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Safe Harbor Baptist Church

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“God doesn’t want your Worship”

I Samuel 15:13-23

Text verse: Vs 22 And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

Better- More acceptable.

The terms “sacrifice” and “the fat of rams” are both connected with the process of Worship.

Worship- Divine worthiness. Chiefly and eminently, the act of paying divine honors to the Supreme Being; or the reverence and homage paid to him in religious exercises, consisting in adoration, confession, prayer, thanksgiving and the like.

John 4:23-24 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

1. God **Demands** Worship.
2. God **Deserves** Worship. (We praise him for what he does, but we worship him for who he is)
3. God **Delights** in Worship.
4. But in our text we find God **Denying** Worship.

Within the context of I Samuel 15 we will find an occasion in the Word of God when a man tried to Worship God and wanted to Worship God, But God did not want, nor did he receive his Worship.

The man in our text is Saul. And the reason that God would not receive his worship is because Saul had directly disobeyed the Word of God.

Point: We are living in a day where the average “Church attender” thinks nothing about the LORD all week long. They never read their Bible, they never pray, they never give thanksgiving, they walk in the flesh and fulfill the lust thereof, but come Sunday morning they are coming to Worship the LORD.....the only problem is, God doesn’t want your Worship!

I. I want us to note the **Stated Demand. Vs 1-3**

1. The **Sovereign Reverence of this Demand. Vs 1**

“Samuel also said unto Saul, The Lord sent me to anoint thee to be king over his people, over Israel: now therefore hearken thou unto the voice of the words of the Lord.”

This demand or command came not from the lips of the Prophet Samuel, but rather came from the LORD himself!

2. The Seen Representation in this Demand. Vs 2

“Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel”

Amalekite is a descendant of Esau- **Genesis 36:12** *And Timna was concubine to Eliphaz Esau's son; and she bare to Eliphaz Amalek: these were the sons of Adah Esau's wife.*

Esau was the 1st born of Isaac and Rebekah, he had a twin brother names Jacob, even though they were twins they were different as night and day. Esau always pictures the flesh, he sold his birthright for a bowl of pottage.

3. The Spoken Remembrance in this Demand. Vs 2

“2 Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt.”

God states that he remembered what Amalek did to the people of God when they came of Egypt all the way back in Exodus 17, he says 2 things about the remembrance of Amalek.

A. The Subtlety. *“how he laid in wait”*

This is exactly how the flesh works, it lays in wait, in subtlety trying to attack the child of God when he is least expecting.

B. The Strategy. *“when he came up from Egypt”*

Israel was coming from a great victory when Amalek came against the people of God.

The Flesh will always wait and attack after you gain some ground in your life because the flesh does not like losing ground, he wants to take it back.

4. The Specific Requirements of this Demand. Vs 3

“3 Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass.”

This seems to be a harsh command to destroy the children of Amalek, but they would have grown up to be the enemies of Israel.

It is also pictured as the mercy of God, for these children went to Abraham's bosom.

The point here is to destroy sin in the early stages!

II. I want us to note Saul's Disobedience. Vs 4-11

1. The Initial Compliance. Vs 4-7

4 And Saul gathered the people together, and numbered them in Telaim, two hundred thousand footmen, and ten thousand men of Judah.

5 And Saul came to a city of Amalek, and laid wait in the valley.

6 And Saul said unto the Kenites, Go, depart, get you down from among the Amalekites, lest I destroy you with them: for ye shewed kindness to all the children of Israel, when they came up out of Egypt. So the Kenites departed from among the Amalekites.

7 And Saul smote the Amalekites from Havilah until thou comest to Shur, that is over against Egypt.

As the text unfolds we find Saul doing right in Vs 4-7.

He rallies the armies together and goes to fulfill the word of the LORD.

2. The Illegal Compromise. Vs 8-9

8 And he took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword.

9 But Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them: but every thing that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly.

Here the narrative begins to change.

For some reason, known only to Saul and the LORD, Saul spares the king of Amalek, Agag.

Then he begins to go through and spare the best of the “livestock” that Amalek possessed.

He partially obeyed what the LORD wanted him to do, but in partially obeying we learned that he completely disobeyed!

We note that he had no trouble destroying the “vile and refuse” meaning those things that were obviously not acceptable. But he felt as though he could get away with keeping the best that the flesh had to offer!

Hebrews 12:2 *Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

3. The Incredible Cost. Vs 10-11

10 Then came the word of the Lord unto Samuel, saying,

11 It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. And it grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the Lord all night.

The word of the LORD informed Samuel of the disobedience of Saul. And just like a true man of God it broke Samuel’s heart!

God did not make a mistake in choosing Saul to be king. The people made the mistake in asking God for a king.

Sometimes God will give you exactly what you want!

III. I want us to note Samuel’s Discernment. Vs 12-23

1. The **Deceptive Expression**. Vs 12-13

“12 And when Samuel rose early to meet Saul in the morning, it was told Samuel, saying, Saul came to Carmel, and, behold, he set him up a place, and is gone about, and passed on, and gone down to Gilgal.

13 And Samuel came to Saul: and Saul said unto him, Blessed be thou of the Lord: I have performed the commandment of the Lord.”

