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**B0915 – April 12, 2009 – Saul's Conditional Kingship**

I'd like to start by reviewing the purpose of man in creation. In Genesis, man was created to subdue the earth, he was to rule, and that is what man is to do, under God of course, not as an autonomous king, but a king who is an under lord to the Overlord, and man is not to worship nature, he is to rule wisely over nature, a point of confusion in our time. That's the big picture of what man is to do, he is to rule and to subdue with wisdom. Despite the curse and the Fall we still have within our souls a desire to rule and subdue, the problem is we're always frustrated in the ruling and subduing because just as we rebelled against God, the earth rebels against us, so we have the thorns and the thistles. The ruling imperative hasn't been taken away, it's just that we have resistance to the subduing, and in the ethical and spiritual sense we have locked into sin, apart from God's grace, which He gives us in Jesus Christ. Christ, all through His earthly life was a model of THE man who subdues and rules. He subdued, He obeyed what God said, He was 100% successful in carrying out the mandates of God in His personal life, and as a result He earned righteousness, and that righteousness is attributed to us at the point of faith. So he represents a subset of the human race just as the first Adam represents a subset of the race, a hard concept to understand but in essence that's what our salvation is all about.

When we come to this point in our progress in history, we're looking at this last event in the disruptive truths sequence, and the whole story of this David thing is to give us a model of what leadership in the kingdom of God is to look like. As we've said, the way to read the Bible is to read it over against its environment, so while you can get many, many blessings out of Scripture, you can get more when you set the Bible over against the world system at the time. That way you see the contrast. The idea is that the king of the nation, whoever he is, ought to be the ideal of subduing. The question we face with

the 1 Sam narrative is who is the ideal leader in the kingdom. To review the timeline, so we can set this in history, we have from ~2400BC everybody gets off the boat, they go out, they establish nations, they spread their architecture, their math, they map the continents, and all that happens till you come to the time of Abraham.

Now, at the point Abraham comes along, God said I reject this civilization. I don't reject the tools, I reject the use of the tools because I gave you the tools and you went out and autonomously used the tools to rebel against Me in building the kingdom of man and so I start with you Abraham, a new kingdom, a counter kingdom. And from Gen 12 on through history is a story of God disrupting man's kingdom building. There's always a disruption. Following Abraham they go down to Egypt and the disruption is the Exodus from Egypt, the kingdom of God cannot grow inside the kingdom of man, it has to come out from that system and develop on its own principles. Then we have the Conquest and Settlement, Israel and the nations, two systems at total war with one another, a big disruption. Now we're into the kings, and now we're going to have a very severe disruption in how men view kingship and leadership. So the disruption here is God is setting up to inject the ideal king into the world system.

Last time we were dealing with the problem of Israel wanting a king, but they wanted a king like all the other nations; the autonomous model of the king. From 1 Sam 8-15, this whole block of material is devoted to an examination of what went wrong with their prayer request to have a king like all the other nations, and God answered, and He gave them a king that met all the human requirements, impressive stature, good looking, but it was a conditional kingship. 1 Sam 8 is one of the most important political passages, the Bible isn't a political document but it has wisdom principles that can be applied in the political realm, and 1 Sam is one of those places. Deut 17 is another one, the 1644 tract, *Lex Rex*, published by Samuel Rutherford argued on the basis of Deut 17 that the king of the kingdom is subject to the law. So if there's a question between law and king, it's law that wins out; that's Deut 17.

