



## 12: Rejection & Selection of a King

(1 Sam 15:1-16:13)

Today we explore one of the most dramatic turning points in the Bible - Saul's rejection and David's selection. What does it mean for us that God looks at the heart, not the outward appearance? And how does this point to Jesus, the rejected King who makes us God's children?

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\* All Scripture is from the Christian Standard Bible (CSB) unless otherwise noted.

### 1 Samuel 13:13-14

Samuel said to Saul, "You have been foolish. You have not kept the command the LORD your God gave you. It was at this time that the LORD would have permanently established your reign over Israel, but now your reign will not endure. **The LORD has found a man after His own heart,** and the LORD has **appointed him as ruler over His people,** because you have not done what the LORD commanded."

### 1 Samuel 15:1-2

Samuel told Saul, "The LORD sent me to anoint you as king over his people Israel. Now, listen to the words of the LORD. This is what the LORD of Armies says: 'I witnessed what the Amalekites did to the Israelites when they opposed them along the way as they were coming out of Egypt.'

### Deuteronomy 25:17-19

Remember what the Amalekites did to you on the journey after you left Egypt. They met you along the way and attacked all your stragglers from behind when you were tired and weary. They did not fear God. When the LORD your God gives you rest from all the enemies around you in the land the LORD your God is giving you to possess as an inheritance, blot out the memory of Amalek under heaven. Do not forget.

- The Amalekites were the first group of people to oppose and attack the Hebrew people as they made their way from Egypt toward the Promised Land.
- For over 400 years, the Amalekites continued to side with Israel's enemies to raid & destroy Israel's land & people (Judges 3:13, 6:3).
- Yahweh - the Creator & Judge of all things - condemns the Amalekite people with the death penalty...to be carried out - not by a flood drowning or by brimstone burning, but by the Hebrew military killing.
- Some quote the 10 commandments saying "Thou shalt not kill" (KJV). In reality, this should be translated, "Do not murder". In fact, and in this case, God commands killing in war against His enemies and commends killing in self-defense.

And now we see one of the most difficult parts of the Old Testament, when Yahweh commands Saul...

### 1 Samuel 15:3

Now go and attack the Amalekites and completely destroy everything they have. Do not spare them. Kill men and women, infants and nursing babies, oxen and sheep, camels and donkeys."

- God very rarely commands this kind of total destruction of all people and possessions (see destruction of Jericho).
- Some scholars say this language about killing all men, women, & children is hyperbole, since we see the Amalekites still
- **BIG PICTURE:** Saul and his people were NOT supposed to take people nor possessions, but were to destroy them all. That's going to become an important piece of the story in a moment.

### 1 Samuel 15:4-15

Then Saul summoned the troops and counted them at Telaim: two hundred thousand foot soldiers and ten thousand men from Judah. Saul came to the city of Amalek and set up an ambush in the wadi. He warned the Kenites, "Since you showed kindness to all the Israelites when they came out of Egypt, go on and leave! Get away from the Amalekites, or I'll sweep you away with them." So the Kenites withdrew from the Amalekites. Then Saul struck down the Amalekites from Havilah all the way to Shur, which is next to Egypt. He captured King Agag of Amalek alive, but he completely destroyed all the rest of the people with the sword. Saul and the troops spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, goats, cattle, and choice animals, as well as the young rams and the best of everything else. They were not willing to destroy them, but they did destroy all the worthless and unwanted things. Then the word of the LORD came to Samuel, "I regret that I made Saul king, for he has turned away from following me and has not carried out my instructions." So Samuel became angry and cried out to the LORD all night. Early in the morning Samuel got up to confront Saul, but it was reported to Samuel, "Saul went to Carmel where he set up a monument for himself. Then he turned around and went down to Gilgal." When Samuel came to him, Saul said, "May the LORD bless you. I have carried out the LORD's instructions." Samuel replied, "Then what is this sound of sheep, goats, and cattle I hear?" Saul answered, "The troops brought them from the Amalekites and spared the best sheep, goats, and cattle in order to offer a sacrifice to the LORD your God, but the rest we destroyed."

