

I. Introduction and review.

II. Saul is given one final opportunity to obey God. 15:1-3

- A. The LORD, through Samuel, tells Saul to destroy the Amalekites. v. 1-3
1. Listen carefully to the words of the LORD. v. 1
 2. The LORD has determined to punish the Amalekites for their past sins. v. 2
Exod. 17:8-16 Num. 24:20 Deut. 25:17-19 Gen. 12:3
 3. The Amalekites and their property are to be utterly destroyed (under the ban) in holy war. v. 3 Josh. 6:17,21 Deut. 7:1-6 20:16-18
- B. Many modern people have problems with this text. Gen. 15:16
1. Liberal scholars claim the primitive religion of the Hebrews was barbaric.
 2. Even some who claim to be more conservative say, "That's the Old Testament." v. 29 Mal. 3:6 Heb. 13:8 Mt. 13:49-50
 3. Is such a slaughter inconsistent with the love of God? Ro. 9:13-15
 4. Is it fair to punish the Amalekites for sins committed 300 years earlier? v. 18
 5. What about the children and the animals? Ps. 51:5 Ro. 5:12,15
 6. God has executed similar judgements many times. Gen. 6-8 19
 7. One day He will judge all humanity once and for all. II Pe. 3:10ff II Th. 1:6ff
- C. We should learn about God's character. Ex. 34:6-7
1. God is holy and has a holy hatred of sin. Isa. 6:3 Rev. 4:8
 2. God is righteous and judges the wicked who foolishly oppose Him and His people.
Rev. 6:10 Dt. 32:43 II Th. 1:6 Ro. 9:22-23
 3. God is sovereign.
 - a. He has the right to show mercy to whom He will. Ro. 9:15
 - b. He has the right to punish sin when and how it pleases Him. II Pe. 3:9
 - c. God is sovereign in choosing the instruments of His judgment. Rom. 13:4
 4. God is immutable. v. 29 Mal. 3:6 Heb. 13:8
 5. God's ways are not our ways. Isa. 55:8-9 Rom. 11:33-36 Jer 18:6-8 Gen. 18:25
- D. We are also reminded of the sinful character of mankind. Ro. 3:10-18,23 6:23
Eph. 2:1-3 Is. 53:6 Rom. 1:18-32 2:14-15 Heb. 9:27 Acts 17:31 Lam. 3:22

III. Saul fails again. v. 4-31

- A. Saul defeats the Amalekites. v. 4-9
1. Why does he spare the Kenites? v. 6 Num. 24:21 Ex. 18:9-10 Gen. 12:3
 2. Saul's obedience is (again) incomplete. v. 8-9 Why did Saul spare Agag? Jdg. 1:6
- B. The LORD speaks to Samuel. v. 10-12
1. In what sense can the LORD regret having made Saul king? v. 10-11a,35
 - a. The LORD is not like a man who changes his mind. v. 29 Mal. 3:6 Js. 1:17
 - b. God is involved in history, responding to events. Je. 18:8 Jon. 1-4 Ex. 32:11-14
 - c. God is genuinely grieved by human sin. Mt. 23:37-39 Lu. 19:41-44 Ge. 6:5-6
 2. Samuel also is deeply distressed. v. 11b Mt. 23:36ff Luke 6:12
- C. Saul remains clueless about his sin. v. 12-13
1. He builds a monument commemorating his victory. v. 12 Ex. 17:15-16
 2. He boasts of having kept the LORD's command. v. 13 Pr. 12:15 21:2 Heb. 3:13

- D. Samuel confronts Saul. v. 14-19**
1. Hear the Word of the LORD! v. 14-16
 2. You have failed to obey the LORD. v. 17-19 9:21 10:22 Pr. 3:5-6
- E. Again Saul is full of excuses. v. 15,20-21 13:11-12 Gen. 3:12-13 Ex. 32:21-24**
1. He claims partial obedience is good enough. v. 20
 2. He blames the people. v. 21a,24,15 Gen. 3:12-13 Pr. 29:25 Ex. 32:21-24
 3. He claims that his motive for saving the animals was to worship God. v. 21b,15b
- F. Samuel pronounces the LORD's judgment on Saul. v. 22-23**
1. Obedience is more important than external religious acts. v. 22 Ps. 51:16-17 40:6-8 Is. 1:10ff Pr. 21:3 Je. 7:21ff Ho. 6:6 Am. 5:21ff Mic. 6:6ff Mk. 12:32-33 He. 10:6-9
 2. Disobedience is as bad as divination and idolatry. v. 23a Dt. 10:10
 3. As you rejected the LORD's word, He has rejected you. v. 23b,26-28 12:25 13:14
- G. Saul tries to save face. v. 24-35**
1. Saul confesses his sin. v. 24 Ex. 9:27 10:16-17 Num. 22:34 II Cor. 7:10-11
 2. Saul's big concern seems to be how he will look in the people's eyes. v. 25-27,30-31
 3. Samuel's torn robe becomes a parable of Saul's kingdom. v. 28-29 28:17-18
 4. The LORD will appoint a more faithful king. II Sam. 22:38 Ps. 18:37 89:28ff
 5. Samuel finishes the job which Samuel refused to do by killing Agag. v. 32-33
 6. Samuel parts ways with Saul. v. 34-35

IV. Concluding applications.

- A. We need leaders who fear God and not men. v. 24 Pr. 29:25 John 12:43 5:44**
- B. Your exact obedience to the LORD is important. I Jo. 2:3-4 Mt. 28:20 John 14:15**
1. Are you attentive and submissive to God's Word? v. 1
 2. Are you satisfied with mere partial obedience? v. 13
 3. Don't make lame excuses!
 4. External religious acts without heartfelt obedience are worthless. v. 22 Mt. 15:9-10
- C. Where is Jesus in our text?**
1. He sought God's approval not man's. John 5:41,44
 2. He obeyed the Father perfectly, even unto death. Phil. 2:5-8 Heb. 10:6-9
 3. His one sacrifice satisfied God's justice for our sin. I Pe. 3:18 II Co. 5:21 I Jo. 2:2 Heb. 10:10-14 Isa. 53:4ff
 4. He will reign forever -- The Father will never regret making Him King. Ps. 89:29
 5. Obey the gospel by repenting and believing. Ro. 1:5 16;26 Ps. 51:17,4 Pr. 28:13 Acts 16:31 17:30
 6. If you reject Jesus, you will be utterly destroyed. Mt. 13:41-42,49-50 Lu. 13:1-5
 7. Jesus grieves over your unbelief. Lu. 19:41-44 Mt. 23:36ff

Discussion questions.

1. What should our attitude be about God's judgment of the wicked?
2. How was it fair for the Amalekites to be utterly destroyed?
3. Which of God's attributes are displayed in this text?
4. In what sense did God regret making Saul king?
5. How are we like Saul in excusing our sins and in partial obedience to God?
6. What can leaders learn from Saul's bad example?
7. How are people inclined to offer outward sacrifices rather than to obey God?
8. Where is Jesus in this passage?