In 1 Sam 8 the key is the spirit, just as you remember in the tower of Babel, when civilization began and we had the linguistic fracturing of the human race, we saw the spirit of the pagan heart at the tower of Babel. They said

“let us make a name for ourselves.” That has a lot of implications, but the underlying current of that statement is the spirit of the world system, the spirit of sinful man. It is the spirit that says, “I will build my kingdom, I will define the meaning and purpose of life, I will be like the Most High, and I will define what is good and evil, I am the law-maker, I invent truth, I am autonomous.” That’s the cry, and that was the whole spirit of the tower of Babel. In a small way this is what we have in 1 Sam 8:5. In verse 4 they send a delegation, so these are the representatives of the nation. This isn’t just a few old guys coming to Samuel, this is a delegation that has been appointed by the tribal leadership to represent the families of Israel, and they request in verse 5 that they want Samuel to appoint them a king to judge like all the other nations. Remember the background, because they had just gone through the Judges period, and the Judges period was a period of freedom and education, but what was the conclusion of this period? Socially what had happened? Every man did what was right in his own eyes. It was social anarchy! Which shows you that the idea held by many intellectuals today that all you have to do is educate everybody and then everything will be great, is a wrong idea. The Bible is a little more skeptical because of this period of history, they had a great education system and the whole thing went to pot. So the pendulum begins to swing, from chaos you swing toward law, from licentiousness to legalism. Thus the people cry out for law and order centered in a human king, they want totalitarian government. We went through 1 Sam 8 and all the arguments Samuel goes through, this is what’s going to happen, and he carefully makes it a spiritual issue. Lest we forget the spiritual issue that’s going on, look at verses 6-7 again. Here are the spiritual dynamics; the last clause in verse 7 says “they have rejected Me that I should not reign over them.” Who is the real King of Israel? This passage gives you the theology of kingship. The king is God, so when people are dissatisfied in verse 5 about what’s going on, the blame is really on God, “God your system is malfunctioning, it’s not working.” So we have this spiritual problem that creeps into the Samuel-Kings history. Where are you getting the standard to judge God’s system? Are you just generating these standards out of thin air? The nation had become autonomous; they wanted to be like all the other nations. And we come to the problem we started with last time which we resolve partially today. The problem is this? God is the King, but the Mosaic Law code allowed for a human king, we know that from Deut 17. The people demand a certain kind of king in verse 5. God says I won’t let you

have everything you want, I'll give you a king, I'll choose the guy and now we want to trace the outworking.

Let's look at some Scripture, 1 Sam 9:2, here's the process of anointing. "He had a son whose name was Saul, a choice and handsome *man*, and there was not a more handsome person than he among the sons of Israel; from his shoulders and up he was taller than any of the people." And then it describes how Samuel goes and anoints Saul as king, that's the whole idea of this chapter.

Come down to 1 Sam 13:13, this is later in Saul's life when he had a little problem, we're skipping quite a bit but I want to show you something. "13Samuel said to Saul, "You have acted foolishly; you have not kept the commandment of the LORD your God, which He commanded you, for now the LORD *would have* established your kingdom over Israel forever." See He "would have," it's a conditional everlasting kingship. Now if this is puzzling to you, what is going on with the king? You have complexities here, the people wanted a king and they wanted a king like all the nations, God said no, you'll get the king I pick you. He picks a guy that's not in the line of Judah, then he kind of fizzles out, and yet God said had he not the kingdom would have been his forever. That's very parallel to one of Jesus' choices. Who did Jesus choose among His disciples that petered out? Judas. Why did Jesus choose a Judas? God does this kind of thing. Why did the highest ranking angel, called Lucifer, that turns into Satan, why does God make him so great when He knows he's going to rebel against Him? It's part of the drama of Scripture.

So, what we have in the choice of the first king from the house of Benjamin was a conditional kingship. His kingship depended on his response to God's law. Lex Rex, Law is King. Now 1 Sam 12 because here's the answer to what Saul was about. Notice in this chapter that Samuel once again addresses the people, and it's his *au revoir* speech, this is his farewell address, he's turning the nation over now and he's saying goodbye to the nation, and here are his closing words. In the Bible, the prophets do this. Let's watch. 1 Sam 12:1, "Then Samuel said to all Israel, "Behold, I have listened to your voice in all that you said to me and I have appointed a king over you. 2"Now, here is the king walking before you, but I am old and gray, and behold my sons are with you. And I have walked before you from my youth even to this day." Vv 3-12

he's going to give his witness, he's going to recite history as sort of a review. Why does he recite history? Why are we so interested in history? Because it's God's track record. God said He would do this in the covenant and history is the record, has God done it or not. That's why covenants are made, to monitor behavior. So Samuel says, don't forget what God has done in history. That's why in going through this series, what are we doing, we're going through it historically. This is the way the Bible thinks, it thinks historically.

