

## 1<sup>st</sup> Samuel Chapter 15

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V: 1-3 Samuel reminds Saul that God anointed him to be king, essentially that God raised Saul up, that he didn't just make himself king. Because of that he should therefore hearken to the word of God.

**Psalm 75:6-7** “<sup>6</sup>For promotion cometh neither from the East, nor from the West, nor from the South. <sup>7</sup>But God is the judge: He putteth down one, and sitteth up another.”

- God is the true king maker.

**Revelation 19:16** “... KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.”

- Saul has failed to heed the word of God in the past and Samuel is warning Saul, but also giving him an opportunity to be obedient, and opportunity to do good – if he will take it.

Peter writes:

**2 Peter 3:17** “Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.”

- “You already know these things but I'm going to tell you again anyway...”
- Some things bear repeating: “Take heed to the word of God.”

**Revelation 2:7** “He that hath an ear, let him hear...”

- God declares war on the Amalekites, He remembers their sin – because they haven't repented of it, and now they will be judged and Israel through Saul will be His instrument of judgment.

**Genesis 12:3** “And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee:...”

*“<sup>3</sup>...smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant, and suckling, ox and sheep, camel, and ass.”*

- Very clear, very comprehensive instruction.
- I don't always understand every thing that God does, He doesn't always explain Himself, nor does He need to. When I come to that which I don't understand I have to fall back on what I do understand – that God is good, His purposes and His will is good – and that He has good reason for the things that He does – whether I understand them or not.

**Isaiah 55:8-9** “<sup>8</sup>For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. <sup>9</sup>For as the heavens are higher than the

earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.”

- Some people take issue with the destruction of the so called “innocents”, the “non-combatants” – but they will all one day become combatants, God knows that they are all destined to die through a life long and painful process – and He is putting them out of their misery and preventing them from infecting Israel with their sin.
- Rabid puppy entering a playground full of kids.
- All of this is a picture of how we are to deal with our own flesh and sin:

**Matthew 18:8-9** “<sup>8</sup>Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. <sup>9</sup>And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire.”

- Jesus isn’t speaking literally here, He’s speaking figuratively, that we need to deal with sin in a ruthless and violent manner if need be, it’s a matter of life and death.
- The flesh and the spirit are always contrary; there will never be peace between the two. There is no peaceful co-existence, there is always a battle between the Spirit and the flesh in every believer. It is a battle for supremacy in our lives, will we be ruled by our flesh or by the Spirit?

Paul acknowledges this struggle:

**Romans 8:22-24** “<sup>22</sup>For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: <sup>23</sup>But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. <sup>24</sup>O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”

**2 Corinthians 5:2-4** “<sup>2</sup>For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from Heaven: <sup>3</sup>If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. <sup>4</sup>For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.”

- In this war we cannot allow the enemy to gain a foot hold in our lives.

**Ephesians 4:27** “Neither give place to the Devil.”

- Sin is like cancer, if it is not dealt with in a biblical way – it will spread.

**Hebrews 12:15** “Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;”

V: 4-5 Saul gathers the army of Israel to Telaim (not sure) then moves onto a city of Amalek (not sure either) in preparation for battle – in obedience to the commandment of God.

V: 6 Presumably at God’s urging, Saul warns the Kenites to separate from the Amalekites who are about to be destroyed.

**2 Peter 2:7-9** “The Lord knows how to deliver the Godly out of temptations, and to preserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.”

- The Kenites were a nomadic tribe, descended from or related to Jethro, the priest of Midian – Moses’ father in law. The name means “smith” – they may have been nomadic black smiths. They had showed kindness to the children of Israel during the Exodus years, and now are shown kindness in return.

V: 7-9 Saul attacked and smites the Amalekites from Havilah / Midian to Shur, the border of Egypt.

