

## LESSON # 6

### SAUL—TO OBEY IS BETTER THAN SACRIFICE

#### I Samuel 15

**Verse 1: Samuel (the Prophet) reminds Saul (the King) that the Lord instructed Samuel to anoint Saul king over Israel—and that Israel was God's people, not Saul's. Otherwise Saul would have never been in the position he occupied. Because God alone allowed him to have the power, Saul should, therefore, listen carefully to the instructions God was about to give him, through Samuel. (In the kingdom of Israel the king was always subject to the prophet—because the prophet was speaking for God.)**

**I Peter 5:3 Elders in church today are reminded the flock they serve does not belong to them—therefore, they are not to lord it over “God's heritage”.**

**John 19:11 Pilate: Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee and have power to release thee? Christ: Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above**

**Romans 13:1-7 . . .there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained (ordered) of God. . .**

**Verse 4: he is the minister of God to thee for good. . .a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.**

**Verse 2: I remember (after over 400 years) that which Amalek did (See Deuteronomy 25:17-19.)**

**Ecclesiastes 8:11 Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the hearts of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.**

**Verse 18: (Although the people Saul would be dealing with were several generations away from the time the crime was committed against God's people, they had not changed—they were still evil (“sinners”) and in God's judgment should be destroyed.**

**Verse 3: God is a righteous judge (II Timothy 4:8). It was God's decision the Amalekites should die—not Saul's. God doesn't make mistakes—man does. Like God's condemnation of idolatrous Judah, before Babylonian captivity: “he (Nebuchadnezzar) shall not spare them (Judah), neither have pity, nor have mercy.”**

**Romans 11:22 “Behold, therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness; otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.” GOD DOES HAVE A SIDE THAT WORKS AGAINST THOSE THAT RESIST HIM.**

**God gave Saul the commandment—it was not Saul's idea: SIMPLE COMMAND  
NO ROOM FOR QUESTIONS  
GOD GIVEN ORDER--SURE  
SUCCESS IF FOLLOWED.**

**Verse 4-5: Saul used 210,000 fighting men; low estimate of number of Amalekites would be 100,000 fighting men (not counting women and children)—say, approximately 400,000 altogether. Saul's beginning was prompt, orderly, and according to directions.**

**Verse 6: "Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?"**

**Genesis 18:23 Abraham at Sodom and Gomorrah.**

**II Peter 2:9 GOD NEVER DESTROYS RIGHTEOUS WITH WICKED: (1) at Sodom and Gomorrah, (2) at destruction of Jerusalem, and (3) at end of the world, IF THEY FOLLOW DIRECTIONS—II Corinthians 6:17-18.**

**Otherwise the "righteous" become a part of the world (the Amalekites) and are destroyed along with the rest of the world.**

**Matthew 25:31-46 Spared because they shewed kindness to God's people.**

**Verse 7-9 Smote—How many, if there were 400,000?      399,999**

**Took alive—How many?**

**1—Agag, the king**

**SAUL KEPT MOST OF THE COMMANDMENTS—in men's judgment, an overwhelming—and therefore satisfactory—majority. But in God's judgment, not entirely obedient—therefore, disobedient. Saul judged the king should be spared; God judged he should be destroyed. Therefore, Saul's actions were in direct opposition to God's judgment.**

**NOT FAIR TO THOSE DESTROYED TO PAY THE PENALTY—AND NOT THE KING (who was a sinner, too).**

**NOT FAIR TO VILE AND REFUSE TO BE DESTROYED (in man's opinion)—AND GOOD AND BEST TO BE SPARED (in God's judgment, equally vile and refuse—and commanded to destruction.)**

**THE SACRIFICE OF THE RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT OF GOD WAS TO BE MADE IN THE LAND OF THE AMALEKITES—and nowhere else, if it would please God. GOD DID NOT SEEK MAN'S JUDGMENT/ADVICE IN THE MATTER—NEITHER WOULD HE ACCEPT IT!**

**See I Corinthians 2:16 "Who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him?"**

**Verse 11: God repents (is sorry and does something about it). He made Saul king. Saul changed his will (away from God). (1) Turned back from following me; and (2) hath not performed my commandments. Saul repented of doing good. So God willed a change (repented of making him king; and therefore removed him from the kingship.) MAN LEFT GOD FIRST; as a consequence, GOD HAD TO LEAVE HIM.**

**Samuel loved Saul—Samuel grieved and cried over Saul's disobedience. Do we ever see this happen today?**

**Philippians 3:18-19 For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is their shame, who mind earthly things.**

**Proverbs 17:5** Whoso mocketh the poor reproacheth his maker; and he that is glad at calamities shall not be unpunished (held innocent).

