**Lesson 16 1 Sam chap 15:1-35**

**B. Saul's rejection (**[**chap. 15**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+15)**)**

[15:1-8](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+15%3A1-8). Long before the time of Saul, in the days of the wilderness wandering, Israel had been savagely attacked from the rear by **the Amalekites,** a deed the Lord had promised to avenge someday ([Ex. 17:8-16](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ex+17%3A8-16)).



{ 8 The Amalekites came and attacked the Israelites at Rephidim. 9 Moses said to Joshua, “Choose some of our men and go out to fight the Amalekites. Tomorrow I will stand on top of the hill with the staff of God in my hands.”  
10 So Joshua fought the Amalekites as Moses had ordered, and Moses, Aaron and Hur went to the top of the hill. 11 As long as Moses held up his hands, the Israelites were winning, but whenever he lowered his hands, the Amalekites were winning. 12 When Moses’ hands grew tired, they took a stone and put it under him and he sat on it. Aaron and Hur held his hands up—one on one side, one on the other—so that his hands remained steady till sunset. 13 So Joshua overcame the Amalekite army with the sword.  
14 Then the LORD said to Moses, “Write this on a scroll as something to be remembered and make sure that Joshua hears it, because I will completely blot out the name of Amalek from under heaven.”  
15 Moses built an altar and called it The LORD is my Banner. 16 He said, “Because hands were lifted up against the throne of the LORD, the LORD will be at war against the Amalekites from generation to generation.”}

The time had now come, so **Samuel** commanded Saul to **destroy** the Amalekites **totally,** that is, to "place them under the ban (*ḥērem*) of holy war" ([1 Sam. 15:3](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+15%3A3); cf. [vv. 8-9](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+15%3A8-9), [15](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+15%3A15), [18](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+15%3A18), [20-21](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+15%3A20-21); [Deut. 20:16-18](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Dt+20%3A16-18); see [comments](http://www.crossbooks.com/book.asp?pub=0&book=137&sec=00007586#links397) on [Josh. 6:21](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jos+6%3A21)). However, **Saul** was to spare **the Kenites** since they had **shown kindness** to Israel in the wilderness wandering ([1 Sam. 15:6](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+15%3A6); cf. [Ex. 18:9-10](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ex+18%3A9-10) [Jethro was a Kenite, [Judges 1:16](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jdg+1%3A16)]). **Saul** proceeded to do the bidding of Samuel ([1 Sam. 15:7-8](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+15%3A7-8)) but not entirely. Why?



Something to be utterly destroyed.

**1 Samuel 15:1-35 (NASB)**   
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.   
2  "Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'I will punish Amalek *for* what he did to Israel, how he set himself against him on the way while he was coming up from Egypt.   
3  'Now go and strike Amalek and utterly destroy all that he has, and do not spare him; but put to death both man and woman, child and infant, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.'"   
4  Then Saul summoned the people and numbered them in Telaim, 200,000 foot soldiers and 10,000 men of Judah.   
5  Saul came to the city of Amalek and set an ambush in the valley.   
6  Saul said to the Kenites, "Go, depart, go down from among the Amalekites, so that I do not destroy you with them; for you showed kindness to all the sons of Israel when they came up from Egypt." So the Kenites departed from among the Amalekites.   
7  So Saul defeated the Amalekites, from Havilah as you go to Shur, which is east of Egypt.   
8  He captured 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, the oxen, the fatlings, the lambs, and all that was good, and were not willing to destroy them utterly; but everything despised and worthless, that they utterly destroyed.

[15:9-35](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+15%3A9-35). When **Saul** saw the fatness of the Amalekite **sheep and cattle** and when he considered the enhancement of his own glory and prestige in bringing back **Agag, king of** Amalek, as prisoner, he could not resist returning them as public exhibits of his leadership ([v. 9](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+15%3A9)). That this was Saul's intent is clear from [verse 12](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+15%3A12), which speaks of Saul's erecting **a monument** to **his own honor** at **Carmel** (in Judah, not the Carmel on the upper Mediterranean coast). When accosted by **Samuel** ([v. 14](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+15%3A14)), **Saul** tried to justify his disobedience by claiming that the animals were brought as **sacrifice to the Lord** ([vv. 13](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+15%3A13), [15](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+15%3A15)), and were brought because of the insistence of **the soldiers** ([vv. 20-21](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+15%3A20-21)). But **Samuel** responded with a statement of principle that is timeless in its application: **To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams** ([v. 22](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+15%3A22)). In addition to disobeying, Saul was guilty of **rebellion**... **arrogance,** and rejecting God's **word** ([v. 23](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+15%3A23)).

The result for **Saul** was the Lord's rejection of him **as king** ([v. 26](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+15%3A26)), symbolized by Saul's tearing of Samuel's **robe** ([vv. 27-28](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+15%3A27-28)). This repudiation of Saul and selection of a replacement (David) did not mean that God had misled Samuel or even changed **His mind** ([v. 29](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+15%3A29)). Rather, God had from the beginning chosen another, one who would be "after His own heart" (cf. [13:14](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+13%3A14); [16:1](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+16%3A1)). Though still recognized by the people as their king for about 15 more years, **Saul** was deposed by **the Lord** right then (cf. [16:14](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+16%3A14)), and **Samuel** executed **Agag** ([15:32-33](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+15%3A32-33)). The finality of it all was not missed by **Samuel** for from that day Samuel never visited the **king** again ([v. 35](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+15%3A35)). The estrangement between **Samuel** and **Saul** represents that which now existed in permanent form between the Lord Himself and the disobedient king. Though God had permitted Saul to reign in response to the demand of the people, that very concession now **grieved** the heart of **the Lord** ([v. 35](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+15%3A35)).