Samuel and Saul meet one another the next day and Saul immediately begins to exclaim and that he had obeyed the LORD like he wanted some recognition for it.

You don't need to expect recognition for obedience. Just be obedient!

“To many times we live for the “Amen” instead of the “Well done”- Kenny Baldwin

2. The **Direct Enquiring**. Vs 14

“14 And Samuel said, What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?”

In this verse we see 2 things about Samuel:

A. His **Courage**.

B. His **Confrontation**.

The man of God was not afraid to deal directly with the disobedience of Saul!

Point: Most Preachers today would have told Saul how good he was, and how much God loved him. Samuel dealt with his sin!

Samuel was more concerned with Saul's Error, than Saul's Ego!

3. The **Defensive Excuses**. Vs 15

15 And Saul said, They have brought them from the Amalekites: for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed.

You can tell that someone is wrong, when they start making excuses!

He played the blame game!

4. The **Declared Exposition**. Vs 16-19

“16 Then Samuel said unto Saul, Stay, and I will tell thee what the Lord hath said to me this night. And he said unto him, Say on.

17 And Samuel said, When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the Lord anointed thee king over Israel?

18 And the Lord sent thee on a journey, and said, Go and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites, and fight against them until they be consumed.

19 Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the Lord, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the Lord?”

God have given Samuel a message in the night. The message was meant for one person....Saul!

He states that God took him from nothing. Raised him to the highest position in the land, only for Saul to deliberately disobey the word of the LORD.

5. The Detestable Explanation. Vs 20-21

“20 And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, 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.

21 But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in Gilgal.

Once again Saul refuses to accept personal responsibility for the disobedience.

Yes it was true that the people had spared the best of the best, but they did so through the leadership of Saul!

6. The Damaging Effect. Vs 22-23

22 And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.”

23 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king.”

Rebellion is like Witchcraft- Demonic activity.

And Stubbornness is like Iniquity and Idolatry.

We learn from this verse that Saul was not innocent, he simply did what he wanted to do!

Because of his “self-will” actions, God had rejected him from being the king.

IV. I want us to note the Selfish Desire. Vs 24-30

1. The Immediate Regret. Vs 24

“24 And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord, and thy words: because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice.”

Once Saul hears the indictment on his sin, he immediately regrets his actions.

2. The Instant Resuming. Vs 25

“25 Now therefore, I pray thee, pardon my sin, and turn again with me, that I may worship the Lord.”

Saul’s mindset was to say he was “sorry” and then they could immediately begin a worship service.

3. *The Inspiring Reslove. Vs 26a*

“26 And Samuel said unto Saul, I will not return with thee:”

Samuel refused to worship with a man, that had directly and deliberately went contrary to God’s word!

4. *The Imparted Rejection. Vs 26b*

“for thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord hath rejected thee from being king over Israel.”

Saul rejected God, thus God rejected Saul!

5. *The Inward Remorse. Vs 27*

“27 And as Samuel turned about to go away, he laid hold upon the skirt of his mantle, and it rent.”

Saul was filled with such despair that he tried to make Samuel worship with him, to the point to where he grabbed hold of Samuel’s mantle and tore it.

Had Saul been just as passionate about obedience as he was worship, none of this would have occurred.

6. *The Illustrated Rending. Vs 28-29*

“28 And Samuel said unto him, The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, that is better than thou.”

“29 And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent: for he is not a man, that he should repent.”

God stripped the kingdom from Saul’s hand and would raised up David to replaced him!

7. *The Ignorant Request. Vs 30*

“30 Then he said, I have sinned: yet honour me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people, and before Israel, and turn again with me, that I may worship the Lord thy God.”

Some people just don’t get it!

Even after all of Samuel’s explanation all Saul wanted to do was worship!

*There is one word that begins with the letter “R” that is not found in the attitude of Saul and that is **Repentance!***

For if he had truly repented, he would have gone and killed King Agag and then he could have enjoyed worship!

Psalm 51:16-17 For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering.

17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

Adrian Rogers said: "If you are having trouble with faith, try repentance"

V. I want us to note the Sacred Duty. Vs 31-35

1. Saul's Worship. Vs 31

"So Samuel turned again after Saul; and Saul worshipped the Lord."

Saul resumes to trying to worship God in the flesh, but was unsuccessful!

We worship the LORD in Spirit and in truth!

2. Samuel's Weapon. Vs 32

"32 Then said Samuel, Bring ye hither to me Agag the king of the Amalekites. And Agag came unto him delicately. And Agag said, Surely the bitterness of death is past.

33 And Samuel said, As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women.

While Saul is trying to worship, Samuel is hunting a weapon to finish the job that Saul did not complete!

Samuel got the sword!

Before there was going to be any real worship, the Sword had to cut down the flesh!

Hebrews 4:12 *For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

3. The Successful Work. Vs 33b

"And Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the Lord in Gilgal."

4. The Sad Words. Vs 34-35

"34 Then Samuel went to Ramah; and Saul went up to his house to Gibeah of Saul.

35 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."

Samuel and Saul loss fellowship because Saul refused to obey God!

Conclusion:

There are many today that want to worship, but they have not been obedient to the Word of God.

You will never Worship, if you are not obedient!