The troops huh? Once again, Saul seems to shift the blame on others. And he won't get away with it for long.

**Spare the best...to sacrifice to Yahweh?** Yeah...right. They kept the best for themselves and Saul allowed it to happen!

### 1 Samuel 15:16-21

"Stop!" exclaimed Samuel. "Let me tell you what the LORD said to me last night." "Tell me," he replied. Samuel continued, "Although you once considered yourself unimportant, haven't you become the leader of the tribes of Israel? The LORD anointed you king over Israel and then sent you on a mission and said, 'Go and completely destroy the sinful Amalekites. Fight against them until you have annihilated them.' So why didn't you obey the LORD? Why did you rush on the plunder and do what was evil in the LORD's sight?"

"But I did obey the LORD!" Saul answered. "I went on the mission the LORD gave me: I brought back King Agag of Amalek, and I completely destroyed the Amalekites. The troops took sheep, goats, and cattle from the plunder—the best of what was set apart for destruction—to sacrifice to the LORD your God at Gilgal."

When caught in disobedience, Saul does what many of us have done - attempted to REDEFINE what obedience means.

And then Saul flat-out LIES, saying this was all **set apart to sacrifice to Yahweh** - yeah right!

**1 Samuel 15:22-23** Then Samuel said: Does the LORD take pleasure in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the LORD? Look: to obey is better than sacrifice, to pay attention is better than the fat of rams. For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and defiance is like wickedness and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He has rejected you as king.

**To obey is better than sacrifice.** God desires that our *INTENTIONS* fuel our *ACTIONS*. God sees **rebellion** being **like the sin of divination** - seeking supernatural means of telling the future (horoscopes, astrological tables, using cards, dice, or crystals). It can also involve examining entrails or tea leaves or trying to contact the dead or some other spirit-being.

In a parallel way **defiance** (another term for **rebellion**) **is like wickedness and idolatry**.

- Many who claim to be Christians would never seek some spirit-being or stars to tell us the future. Neither would we bow down to another god - and act of **idolatry**. BUT...we have all had moments where we chose rebellion & defiance toward God. We *KNOW* what God says, but refuse to *DO* what God says.

② What if instead of justifying our selfish desires - what if we saw our disobedience as seeking help from spiritual beings other than god, what if we considered our defiance to be like bowing down to a false god? This would likely cause us pause, and turn TO God instead of away from Him.

**1 Samuel 15:24-33** Saul answered Samuel, "I have sinned. I have transgressed the LORD's command and your words. Because I was afraid of the people, I obeyed them. Now therefore, please forgive my sin and return with me so I can worship the LORD." Samuel replied to Saul, "I will not return with you. Because you rejected the word of the LORD, the LORD has rejected you from being king over Israel." When Samuel turned to go, Saul grabbed the corner of his robe, and it tore. Samuel said to him, "The LORD has torn the kingship of Israel away from you today and has given it to your neighbor who is better than you. Furthermore, the Eternal One of Israel does not lie or change His mind, for He is not man who changes his mind." Saul said, "I have sinned. Please honor me now before the elders of my people and before Israel. Come back with me so I can bow in worship to the LORD your God." Then Samuel went back, following Saul, and Saul bowed down to the LORD. Samuel said, "Bring me King Agag of Amalek." Agag came to him trembling, for he thought, "Certainly the bitterness of death has come." Samuel declared: As your sword has made women childless, so your mother will be childless among women. Then he hacked Agag to pieces before the LORD at Gilgal.

Remember that Samuel is the last judge of Israel. Yahweh had condemned the Amalekites with death penalty, but Saul had not carried it out, so now Samuel the judge, does so before Yahweh.