1 Sam 12:3-12 the narration of Israel's history. <sup>3</sup>"Here I am; bear witness against me before the LORD and His anointed. Whose ox have I taken, or whose donkey have I taken, or whom have I defrauded? Whom have I oppressed, or from whose hand have I taken a bribe to blind my eyes with it? I will restore *it* to you." <sup>4</sup>They said, "You have not defrauded us or oppressed us or taken anything from any man's hand." See, he's bringing to conviction. Was it because the prophetic institution failed you people, is that why you got your king? No it isn't, I never failed you, so you got a king but it wasn't because the prophets failed. Verse 5, "He said to them, "The LORD is witness against you, and His anointed is witness this day that you have found nothing in my hand." And they said, "*He is witness.*" See, they're admitting this, okay, you're right. Verse 6, "Then Samuel said to the people, "It is the LORD who appointed Moses and Aaron and who brought your fathers up from the land of Egypt." What event does Samuel recall here? We've studied and studied these. The Exodus. This is one of the sermons where I found all these events listed in them. So verse 6, the Exodus event. Verse 7, "So now, take your stand, that I may plead with you before the LORD concerning all the righteous acts of the LORD which He did for you and your fathers. <sup>8</sup>"When Jacob went into Egypt and your fathers cried out to the LORD," this is the precursor to the Exodus. Now vv 9, 10, 11, and 12 are all the battles of the Conquest and Settlement period. So he's reciting the fact that for four centuries God kept His word, you didn't. Verse 12 he concludes, "When you saw that Nahash the king of the sons of Ammon came against you, you said to me, 'No, but a king shall reign over us,' although the LORD your God *was* your king." See how he repeats that? Remember what we saw last week, they haven't rejected you Samuel, they've rejected Me, for I was their king. So here's the theme again, verse 12, you said you wanted a king, "the LORD your God was your king. <sup>13</sup>"Now therefore, here is the king whom you have chosen, whom you have asked for, and behold, the LORD has set a king over you."

This is the official coming out of the monarchy, this is the changing of the guard, so to speak, the mantel is passed from one administration to the next and it's inauguration day. Verses 14-19 is a very serious call to the covenant, because the kingship of Saul is a conditional kingship, it is conditioned on the same terms as the Mosaic Covenant, here are the terms. <sup>14</sup>"If you will fear the LORD and serve Him, and listen to His voice and not rebel against the command of the LORD, then both you and also the king who reigns over you will follow the LORD your God." There's Lex Rex, law over king. <sup>15</sup>"If you will not listen to the voice of the LORD, but rebel against the command of the LORD, then the hand of the LORD will be against you, *as it was* against your fathers. <sup>16</sup>"Even now, take your stand and see this great thing which the LORD will do before your eyes."

Verses 17-18 Samuel calls for a weather event, a meteorological low statistical probability thing happening during the wheat harvest, there was all of a sudden this rain, because he's telling the people, you people keep asking for security, you want big government to be your savior, you want a king to be your savior, now there's your harvest out there. Why do you suppose he calls the rain on a harvest? Why not a fire out of the water or something? What's the backbone of the economy? Agriculture. So what is he doing when he brings rain out of heaven? He's rebuking. See the irony of this? He's saying who's providing for you economically, who's giving you the rain, your human king or the one who brought you out of Egypt and fought your battles in the Conquest? Verse 17, "Is it not the wheat harvest today? I will call to the LORD, that He may send thunder and rain. Then you will know and see that your wickedness is great which you have done in the sight of the LORD by asking for yourselves a king." <sup>18</sup>So Samuel called to the LORD, and the LORD sent thunder and rain that day; and all the people greatly feared the LORD and Samuel.

