeing play out here.

From I Samuel 18-31 we see Saul seeking to kill David.

I Samuel 19:5

5 For he took his life in his hand and he struck down the Philistine, and the Lord worked a great salvation for all Israel. You saw it and rejoiced. Why then will you sin against innocent blood by killing David without cause?"

Christ would have read this growing up. He was in the line of David. David was the rightful king. Saul was the unjust king.

Kingdoms have kings and they are either working for the devil or for God. Saul at this point is working for the devil and seeking to kill the rightful king, God's choice as king, David.

Controversy and warfare play out all through all history. So here we see Jonathan speaking truth into the situation (interruption) and questioning his father as to why he would kill David without cause.

6 And Saul listened to the voice of Jonathan. **Saul swore, “As the Lord lives, he shall not be put to death.”**

Saul has a moment of clarity. A total change here. Shows the instability in the mind of someone who can't keep his mind on the Word. He is being tossed like a wave in the wind.

A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways. (James) Saul exhibits this from chapter 19 to 31 of I Samuel.

7 And Jonathan called David, and Jonathan reported to him all these things. And Jonathan brought David to Saul, **and he was in his presence as before.**

There is momentary peace again. David is back in the house performing the function as he had before...playing the Lyre.

8 And there was war again. And David went out and fought with the Philistines and struck them with a great blow, **so that they fled before him.**

Saul could have adjusted his thinking and rehearsed in his mind the good that David was doing for Israel but instead he is again overcome with anger and jealousy opening the door to spirit possession again.

9 **Then a harmful spirit** from the Lord came upon Saul, as he sat in his house with his spear in his hand. And David was playing the lyre.

We see the pattern repeat here. There is War, David is victorious, Saul is overcome with pride, anger and jealousy opening the door again to the spirit of murder. (the harmful spirit is not from God, it is phrased that way because in the OT people did not have Holy Spirit and did not know about the devil since they were protected instead by obeying the law.)

10 And Saul sought to pin David to the wall with the spear, but he eluded Saul, so that he struck the spear into the wall. And David fled and escaped that night.

Saul tries again and David flees.

David represents God.

Saul represents the devil – he becomes the instrument of the devil. Look how quickly a circumstance, an event triggers this loss of control of his thinking, wanting to kill a man who is working for God.

2 Timothy 2:24

24 And the Lord's servant^e must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, **25** correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, **26** **and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will.**

This is exactly what happened to Saul, brought to light in the NT by Paul writing to Timothy. There are many Christians who because they lack an understanding of the truth are carrying out the will of the devil.

11 Saul sent messengers to David's house to watch him, that he might kill him in the morning.

The next morning he is *still* after David. You would think he would stop and consider what he had tried to do and what he had vowed to his son.

But Michal, David's wife, told him, "If you do not escape with your life tonight, tomorrow you will be killed." **12** So Michal let David down through the window, and he fled away and escaped.

Consider this: David knows he has been anointed by Samuel. He knows he is the rightful king of Israel. But he is pursued and chased. Again Christ read this and knew he was the true king of Israel but will also be pursued and chased without cause.

13 Michal took an image^a and laid it on the bed and put a pillow of goats' hair at its head and covered it with the clothes. **14** And when Saul sent messengers to take David, she said, "He is sick." **15** Then Saul sent the messengers to see David, saying, "Bring him up to me in the bed, that I may kill him."

We see individuals representing groups of people representing all of humanity. Saul representing the devil and his interests. David representing God and his interests. The spirit of the devil working through Saul. The spirit of God working through David. This is the story of all of history and the warfare that takes place.

Here in 2023 we have devilish people who want to destroy all Jews and Christians. Fortunately there are organizations that are fearlessly helping persecuted Christians:

Samaritan's Purse, Franklin Graham sending in humanitarian aide even at loss of comfort and at risk of their own lives.

16 And when the messengers came in, behold, the image was in the bed, with the pillow of goats' hair at its head. **17** Saul said to Michal, "Why have you deceived me thus **and let my enemy go**, so that he has escaped?" And Michal answered Saul, "He said to me, 'Let me go. Why should I kill you?'"

David is not Saul's enemy. Saul is David's enemy because Saul is working for THE ENEMY, the devil. We must know the truth of the scriptures so that we can discern good from evil. "Woe to those who call evil good and good evil."

18 Now David fled and escaped, and he came to Samuel at Ramah and told him all that Saul had done to him. And he and Samuel went and lived at Naioth.

Think of Samuel who had already grieved over Saul. God gets him out of his funk and has him anoint David. Think of the poor heart of Samuel with Saul trying now to kill David.

The ESV Study Bible shows the chronology and the progression of Saul's pursuit of David – 16 locations where David had to run for his life.

"All who live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution." Timothy

Christ in John 13-17 said the world has hated me and the world will hate you.

The Bible is consistent from beginning to end. Thank God for the ministries that support the persecuted believers.

19 And it was told Saul, “Behold, David is at Naioth in Ramah.” **20** Then Saul sent messengers to take David, and when they saw the company of the prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as head over them, **the Spirit of God came upon the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied.**

Look at what God is doing! He is making it clear to everyone that Samuel is the man of God. David is the anointed king.

21 When it was told Saul, **he sent other messengers, and they also prophesied.** And Saul sent **messengers again the third time, and they also prophesied.**

Three times so far Saul has tried to kill David, now times he sends messengers and they all prophesy.

22 Then he himself (Saul) went to Ramah and came to the great well that is in Secu. And he asked, “Where are Samuel and David?” And one said, “Behold, they are at Naioth in Ramah.” **23** And he went there to Naioth in Ramah.

And look at this... which is almost beyond belief, but it is God’s mercy on display.

And the Spirit of God came upon him also, and as he went he prophesied until he came to Naioth in Ramah. **24** And he too stripped off his clothes, and he too prophesied before Samuel and lay naked all that day and all that night. Thus it is said, “Is Saul also among the prophets?”

Wow just look at what God does despite all of Saul’s devilish influence trying to kill David. Here again Saul has a moment of clarity and contrition, repentance, humility.

You would think that would be the end of it! Saul gets it. He finally understands. But no! He will continue to pursue David. His mind without the Word coursing through it will allow him to become more and more used and unstable. Continuing all the way through chapter 31.

Here are some comparisons between God and the devil who each have people to manifest and exhibit their opposite characteristics.

John 10:10

10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly

God is:	Devil is:
Creator	Destroyer
Builds up	Tears down
Life giver	Death bringer
Truth	Father of lies

Love	Hateful
Good	Evil
Kind	Cruel
Wins with truth and love	Deceives with tricks, deception, manipulation
Trustworthy	Untrustworthy
Consistent	Inconsistent
Gentle	Abusive
Brings order	Brings chaos
Our friend	Our enemy
Gives life meaning	Makes life meaningless
Rational	Irrational
Brings Clarity	Brings confusion
Presence brings peace	Presence brings terror
Brings unity	Causes division
Calm	Frantic
Light	Darkness
Meek	Arrogant
Heals	Infects and poisons
A remedy	A malignancy
Protects	Exploits
For us	Against us
Keeps no record of wrong	Keeps score & reminds of wrongdoing
Removes our guilt and shame	Is the source of guilt and shame
Encourages	Discourages
Gives freedom	Enslaves
Restores our self-control	Makes us pawns, captives, prisoners, slaves
Does what is right	Does what is wrong and is expedient
Deserves our love, trust and devotion	Deserves our opposition and our rejection