**Verse 12:** set up a place—premature victory monument—and parade  
Gone about, passed on, gone to Gilgal—pomp, ceremony, glory  
**WHOSE VICTORY WAS IT?? GOD'S**

**Verse 13:** FLATTERY—WHY? SAMUEL HAD INFLUENCE with God and with man;  
Saul wanted his endorsement.

“I have performed the commandment”—Saul rationalized away sin; deceived himself and tried to deceive others.

**Romans 16:17-18** Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ (NOT EVEN IN THE THINGS THEY DO RIGHT), but their own belly (THEIR OWN ENDS); and by good words and fair speeches (LIKE SAUL'S HERE) deceive the hearts of the simple (BUT NOT THE INFORMED, LIKE SAMUEL).

**Ephesians 5:6** Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them.

**Verse 14:** See Numbers 32:23 Be sure your sins will find you out. (Just when you think you have all bases covered, some dumb animal exposes you.) He didn't fool Samuel; by the word of the Lord, Samuel KNEW BETTER.

**Verse 15:** They—shifted the fault to others (like Adam and Eve, or all sinners).

The best—for sacrifice—a GOOD intention? Good only in man's eyes.

**BUT GOD SAID TO SACRIFICE THEM ALL IN THE FIELD.**

**THEY WENT TO A LOT OF UNNECESSARY TROUBLE CHOOSING “THE BEST” —“to sacrifice to the Lord thy God”—why not “Lord our God:—seeking Samuel's support.**

**Verse 16:** YOU HAVE HAD YOUR SAY—NOW I'LL TELL YOU WHAT GOD HAS TO SAY ABOUT IT—SINCE HE DOES HAVE THE FINAL WORD—ALWAYS.

**Verse 17:** See Romans 12:3 For I say. . .to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

Saul (when he thought himself least in Israel) was made king by God—but with one restriction—he was to listen to Samuel, representing God to Saul.

Saul, in exercising his office, filled with pride and aspired to be greater—yes, even greater than God, to the point that Saul's judgment was better than God's.

Saul, in neglecting his office by listening to the wishes of the people rather than the wishes of God, failed the trust placed in him—and thereby relinquished the kingship to the people—and instead of leading, Saul became a follower.

He couldn't be God—and wouldn't be OVER people—so there was literally NO KING.

**Verse 18: “Journey”—not a war when God is involved—because the end was known from beginning. (we are sojourners in the earth—God has told us our end before we begin). The Amalekites were every one (including Agag) SINNERS in the judgment of God—it was not Saul’s prerogative to question the decision REGARDLESS.**

**Verse 19: Did not obey (AT ALL? No, just not completely—partial obedience is NO obedience.) “..didst fly on the spoil”—they were tempted by covetousness—evil; in other words, they had no real intention of sacrificing anything when they got home—they wanted it for themselves—in direct opposition to God’s ruling.**

**Samuel tells Saul: Whatever your intentions (which were not what you say they were) the facts are PLAIN AND SIMPLE—YOU DID NOT OBEY!!**

**Verse 20: THE PICTURE OF A MAN WHO HAS LEFT GOD BUT REFUSES TO ACKNOWLEDGE IT—because of the good he has done before. Saul refuses to admit sin (unlike David when Nathan accused him of adultery)—because the right he had done, numerically speaking, far outstripped his one “little” deviation—which he could claim was for a good cause. HE HAD DONE ALL HE THOUGHT WAS NECESSARY—but God differed with him.**