In verse 19 we come to a paradox. Look at the response of the people. "Then all the people said to Samuel, "Pray for your servants to the LORD your God, so that we may not die, for we have added to all our sins *this* evil by asking for ourselves a king." What did God say in 1 Sam 8 after you get a king and you hate it you're going to come back and pray. And what did He say? I'm not going to hear it, sorry. In other words, you asked for a king and you're stuck with one. So here's an interesting example, and it has an application to the

Christian life because so often, “Oh Lord, if you do this for me,” and then he answers and we don’t like it so much. But hey, that’s what we asked for and now I’ve got a mess and we’re like the people, verse 19, now what do we do? We can’t undo what it was we’ve done, so for the rest of our life we live with the consequences of this choice back here, whatever it was, we have to live with it. The Lord is gracious, and in verses 20-25 is God’s answer, I know you screwed up, but there’s a plan B. So He gives them the capacity to handle the consequences of the bad choice. Verse 20, “Samuel said to the people, “Do not fear. You have committed all this evil,” now isn’t that a combination, do not fear, you screwed up. Why does he say that? Because once we’re convicted of our sin we do fear, there’s an alienation from God, we feel like we’ve offended Him and He’s not pleased with us, now what do I do, go off and sulk for the next hundred years? What do I do, I’ve lost my fellowship with Him. This is God’s grace calling us back, He’s saying I know you screwed up, I know you sinned, but don’t fear, “yet do not turn aside from following the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart. <sup>21</sup>“You must not turn aside, for *then you would go* after futile things which can not profit or deliver, because they are futile. <sup>22</sup>“For the LORD will not abandon His people on account of His great name, because the LORD has been pleased to make you a people for Himself.” Notice that, v 22, what just happened there? We’ve studied and studied, now I hope you recognize that something significant happened in v 22. They’ve failed, they’ve done all this wickedness but what hasn’t changed? Go back a thousand years to the Abrahamic Covenant. The relationship hasn’t changed, they’re still His people, that’s positional truth, that never changes. Your experience changes, it’s up one day, down the next, but your position as God’s chosen people never changes, the Abrahamic Covenant. But at the same time your experience fluctuates, that’s experiential sanctification, the Law of Moses dealt with that, the Law of Moses didn’t change, they’re response to it could and here’s their opportunity.

These covenants have logical connections, but the thing you want to see in verse 22 is that when failure happens he doesn’t go back and try to get favor again by earning it on the basis of the law, because the law condemns. That’s why they’re afraid. This is a very interesting passage. In verse 21 the word of God comes through Samuel and says don’t turn aside, continue to obey Me, continue to follow My commands, that’s fine, but the reason that I’m gracious to you isn’t because you earned 101 brownie points. The reason I am gracious is because I chose you for a certain purpose in history and I’m going to

continue working with you. So verse 22 means that their security is rooted in God's sovereign election, His choice of them, not in what they did or didn't do. Verse 22, "For," purpose clause, "For the LORD will not forsake His people for His great name's sake," does it say He will not forsake His people for their great righteousness? No, "for His name's sake." The deal is that God wants the plan to go His way because He's getting the glory out of the plan, "for His name's sake."

Then in verse 23 is that famous passage about praying. "Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD by ceasing to pray for you; but I will instruct you in the good and right way. <sup>24</sup>"Only fear the LORD and serve Him in truth with all your heart; for consider what great things He has done for you." Verse 25, the closing warning, "But if you still do wickedly," in other words, you continue to violate that covenant, "both you and your king will be swept away." Historically that happened in two parts, the northern kingdom was swept away in 721BC, there 80% of the nation went into captivity, and the southern kingdom went in 586BC. That's going to be the end of what we know as the kingdom in the OT. But the kingly line survives.

