

## Commentary on 1 Samuel Chapter 15, by Chuck Smith 9.22.21

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Friday October 1, Dr Michael Youssef, Northfield, MA see Terry or Lisa for tickets

### September memory verse, Romans 6:23 (NKJV)

<sup>23</sup> For the wages of sin *is* death, but the gift of God *is* eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

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Now as we get into chapter fifteen,

Samuel came to Saul, and said, The Lord sent me to anoint you to be king over his people, over Israel: now hearken unto the voice of the words of the Lord ([1Sa 15:1](#)).

Now he has shown a pattern of disobedience up to this point. He has become self-willed, doing his own thing. So the prophet is coming and warning him. This to me is very significant, because God does seek to warn us from our self-willed path of destruction. God doesn't just let you trip off into the path of destruction, without coming and giving you fair warning, oftentimes, repeated warnings.

The Bible said, "He that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck" ([Proverbs 29:1](#)). So God is faithful and God comes and He warns you, "Hey the path you're choosing, the way of self-will is destroying you. Don't do it." Now listen to God, pay attention, obey the voice of the Lord.

So Samuel is coming with a warning for him and telling him of a mission that God is sending him on. "Now hearken to the voice of the words of the Lord."

For the Lord said, I remember the Amaleks that when you were trying to come into the land, they withstood you. And therefore God wants you to go down and utterly wipe out the Amaleks; every man, woman, child, animal. [Don't take anything back alive, utterly slay everything] ([1Sa 15:2-3](#)).

In order that God might be avenged against the Amaleks. Now you think, "Oh that's a horrible command of God." You would think so until historically you would study the practices and all of the Amaleks. They were so corrupt. They were going to wipe out themselves. God was just ordering really the eradication of a cancer within the society. They were like mad dogs. If you don't destroy them, they're gonna hurt innocent people. So God ordered the utter destruction of the Amaleks.

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Now another factor here is that the Amaleks are always a type of the flesh in the scripture. The Amaleks being a type of the flesh; God is ordering the utter destruction of the flesh. "Wipe it out completely, don't give any place for the flesh."

The Bible says, "to fulfill the desires thereof. Crucify the old man, the old nature. If you by the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the flesh, put it to death" ([Romans 8:13](#)). God says, "don't give place for it, utterly wipe it out."

Now Saul went down with the armies, and God gave victory over the Amaleks. However, they saw some of the cattle and some of the sheep were really good stock, and so they set them aside. He spared the king alive, but the sickly sheep, the sickly cows they really hacked them to pieces, didn't give them a chance. That which was sickly and that which is not so good, they just utterly destroyed that, but the good, the healthy, the strong, they preserved them.

Now whatever this is, it is disobedience to the command of God. It is again another opportunity for Saul to redeem himself in obeying the command of the Lord. But it is disobedient, his failure to utterly wipe out the Amaleks, all of their cattle, and all of their sheep and so forth.

Now as we progress in history, and we're gonna go into the time machine now, and we're gonna go ahead in history a few hundred years. The story that is familiar with many of you, all of you have read the Bible, how that when Ester was chosen queen in Persia, there was one man in the kingdom of Persia that was seeking to destroy all the Jews because he could not stand this Jew "Mordecai", who refused to bow to him. He had such a hatred for this man, he perpetrated a scheme whereby all of the Jews were to be wiped out and he had the king sign a decree that on a given day, all the Jews would be wiped out in all the kingdom of Persia.

This wicked man's name was Haman. Now once a year the Jews celebrate, the feast of Purim. The feast of Purim is in celebration of God's delivering them from the hand of this wicked "Haman".

Now in Israel, it is like Halloween almost, in that the little children dress in costumes. The boys dress in the costumes of the villain Haman, ugly mask, and their costumes. The little girls dress up like Ester, and all the little girls are so beautiful, and of course they have their masks and their little wands and everything else. It is like a Halloween. They'll gather together and they have a sort of a party actually. They have the cookies and so forth, the Haman's hat, cookies, and all of this, and it's quite a thing over there. It's actually a Holiday, the feast of Purim.

