

“To Obey Is Better Than Sacrifice”

1 Samuel 15:1-35

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Review:

Hannah, one of the wives of a man named Elkanah longed to have a child, but she was unable to conceive. She prayed to The Lord and asked for a son. **1 Samuel 1:10-11**

Samuel grows up to be a great prophet of the Lord. Later, Israel gives in to political pressure and demands a king against God’s will.

- 1 Samuel 8 – Samuel warns Israel about having a king
- 1 Samuel 9 – Saul is chosen
- 1 Samuel 10 – Saul is anointed and publicly announced
- 1 Samuel 11 – Saul is confirmed through his first victory
- 1 Samuel 12 – Samuel warns Israel one more time.
- 1 Samuel 13 – From Fear
- 1 Samuel 14 – To Victory

Thought of the Passage: We Must Chose To Obey God’s Will Completely Because Disobedience Is Rebellion, And Rebellion Is Great Evil.

There are three main types of disobedience:

1. **Delayed** Obedience Is Disobedience.
2. **Deficient** Obedience is Disobedience.
3. **Deliberate** Disobedience.

We will look at twelve sections of this chapter today.

(1) 1 Samuel 15:1-3 The Command

1 Samuel 15:1 The spiritual leader of the nation is about to communicate God’s will to the political leader. It is so important to avail ourselves of wise counsel.

Proverbs 15:22 A president needs to have Godly counsel.

1 Samuel 15:2

(Exodus 17) More than 400 years earlier, the Amalekites attacked Israel when they were leaving Egypt.

Deuteronomy 25:17-19

The Amalekites did wrong. The Lord is not pleased when people abuse others.

Exodus 17:14-16

Our God is a God of justice. God will settle His accounts.

1 Samuel 15:3

This strike is a judgement against Amalec and also a test of the quality of Saul’s obedience. What is the quality of your obedience?

(2) 1 Samuel 15:4-6 The Preparation

1 Samuel 15:4 (That's 210,000 men) when he started with 600 men in chapter 14.

1 Samuel 15:5 **Saul came to the city of Amalek and set an ambush in the valley.** Saul was an effective military leader who knew how organize his men, and he also knew how to employ tactical strategy.

1 Samuel 15:6 Here we see Saul exhibits compassion and wisdom. These are important traits for a leader.

(3) 1 Samuel 15:7-9 The Battle

1 Samuel 15:7 **So Saul defeated the Amalekites, from Havilah as you go to Shur, which is east of Egypt. (Saul obeys)**

1 Samuel 15:8 **He captured Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword.**

(Verse 3a: Now go and strike Amalek and utterly destroy all that he has, and do not *spare him*;

1 Samuel 15:9a **But Saul and the people spared Agag and the best of the sheep, the oxen, the fatlings, the lambs, and all that was good, and were not willing to destroy them utterly;**

What we have here is called Deficient Obedience and that is Disobedience. Saul's Obedience is Partial, Incomplete, Selective, and it cannot be called true obedience.

1 Samuel 15:9b...but everything **despised and worthless**, that they utterly destroyed. God's judgement is nothing to rejoice over.

(4) 1 Samuel 15:10-11 God And Samuel

1 Samuel 15:10-11a **for he has turned back from following Me and has not carried out My commands.**"

Saul had a humble beginning but now he has rebelled and disobeyed God.

1 Samuel 13:14

Saul was a man after the heart of the people
David was a man after God's own heart.

1 Samuel 15:11b **And Samuel was distressed and cried out to the LORD all night. Bring your sorrows to the Lord.**

(5) 1 Samuel 15:12-13 The Meeting With Saul

1 Samuel 15:12a **Samuel rose early in the morning to meet Saul;**
He did not wait. **Delayed Obedience is disobedience**

This meeting with Saul will be a difficult one. However, the loving thing to do is to bring discipline, correction and instruction to our brothers in Christ.

1 Samuel 12b **and it was told Samuel, saying, “Saul came to Carmel, and behold, he set up a monument for himself, (Saul was not grieved by his sin of disobedience)**

What happened to the young man who had a humble beginning?

1 Samuel 9:21, 1 Samuel 10:22

1 Samuel 15:13 **I have carried out the command of the LORD.”
Saul was blinded by pride. Pride will blind you.**

(6) 1 Samuel 15:14-16 The Excused Offered By Saul

1 Samuel 15:14

1 Samuel 15:15 Saul said, “They have brought them from the Amalekites, for the people spared the best of the sheep and oxen,

**... to sacrifice to the LORD your God; Pride removes God from the throne of our heart where He rightfully belongs. but the rest we have utterly destroyed.”
Deficient Obedience is Disobedience.**

1 Samuel 15:16

(7) 1 Samuel 15:17-21 The Indictment of Saul

1 Samuel 15:19 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?” Son, why did you disobey?

1 Samuel 15:20 “I did obey the voice of the LORD, ... and have brought back Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites.