We want to look at some of Saul's failures, because remember this is a conditional kingship. If he obeys and the nation obeys the Mosaic Covenant then they will be blessed and his kingship will be forever, but if they disobey then Saul's kingship will be terminated. We want to look at how he fares. If we look at Saul on the outside, he's an impressive individual, but on the inside he had profound flaws. I encourage you to read through the Samuel's text, we'll highlight some of the stupid things Saul did. One of the things he did in a battle was placing his own career ahead of the people's need for food in battle. It was a very stupid military decision to deprive his army of food, you ate on pain of death, and his own son, Jonathan, showed up late and didn't get the command and so he's out there hungry, he eats and here's the crown prince violating the king's command, so if he kills him the Crown Prince is the end of his dynasty. He almost did it were it not for the people who convinced him not to, so because he made a rash command he endangered his own son's life. And that's the kind of rash decisions we make when we are absorbed with our own agenda, we impede our own progress



Another one we want to walk through is 1 Sam 15 because this is the last chapter in that section, the Saul section. We want to look at this and see what happens to Saul. This is another very famous chapter in the Bible; a lot of preachers have preached many, many sermons on this one. This is the failure of Saul. The idea is, in verse 1, "Then Samuel said to Saul, 'The LORD sent me to anoint you as king over His people, over Israel; now therefore listen to the words of the LORD.'" Watch how the chapter begins and then watch how the chapter ends. The chapter begins by ordering the king, and notice who's ordering the king; the prophet is. What is the order we always observe in Scripture? Who precedes the king? The prophet. Who proclaims the king? The prophet. Who starts the Gospels? Not Jesus but Jesus' prophet, John. That's why the Gospels begin with John and not Jesus; John is the anointing prophet, it's the same pattern you see in the OT. Samuel anoints Saul, Samuel anoints David, Nathan takes over after Samuel and from that point on there's a series of prophets that anoint the kings. The prophets are always involved in king-making in the Bible. Don't ever think the kings just happen, they don't, they are announced and put in place by these prophets God raises up, laymen apparently, who knew the word of God and had a special call in their life, they played a peculiar role politically in the life of the nation Israel, very different from other nations.

He's ordering the king in verses 1-9 to go to Holy War against the Amalekites. The Amalekites were a nasty group of people. They dwelt in this area, south of Saul and north of the Sinai. These people were ruthless people; they amounted to a big street gang. They pestered Israel when Israel was coming out of the land, and there were several engagements with them at that point in their history. Then Joshua led the nation around after the death of Moses and entered the land from the east side during the Conquest. But the Amalekites have hung around, and at this point in history the plan is to exterminate them. Saul is going to be the one called to eliminate them from history. There are certain groups of people, once they go against God to a certain degree they are garbage. We can't be self-righteous about this; it could happen to us nationally speaking. But God seems to allow a people so much freedom and then that is it, period! Here's one of the cases in history.

He says in verses 3-4, you go and commit Holy War against them. If you want to read about holy war, the rules of engagement of holy war are given in Deut 20:16-18, that's the rules of engagement. The rules of engagement in Holy

War were different than non-holy war. There are two sets of military rules given in Deut 20. The rules of Holy War are total extinction. The moral dilemma of the conquest - how can a holy, righteous, loving God ever give the military orders that God gave, to go in to kill every man, woman, child and beast. Why was this total extinction, total genocide? He who reads the heart gives a preliminary viewing of final judgment. So the order is given to Saul and he goes to attack, verse 6. And the battle goes on but then verse 8, "And he captured Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword." So he obeyed *most* of the military order in the engagement proceedings, except he took the king alive. Then verse 9 adds a few minor rebellions. "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; but everything that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly."