**Verse 21: “The people”—blame others—distract from his own unrighteousness. “should have been destroyed”—Saul knew the law; he understood the law; but he wanted it different than GOD wanted it.**

**Saul wanted to choose how, when, where, and what to sacrifice to God—IF GOD ALLOWED MAN TO HAVE HIS WAY IN SUCH MATTERS, GOD WOULD BE RELINQUISHING HIS KINGSHIP TO THE PEOPLE—WOULD GIVE HIS POWER AND AUTHORITY TO ANOTHER, JUST AS SAUL HAD DONE—AND WOULD END UP WITH NO POWER AT ALL; AND THE PEOPLE WOULD HAVE NO GOD, AS ISRAEL NOW HAD NO REAL KING—JUST A FIGUREHEAD.**

**Romans 10:3 being ignorant of God’s righteousness (way) and going about to establish their own righteousness (way) have not submitted themselves to the righteousness (way) of God.**

**Verse 22: See Isaiah 1:11-19 Burnt offerings and sacrifices are not accepted—until we have obeyed God. OBEYING—GREATEST DELIGHT OF GOD: “I have no greater joy than to hear my children walk in truth.” III John verse 4.**

**GOD HEARS NOT SINNERS (DISOBEDIENT) BUT ANY MAN BE A WORSHIPPER OF GOD AND DOETH HIS WILL, HIM HE HEARETH. John 9:31.**

**Verse 23: You make nothing of my word—I’ll make nothing of YOU.**

**Verse 24: SAUL RELENTED (AND ACKNOWLEDGED HIS SIN) ONLY WHEN THREATENED.**

**“commandment” and “thy words”—weren’t they the same?**

**Did Saul use “thy words” to gain favor with Samuel? Disobeying God’s prophet is disobeying God.**

**Saul perverted God’s word because he feared the people. Kept the commandments of men in preference to God’s. Galatians 1:10 Do we persuade God, or men? If I please men—not the servant of Christ.**

**Verse 25: Could Samuel pardon Saul's sin?**

**“turn again with me”—former communion they enjoyed; but Samuel refused. Since God could not be secured, Saul chose Samuel—one closest to God.**

**Verse 26: SAMUEL COULD NOT RETAIN HIS FORMER RELATIONSHIP WITH SAUL AND BE TRUE TO GOD, SAUL FORCED SAMUEL TO MAKE A CHOICE.**

**Verse 27: To show Samuel he (Saul) was helpless without him.**

**Verse 28: I Samuel 24:4 David cuts off Saul's skirts.**

**Verse 29: God would not change his mind—but rather willed a change.**

**Verse 30: Saul penitent. Seeks to hang on to last vestige of respectability—the approval of the people.**

**Verse 31: Samuel supervises his worship—but record does not say he (Samuel) worshipped with him, as requested.**

**Verse 32: Samuel takes command; and his first task is to do what Saul failed to do. WHEN WE NEGLECT OUR OWN DUTIES, THE RESPONSIBILITY MUST NECESSARILY FALL ON ANOTHER ELSE THE WORK WILL NEVER BE DONE.**

**“came delicately”, etc.—vain hopes of mercy from a true prophet.**

**Verse 33: Sacrificed to God's injured legislation of justice previously made.**

**Verse 35: Saul did not desire Samuel's company nor his advice: See Hebrews 6:4-6 Samuel mourned for Saul—that he should destroy himself and the country. Something like Jesus weeping over Jerusalem.**

**I Samuel 6:1 What God rejects, his followers should never accept or mourn over. GOD WILL BE GLORIFIED EVEN IN SAUL'S DOWNFALL—AND SAMUEL MUST ACCEPT THE FACT.**

#### **APPLICATION:**

**I Corinthians 5<sup>th</sup> chapter: Fornicator in Church at Corinth was rejected by God because he would not repent; so the Church should reject him.**

**II Corinthians 2:6-11: The fornicator repented; now the Church was being tested as to “whether ye would be obedient in all things” by confirming their love to him.**

#### **ALTERNATIVE REFERENCES:**

**II John verses 10 & 11**

**Romans 16:17-19**