- Saul took Agag, king of the Amalekites prisoner – and utterly destroyed all the people, or so he said.
- This is from Saul’s perspective, he didn’t kill or utterly destroy all the Amalekites because we see them again in upcoming chapters. David will go to war against the Amalekites, those left alive by Saul – later in the book of Esther, Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite – an Amalekite is the villain in the story.
- Saul & the people not only spared Agag, but the best of the sheep, oxen, the fatlings of the lambs. The poor stock, the vile and refuse he destroyed.

V: 10 Again, the Word of the Lord came to Samuel – He’s receptive, he has ears to hear, he’s willing to be obedient – so God speaks to him.

V: 11 This is a difficult verse. “It repenteth me...”

- Repenteth: (H5162). nacham, naw-kham'; to sigh, to be sorry, rue; repent, regret.
- This is an “anthropomorphism” – an attempt to explain God’s actions in human words; which are inadequate.
- Look ahead to **V: 29** “And also the Strength of Israel (God) will not lie nor repent: for He is not a man, that He should repent” or change His mind.
- God is eternal and un-changing.

**Hebrews 6:18** “That by two immutable things, in which is was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:”

**Hebrews 13:8** “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.”

- When we read this phrase “**and God repented...**” we often apply a New Testament meaning; “change” to an Old Testament word that is translated 41 times in the OT as “regret”.
- Again we’re back to trying to use human language to describe God, which is where the break down is because there is a seeming change of direction concerning Saul.
- As it has been pointed out in **V: 29** and other verses God is eternal, He doesn’t repent or change. “**He is not a man that He should repent**” – it is just a word that we have to use to describe the activities of God. Thus, the seeming inconsistency which is not inconsistent.
- Saul’s actions greatly grieved Samuel – because he knows it greatly grieved God.

V: 12 Now Samuel is set on tracking Saul down, first to Carmel – where Saul builds a monument to commemorate his victory. ([s/o Hebron – map](#)), then to Gilgal.

V: 13-15 As Samuel comes to Saul, Saul pronounces a blessing and states that he’s performed the commandment of the Lord.

- Saul couches his excuse in spiritual tones – “**blessed be thou of the Lord**”, then later saying it was for a sacrifice, trying to cover his sin with a spiritual cloak.
- People will at times speak blasphemously when they try to justify their sin by saying “the Lord told me”, or “the Lord showed me” – putting false words into God’s mouth, God will not never lead us to do anything that is contrary to His Word.
- Samuel immediately confronts Saul with his disobedience – “**then what is this bleating of the sheep and the lowing of the cattle?**”

“<sup>15</sup>...**they...**” – did it... not taking responsibility for his actions, “... **for the people spared the best of the sheep and oxen...**”

- God has already declared that it was to be destroyed, entirely, because it is evil – yet Saul and the people went against the word of God and declared that these things were good, which is why they kept it.

**Isaiah 5:20** “**Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!**”

V: 16-19 “Stay / stop, (NKJV – be quiet!) and I’ll tell you what the Lord told me last night...”

- When you were a nobody, God made you king over Israel – He gave you clear instruction to utterly destroy the Amalekites until they were “consumed” – all gone – and you’ve disobeyed, not only in not destroying the Amalekites, but in seizing the forbidden spoil – and all this in the sight of the Lord.

V: 20-21 Saul responds:

1. “I have obeyed the voice of the Lord” – not true.
  2. “I have gone the way which the Lord sent me” – not true.
  3. “I have brought Agag” – true, proof though that he’s been disobedient and not utterly killed the Amalekites.
  4. “I have utterly destroyed the Amalekites”
- “But the people...” – blame shifting, again not taking responsibility for his actions.
  - We were going to make a sacrifice unto the Lord...

**Deuteronomy 13:15-17** “<sup>15</sup>Thou shalt surely smite the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword, destroying it utterly, and all that is therein, and the cattle thereof, with the edge of the sword. <sup>16</sup>And thou shalt gather all the spoil of it into the midst of the street thereof, and shalt burn with fire the city, and all the spoil thereof every whit, for the Lord thy God : and it shall be an heap for ever; it shall not be built again. <sup>17</sup>And there shall cleave nought of the cursed thing to thine hand...”