But the thing I want to point out is the nationality of Haman. He was a descendant of the king of the Amaleks, "Agag". He was an Agagite. A descendant from Agag, so that Saul failing to completely obey God, almost cost Israel its whole national existence later on because he failed to completely obey the command of God. It almost cost the Jews in

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later history their very existence. This Haman the Agagite almost wiped them out completely.

Which if you do not bring your flesh to the cross, if you do not mortify the deeds of the flesh, if you seek to make allowances and tolerances, and say, "Well, that's a pretty good part of me, it isn't too bad," your flesh will come back to destroy you. We must bring the old man to the cross. We must not give place to the flesh to fulfill its desires. We must reckon the old man to be dead, and failure to do so can create real problems down the line. Your flesh will come back to haunt you and it will come back to destroy your relationship with God. God wants you to bring your flesh to the cross and there reckon the flesh, the old man to be dead.

Saul failed to obey the command of God keeping the best cattle and sheep and so forth. So as he came back with the spoils of war. Old Samuel, who is now an old man, can't see very well, he comes out to meet Saul.

And Samuel came to Saul: and Saul said to him, Blessed be thou of the Lord: I have performed the commandment of the Lord ([1Sa 15:13](#)).

Liar. But notice the spiritual language. "Blessed be thou of the Lord." Now a lot of people can use spiritual jargon, but it really doesn't mean anything. They go around saying, "Oh, praise the Lord. Oh bless God." while they're picking your pocket.

That's right. There's a young boy in Israel. He is ~~~~~ an Arab boy, and he meets us always when we're coming down the path of the Mount of Olives. "Oh, Christians. America. Oh praise the Lord. Praise the Lord. Hallelujah, hallelujah. Oh, Christians from California? Oh yes. Brother, brother." Watch out. Your wallet or your pen or something will be gone after his embrace. "Praise God. Hallelujah." "Fat wallet, praise the Lord." Spiritual jargon, it doesn't prove anything. You can be a crook and use spiritual language. Often it is used as a disguise. "Blessed be thou of the Lord: I've done everything, I've performed all the Lord commanded me."

Oh Samuel was not deceived, he said,

[If you've done everything that the Lord commanded you,] then what means the bleating of the sheep, and the lowing of the cows that I hear? ["Don't give me that business."] And Saul said, Oh they brought them from the Amalekites: for the people spared the best of the sheep and the oxen, to sacrifice to the Lord thy God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed ([1Sa 15:14-15](#)).

Now again remember Saul has developed a pattern of making excuses. When faced with his wrong, rather than repenting, when he offered the sacrifices in disobedience to God and Samuel called him for it, he said, "Oh, the people, you know, they were scattered and I forced myself. It was because of the people." Now again faced "What do you mean that you've done everything? If you have, how come I hear the sheep and the cattle?"

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"Oh well, the people, they kept the best. They brought them back to sacrifice." Religious excuses are the most damnable of all.

And Samuel said unto Saul, [Just wait a minute pal,] I'm going to tell you what the Lord said to me tonight. [And Saul said,] Say on. And Samuel said, When you were little in your own sight, you were made the head over the tribes of Israel, and the Lord anointed you to be king over Israel? And the Lord sent thee on a journey, and said, Go and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites, [Notice the sinners, the Amalekites.] and fight against them until they be consumed. Why then did you not obey the voice of the Lord, but you did fly upon the spoil, and you did evil in the sight of the Lord? And Saul said unto Samuel, Yes, I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, and I've gone the way which the Lord sent me, and I've brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites ([1Sa 15:16-20](#)).

He was lying; he was not repenting. But you see when he was little in his own sight, there was a difference then, but now he's become puffed up. Pride has filled his life and it's about to destroy him.

Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great a delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obedience to the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than to sacrifice, and to hearken to God is better than the fat of rams [which is burned in the sacrifices] ([1Sa 15:22](#)).

Flimsy excuse. God isn't interested in the sacrifices from a disobedient heart and life. God would much rather you obey Him than offer sacrifices. Many times people are giving to God in order to cover their feelings of guilt. Giving to God is not a sign necessarily of great spirituality. People can feel very guilty, "Oh, I'm gonna make a sacrifice unto God" because they feel so guilty for their disobedience. God would rather have your obedience than your sacrifice. "To hearken to the voice of God is better than to offer the fat of rams upon the altar."