Think this through. Who's king of Israel, truly? Saul? No, we've already seen its God. So whose war is this, Saul's war or God's war? God's war. Whose booty is it? Saul's booty or is it God's booty? It's God's booty and God has a right to do with it what He wants. But what do we read happened in verse 9. There's a little monetary evaluation of some things, the good stuff, notice the text says the "best of the sheep," aha, as the saying goes, "follow the money." The flesh always follows the money. That's what's going on here; this is a deal that's being cooked up, along with the rules of engagement of course.

Now we have a classic prophet-king confrontation. We're going to have several of these in the book of Samuel. They would be unknown in a pagan nation, no layman is going to walk up to Nebuchadnezzar and convict him of his sin. No lay Egyptian is going to walk into Pharaoh's temple and tell him off. Only in Israel do you dare have some person, a lay person so to speak, walk into the presence of the king as a prosecuting attorney. Ask yourself why? A fundamental question for Christians studying the Bible, why is the behavior of the prophet and king in Israel different from all other political institutions of the world. What is the difference? What makes that happen in Israel that didn't happen in Mesopotamia and Egypt, and Lord knows what other nations? What gave Samuel the power to do this? It was God reigning, Samuel knew it, and he operated on the basis of an absolute law. It was the presence of absolute truth and absolute law that allowed them to do this. The Egyptians didn't operate on any absolute law, outside of Pharaoh.

Remember when we showed the thing from Egyptian art, here's another illustration of this process. When the prophets came in to the kings, they came in as the voice of God. This slide is an Egyptian column, an Egyptian temple, and if you look carefully, this depicts the theology of the Pharaoh. Inside this column you have basically the hieroglyphic depiction of the Pharaoh. On either side you have lines, and it looks like a line but it stops there at the scepter, and starts above the bottom line; those scepters signify authority and rule. Up here you have the sun and the heavens; down here you have the earth. What do you think the artist is saying in that diagram; that's the doctrine of pagan totalitarian government. Pharaoh integrates heaven and earth, he is the lord of both, he is the link, he is the mediator, he therefore is the priest, king and all else, he is absolute power. You don't walk into this guy and tell him he screwed up. Which gives you, by the way, the sense of what Moses was up against. And you didn't go into the Assyrian kings either, unless you wanted to be executed. Only in Israel do you have someone going into the king like this.

So the confrontation occurs now, prophet vs king. What does he say? This is a classic. 1 Sam 15:10, "Then the word of the LORD came to Samuel, saying, <sup>11</sup>"I regret that I have made Saul king, for he has turned back from following Me and has not carried out My commands." And Samuel was distressed and cried out to the LORD all night." So Samuel wasn't against Saul. Apparently Samuel liked the guy. Now he's in a mess because he's warned the people about Saul, he's apparently grown to have some affection for Saul, and now all of a sudden the Lord says okay Samuel, remember I said it was a conditional kingship, and he's failed, and you're going to be the guy that walks in and tells him he's fired.

Verse 12, "Samuel rose early in the morning to meet Saul;" verse 13, "Samuel came to Saul," now watch Saul, this is so slick, "Samuel came to Saul, and Saul said to him, "Blessed are you of the LORD! I have carried out the command of the LORD." Sounds very spiritual until the next verse, in one short phrase Samuel cuts to the chase. What's that I hear? Ah, I hear something Saul. Sheep, the bleating of the sheep, the expensive ones, what's that? And now Saul has to come up with an excuse to cover this, like we all do, operation cover up. V 15, "they brought them from the Amalekites...they spared the best of the sheep and the oxen, to sacrifice to the LORD your God"