- Had Saul been obedient to read and transcribe the book of Deuteronomy as commanded, had he been familiar with the Word of God, he would have known how foolish and unacceptable his excuses were.

V: 22-23 This act of partial obedience is considered dis-obedience.

- Throughout the scriptures we see that God places a very high premium on obedience to His word. Without obedience to His Word, the sacrifices and observances become meaningless gestures of dead religion.

Jesus rebuked the religious leaders of the day for the same thing:

**Mark 7:6-9** “<sup>6</sup>He answered and said unto them, well hath Isaiah prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, this people honoureth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. <sup>7</sup>Howbeit in vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. <sup>8</sup>For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. <sup>9</sup>And he said unto them, full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.”

- Just going through the motions is never enough to please God.

**Psalm 51:16-17** “<sup>16</sup>For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering. <sup>17</sup>The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.”

- Saul had rebelled against the Word of God, he had stubbornly insisted that he'd been obedient when he had clearly not been obedient, refusing to repent of his sin.
- In his actions he had rejected the Word of God, as a result God would reject him as king.

V: 24-26 Saul's confession seems shallow and insincere, it wasn't acknowledged or accepted by the Lord. Saul rationalized, he qualified his confession with “because”...

- He admits that part of his motive was fear of the people:

**Proverbs 29:25** “The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe.”

- “I will not return with you, I will not walk with you – because you've rejected the Word of God – and God has rejected you!”

**Amos 3:3** “Can two walk together, except they be agreed?”

**Psalm 1:1** “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinner, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.”

- Previously Saul had lost the dynasty, now he loses the throne.

V: 27-28 As Samuel turns to leave, Saul grabs at his robe to stop him, and tears Samuel's robe.

- Samuel turns to tell Saul that the kingdom will be ripped from him just like Samuel's garment was torn.

V: 29 “The Strength of Israel” = God, will not lie or repent – God's judgment will stand.

V: 30-31 Saul is now pleading with Samuel, again admitting that he sinned – but it is not acknowledged by God.

- Samuel turns back with Saul, and Saul worships “thy” God. Not “my” God or “our” God but “your” God. (Sincere?)
- At first it seems contradictory that Samuel would turn back with Saul after having said he would not walk with him because he'd rejected the word of God.
- The answer is in the context of this and the following scriptures.

V: 32-33 Samuel turned back with Saul to finish the job that Saul should have done, he takes up the sword of the Lord and does what Saul had refused to do, had Saul been truly repentant he would have beat Samuel to the punch.

- Samuel kills Agag with the sword, hewing him into pieces.

V: 34-35 Samuel returns home to Ramah, never to see Saul again – in this life. He will see him once again in an un-natural way via the witch of Endor.

- Saul goes home to Gibeah. Samuel mourns for Saul, the great disappointment.
- The Lord “repents”, regrets that He made Saul king over Israel.
- Again the word “repent” used to describe the fact that God rejected Saul as king over Israel.

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- Saul’s disregard for the Word of God would cost him more than the kingdom. Later when he was wounded in a battle with the Philistines on Mt. Gilboa, it would ultimately be an Amalekite that would run him through with a sword.

- If we don’t kill the flesh, the flesh will kill us.

**Romans 6:23** “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

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- In **Deuteronomy 17:15** God makes provision for a king for Israel, it’s part of His plan for the nation.
  - In God’s way, in His time they would have a king, had they been willing to wait.

**Psalms 37:4** “Delight thyself also in the Lord; and He shall give thee the desires of your heart.”

- A recurring theme in the Bible is waiting on the Lord, waiting for His perfect timing:

**Psalms 27:14** “Wait on the Lord: be of Good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord.”

- When we get ahead of the Lord and do things our way we end up with Ishmael instead of Isaac, and we end up with Saul instead of David.

**Micah 7:7** “Therefore I will look unto the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me.”