1 Samuel 15:21 But the people took some of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the choicest of the things devoted to destruction, to sacrifice to the LORD your God at Gilgal.”

Here is an opportunity to take responsibility. The root of Saul’s disobedience is his own pride. Here are three main threats to a Christian:

- 1) Pleasure
- 2) Money
- 3) Pride

(8) 1 Samuel 15:22-23 The Sentencing of Saul

1 Samuel 15:22

Religion and activities devoid of obedience never please God. This is not true worship.

Psalm 51:16-17, Romans 12:1

1 Samuel 15:23 “For rebellion is as the sin of divination, And insubordination is as iniquity and idolatry. [NKJV] For rebellion *is as* the sin of ^(a)witchcraft, And stubbornness *is as* iniquity and idolatry.

Because you have rejected the word of **the LORD, He has also rejected you from being king.”**

Deliberate Disobedience is shameless and blatant. It is saying that my will is more important than God’s will.

Saul is now disqualified.

(9) 1 Samuel 15:24-25 Saul’s Lack of Repentance

1 Samuel 15:24 because I feared the people and listened to their voice.

First Denial, then Forced confession. Are you asking forgiveness because you are full of sorrow, or because you got caught?

1 Samuel 15:25

(10) 1 Samuel 15:26-31 The Sentencing Repeated

1 Samuel 15:26 for you have rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD has rejected you from being king over Israel.” I have said what I came to say.

1 Samuel 15:27

Christian, don’t seize, don’t hang on to something, don’t pull, don’t grab on to anything. Not a position, not a possession, not a ministry. None of these belong to us.

We should only grab on to God.

1 Samuel 15:28

and has given it to your neighbor, who is better than you. (King David)

1 Samuel 15:29 God’s will shall prevail.

Saul at this point, thought very highly of himself, more than he ought to. “You need me more than I need you.” What a dangerous place to be. When our feelings and our opinions are more important than God or His people, we have disqualified ourselves.

Samuel reminds Saul that God is on the throne and this is God’s program.

1 Samuel 15:30 **but please honor me now before the elders of my people and before Israel,** and go back with me, that I may worship the LORD your God.” Saul is more concerned with appearances than forgiveness.

1 Samuel 15:31

31 So Samuel went back following Saul, and Saul worshiped the LORD.

This was not yet the time for Samuel to remove Saul from leadership.

(11) 1 Samuel 15:32-33 Samuel's Obedience

1 Samuel 15:32 "Bring me Agag, the king of the Amalekites."

The mission was completed. **And Agag came to him cheerfully. And Agag said, "Surely the bitterness of death is past."**

1 Samuel 15:33 "As your sword has made women childless, so shall your mother be childless among women." And Samuel hewed Agag to pieces before the LORD at Gilgal.

Samuel did not do this to humiliate Saul, but to complete what God had commanded.

Obedience can be difficult, but obedience is not dependent on our feelings. Obedience is a choice to honor God, regardless of how I feel.

Micah 6:6-8

Obedience is difficult. **"To Obey Is Better Than Sacrifice"**

(12) 1 Samuel 15:34-35 The Separation of Samuel and Saul

1 Samuel 15:34-35

A short distance of 10 miles separated Ramah and Gibeah of Saul. Saul never went to look for Samuel. There was no repentance in Saul. Repentance would not have restored the kingdom to Saul, but it would have restored his relationship with Samuel and perhaps with God.

There is no reconciliation apart from true repentance. You need to reconcile with God tonight.

35 for Samuel grieved over Saul. (NKJV "mourned") And the LORD regretted that He had made Saul king over Israel.

Application:

1. There Are Three Main Types Of Disobedience:

- a. **Delayed** Obedience Is Disobedience.
- b. **Deficient** Obedience is Disobedience.
- c. **Deliberate** Disobedience.

2. **"For rebellion is as the sin of divination, And insubordination is as iniquity and idolatry. 1 Samuel 1:15:23^a**

4. How Can I Be Obedient To The Lord, My Boss, My Teachers, And To Authorities?

5. I must detect and destroy disobedience In My Life.

6. Obedience Can Be Difficult And It Is Not Dependent On How I Feel.