The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty.

10  Then the word of the LORD came to Samuel, saying,   
11  "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.   
12  Samuel rose early in the morning to meet Saul; and it was told Samuel, saying, "Saul came to Carmel, and behold, he set up a monument for himself, then turned and proceeded on down to Gilgal."   
13  Samuel came to Saul, and Saul said to him, "Blessed are you of the LORD! I have carried out the command of the LORD."   
14  But Samuel said, "What then is this bleating of the sheep in my ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?"   
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; but the rest we have utterly destroyed."   
16  Then Samuel said to Saul, "Wait, and let me tell you what the LORD said to me last night." And he said to him, "Speak!"   
17  Samuel said, "Is it not true, though you were little in your own eyes, you were *made* the head of the tribes of Israel? And the LORD anointed you king over Israel,   
18  and the LORD sent you on a mission, and said, 'Go and utterly destroy the sinners, the Amalekites, and fight against them until they are exterminated.'   
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?"   
20  Then Saul said to Samuel, "I did obey the voice of the LORD, and went on the mission on which the LORD sent me, and have brought back Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites.   
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."   
22  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.   
23  "For rebellion is as the sin of divination, And insubordination is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He has also rejected you from *being* king."   
24  Then Saul said to Samuel, "I have sinned; I have indeed transgressed the command of the LORD and your words, because I feared the people and listened to their voice.   
25  "Now therefore, please pardon my sin and return with me, that I may worship the LORD."   
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."   
27  As Samuel turned to go, *Saul* seized the edge of his robe, and it tore.   
28  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.   
29  "Also the Glory of Israel will not lie or change His mind; for He is not a man that He should change His mind."   
30  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."   
31  So Samuel went back following Saul, and Saul worshiped the LORD.   
32  Then Samuel said, "Bring me Agag, the king of the Amalekites." And Agag came to him cheerfully. And Agag said, "Surely the bitterness of death is past."   
33  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.   
34  Then Samuel went to Ramah, but Saul went up to his house at Gibeah of Saul.   
35  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.

Not what you want to hear from God about yourself.



Not my fault, turning blame away from himself.

**Open it**

1. What are some of the primary reasons people rationalize their behavior?   
 **To justify it to themselves or others**

2. Why does someone just breaking into politics seek the endorsements of well-known public figures?   
 **To get their own reputation established, they know me so you should as well**

**Explore it**

3. To what authority did Samuel appeal when he gave God’s command to Saul? ([15:1](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+15%3A1))   
 **The Lord God’s**

4. Why were the Amalekites so hated by the Hebrews? ([15:2](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+15%3A2))   
 **For how he Amalek, king, had treated Israel. God wanted them destroyed, down to the last**

5. How did Samuel learn of Saul’s disobedience? ([15:10-11](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+15%3A10-11))   
 **The word of the Lord came to him**

6. How did God feel about Saul after he disobeyed? ([15:11](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+15%3A11))   
 **God regretted having made Saul king, he has tuned back from following ME and no carried out my commands**

7. What was Saul’s greeting for Samuel when Samuel caught up to him? ([15:13](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+15%3A13))   
 **Blessed are you of the Lord! I have carried out the command of the Lord.**

8. What was Samuel’s sarcastic remark, serving notice that he was not fooled? ([15:14](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+15%3A14))   
 **Why do I hear sheep and oxen then**

9. Where did Saul place the initial blame for saving the prime animals? ([15:15](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+15%3A15))   
 **The people spared them for sacrifice to God**

10. Whom did Samuel hold responsible for disobeying God? ([15:16-19](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+15%3A16-19))   
 **Saul, whom God had made king**

11. How did Saul rationalize his behavior even after Samuel’s confrontation? ([15:20-21](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+15%3A20-21))   
 **I did what I was told, the people took the spoils to sacrifice to the Lord**

12. How did Saul demonstrate that he was desperate to have the legitimacy of Samuel’s presence? ([15:27](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+15%3A27))   
 **He grabbed and tore Samuel’s robe**

13. By what figure of speech did Samuel turn Saul’s desperation into another statement of God’s judgment? ([15:28](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+15%3A28))   
 **The Lord has torn the kingdom from you to give to you neighbor**

14. How did Agag (the Amalekite king) feel when he was called before Samuel? ([15:32](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+15%3A32))   
 **He was cheerful, surely the bitterness of death has past**

**Get it**

15. In what way was Saul obeying the letter or the spirit of God’s command?   
 **He did kill the people as told**

16. How was God showing His concern for the Hebrews by commanding them to destroy the Amalekites?   
 **By doing this God removed an enemy from every attacking again**

17. Why does God prize obedience more highly than offerings or sacrifices?   
 **Obedience comes from the heart**

18. In what way is rebellion and arrogance toward God like idolatry?   
 **You are doing it for your own pride**

19. Why were the Israelites hesitant to totally destroy their enemy as God told them to?   
 **it was a resource of animals and slaves**

**Apply it**

20. How can you place a higher value on obedience than on appearances or practical considerations in your life?   
 **You have to make it a higher value in your own heart and mind**

21. How can you avoid rationalizing the next time you are "caught in the act" of something you know you shouldn’t do?   
 **Accept responsibility for your actions, and know that they are wrong**