For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry ([1Sa 15:23](#)).

In other words, if you're rebelling against God, that's just as bad as if you were into witchcraft. If you have a stubborn spirit, you're no better off than the person who is worshiping an idol. This business of rebellion and stubbornness is something that God is not pleased with in our lives. Rebellion is just as bad as witchcraft. Stubbornness is just as bad as idolatry.

And because you have rejected the word of the Lord, he has also rejected you from being king. [The official rejection, "That's it God has rejected your kingship"] And Saul said to Samuel, I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord, and thy words: [But notice it isn't a full repentance.] because [he said] I feared the people, and obeyed their voice ([1Sa 15:23-24](#)).

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Oh, he didn't fear the people. Again he's just offering a lame excuse for his disobedience. God would rather have just a straight, frank confession. "God, I blew it. I was wrong. I sinned. God, I'm sorry, I repent." God wants-there's no sign of repentance in this at all. Some people think it's cute to say, "Oh, I'm a sinner." That isn't repentance, it's only a declaration of a blasphemous truth. "Oh, I sinned." Doesn't make anything out of you, forsaking the sin is what is important. Turning from the sin, the repentance is what God is seeking.

Now therefore, [he said] I pray thee, pardon my sin, and turn again with me, that we might worship the Lord. And Samuel said to Saul, I will not return with you: for you have rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord has rejected you from being the king over Israel. And Samuel turned to go away, and he grabbed hold of him, and tore his coat. And Samuel said unto him, The Lord has torn the kingdom from you this day, and has given it to a neighbour that is better than you are. And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent: for he is not a man, that he should repent ([1Sa 15:25-29](#)).

Now the "Strength of Israel", here being a reference to God. Notice, "The Strength of Israel will not lie or repent." Now in Numbers we read, "For God is not a man that He should repent. Hath He not spoken? Shall He not make it good?" But in just a few verses we're gonna read where he says, "God repented that He made you king." How come this kind of a dichotomy? "The Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent, for He is not a man that He should repent."

Then Saul again said, I have sinned, yet honour me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people, [In other words, "Make me look good in front of the people, I've sinned."] and before Israel, turn again with me, that I may worship the Lord thy God. [Notice not the Lord my God, the Lord thy God.] So Samuel turned again after Saul; and Saul worshiped the Lord. Then said Samuel, Bring hither Agag the king of the Amalekites. And Agag came unto him delicately. And Agag said, Surely the bitterness of death is passed. And Samuel said, As your sword has made women childless, so shall your mother be childless among women. And Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the Lord in Gilgal. Then Samuel went back to Ramah; and Saul went up to his house in Gibeah. And Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death: nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul: and the Lord repented that he had made Saul king over Israel ([1Sa 15:30-35](#)).

So God there "the Strength of Israel will not lie, nor repent." Then what does it mean it repented the Lord that He made Saul king over Israel? There is always a difficulty in expressing God and the characteristics of God and the actions of God in human language, but all we have is human language.

Now God has characteristics, abilities, that we have no human language for, for we have no way of experiencing these things. I cannot even think how God thinks, because He knows everything. How does He even think when He knows everything to begin with? Now how can I even express the way that God thinks? How can I express the

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actions of God? I can only express them with human terms, as they appear to be from my human standpoint, but yet I am bound with human language.

Now I'm certain that there is a vocabulary of heaven that is far broader, and capable of expressing these things in languages, that if we heard it, we wouldn't know it because we have nothing that will equal it in human experience. So we are seeking to describe now an action of God, and that is the action of turning away His favor from Saul, the change of God's attitude towards Saul.

Now the word "repent," meaning change, God is changing now His attitude towards Saul. We have only one word to describe that change, "repent." But yet we have just read in a true sense, "God is not a man that He lies, or repents." But yet we have this human language barrier. So we have to express the activities of God with human language. The only word we have to express this particular action of God's obvious change in attitude towards Saul, the only word we have to express this obvious change is "repent." Yet because it is God's action, it isn't a "repentance" as we think of repent in our human minds. But it is the only vocabulary word that we have to express this change of attitude, so we use the word. But it isn't "repent" in the same way that a man repents from his decisions or his doings. I hope I've helped you. I don't know.