Oh, such a spiritual thing, “to sacrifice” all the fine things. See God, it’s for you, it’s all going to the Lord. Excuse me, but what does that have to do with the command of God? What does that have to do with Holy War? You’re trying to do a right thing a wrong way? It doesn’t work that way. It’s God’s war, God’s the general. He said destroy it. He doesn’t want it. He already owned it, so you’re not giving it to God. God said I want it exterminated. Verse 16, “Then Samuel said to Saul, ‘Stay, and I will tell you what the LORD has said to me this night,’” and now he starts to convict him. You know, who are you Saul? What position do you hold? What’s your office and who gave you the office? Who’s responsible? You can go on and on all day about they did this and they did that but who’s responsible here? Who’s in charge of these soldiers? That goes on down to verse 19, “Why didn’t you obey the Lord? Verse 20, “And Saul said unto Samuel,” (look at this, you want to watch this, in this conversation we have it all, this is exactly the dialogue that goes on all the time between the Lord and us, because when He reaches down to convict us of our sin, what do we always try to do first? Come up with some kind of excuse, some kind of hyper-spiritual reason, see, what I was really trying to do was honor you God). Look at verse 20, he says well, I have “obeyed the voice of the LORD, and have gone the way which the LORD sent me, and have brought Agag, the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. <sup>21</sup>But the people took of the spoil,” remember that in Genesis 3, when God comes to Adam and He accuses him, and what does Adam say? It wasn’t me, it was this woman you gave me. It’s always the blame shifting game. He’s still trying to blame shift. See how real the Bible is, that’s why reading the Bible scares the hell out of most people, because there’s no super-religiosity here, everything’s just blunt fact, this is real and it’s personal and it’s every one of us.

Verses 22-23 is the classic statement of rebellion and sin in the Scripture. Very interesting! “Samuel said, “Has the LORD as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, *And* to heed than the fat of rams. <sup>23</sup>“For rebellion is as the sin of divination, *And* insubordination” that’s a military word of rebellion against authority, “insubordination is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He has also rejected you from *being* king.” End of career. So it’s not a nice chapter.

In verse 24 Saul admits that he's sinned. In verse 26, "But 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 king over Israel." <sup>27</sup>As Samuel turned to go, *Saul* seized the edge of his robe, and it tore. <sup>28</sup>So Samuel said to him, "The LORD has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today and has given it to your neighbor, who is better than you. <sup>29</sup>"Also the Glory of Israel will not lie or change His mind; for He is not a man that He should change His mind." <sup>30</sup>Then he said, "I have sinned; *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." <sup>31</sup>So Samuel went back following Saul, and Saul worshiped the LORD." Verse 31 is God's grace. God's going to be gracious to him in his personal life, but He hasn't taken away the sins of discipline which lose him his office.

In verses 32-33 there's a little unfinished business, and this is a nasty one. People complain there's too much violence in our society, and it's true, we don't like violence, but it can get to the point of stupidity. Like let's get rid of the militant hymns, erase Onward Christian Soldiers from the hymn book because it's violent. In an evil world there is violence. Why? Because to remove evil requires violence. So here's the case, verse 32, "Then Samuel said, "Bring me Agag, the king of the Amalekites." And Agag came to him cheerfully." (there's a debate here over the root of that word, suffice it to say it means cautiously, he's got the sense that this Samuel character is not the same kind of guy as Saul, so he's a little careful here), "And Agag said, 'Surely the bitterness of death is past.' <sup>33</sup>But Samuel said, "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." A nice passage; chop, chop, chop. So here we have the end of the Amalekites, but notice who ends the holy war? It is the prophet. If the king doesn't finish it, the prophet finishes it, but it will be finished.

Then verse 35, a very poignant thing, considering the fact that personally Samuel must have liked Saul. Look what happens, "Samuel did not see Saul again until the day of his death; for Samuel grieved over Saul. And the LORD regretted that He had made Saul king over Israel." That verse summarizes all the relationship going on, between God and Samuel, and Samuel and Saul, and God and Saul, etc.

Next time we'll deal with David. Now we've got the stage set for this guy David. If you want to read ahead, skim it, don't get involved in the details, but skim through the rest of Samuel, just skim the highlights and get into the beginning of 2 Samuel, through chapter 7. We're going to see what happens to David. You've seen certain things now, watch what is different about how David is elected than how Saul is elected and watch the difference in character.

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