### 1 Samuel 15:34-35

Samuel went to Ramah, and Saul went up to his home in Gibeah of Saul. Even to the day of his death, Samuel never saw Saul again. Samuel mourned for Saul, and the LORD regretted He had made Saul king over Israel.

It sounds like Yahweh is...SAD. **Samuel** certainly is - as **he mourned for Saul**.

### 1 Samuel 16:1

The LORD said to Samuel, "How long are you going to mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him as king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and go. I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem because I have selected for Myself a king from his sons."

This **horn** would hold the **oil** that Samuel would anoint the future **king** whom Yahweh had selected. Samuel would find this new king in **Bethlehem**, a place meaning "house of bread".

### 1 Samuel 16:2-7

Samuel asked, "How can I go? Saul will hear about it and kill me!" The LORD answered, "Take a young cow with you and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.' Then invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will let you know what you are to do. You are to anoint for Me the one I indicate to you." Samuel did what the LORD directed and went to Bethlehem. When the elders of the town met him, they trembled and asked, "Do you come in peace?"

"In peace," he replied. "I've come to sacrifice to the LORD. Consecrate yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice. When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab and said, "Certainly the LORD's anointed one is here before him." But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or his stature because I have rejected him. Humans do not see what the LORD sees, for humans see what is visible, but the LORD sees the heart."

God sees deep down inside of you and me. God knows who we ARE. Remember that when Saul was selected as king, he stood much taller than other men (1 Sam 9:2; 10:23), a man whose **appearance** was strong & attractive. The next king would not be chosen for the strength of his body, but the DEPTH of his soul.

### 1 Samuel 16:8-11

Jesse called Abinadab and presented him to Samuel. "The LORD hasn't chosen this one either," Samuel said. Then Jesse presented Shammah, but Samuel said, "The LORD hasn't chosen this one either." After Jesse presented seven of his sons to him, Samuel told Jesse, "The LORD hasn't chosen any of these." Samuel asked him, "Are these all the sons you have?" "There is still the youngest," he answered, "but right now he's tending the sheep." Samuel told Jesse, "Send for him. We won't sit down to eat until he gets here."

This youngest son wasn't even at the meeting! He's too young, and he's a shepherd, a lowly position that the other brothers had likely graduated from.

### 1 Samuel 16:12-13

So Jesse sent for him. He had beautiful eyes and a healthy, handsome appearance. Then the LORD said, "Anoint him, for he is the one." So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and the Spirit of the LORD came powerfully on David from that day forward. Then Samuel set out and went to Ramah.

**David** is NOT the one Samuel would have picked on his own. David is young and inexperienced, a simple shepherd boy - NOT what we would choose for a king. Yet that was who Yahweh had chosen, and God was with **David** by the power of **the Spirit**. The Ultimate King Who would come through the family tree of David, *WOULD NOT* have been the One we chose either.

### Isaiah 53:2-3

He grew up before him like a young plant and like a root out of dry ground. He didn't have an impressive form or majesty that we should look at him, no appearance that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by men, a man of suffering who knew what sickness was. He was like someone people turned away from; he was despised, and we didn't value him.

Unlike Saul, Jesus wasn't rejected because he was *DISOBEDIENT*, but because He was *FULLY OBEDIENT*. Yet Jesus took the place of those who should have been rejected. He took on our SIN so that we could have His rightness. And 700 years later, here's what the apostle John writes:

### John 1:9-12

The true Light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was created through Him, and yet the world did not recognize Him. He came to his own, and His own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive Him, He gave them the right to be children of God, to those who believe in His name,

Have questions and need some help? ...real soon...how about now? Please **call** or **text** us soon!

- \* Contact **Jackie** (850-673-1582), **Christy** (850-673-9764), **Caleb** (864-315-8015), **Gary** (850-673-2507), **Betty** (850-973-3266), or another follower of Jesus soon!
- \* Or call our **deacons & wives: Alan & Christy Androski** (850-464-1428), **Steve & Debbie Bass** (850-673-7952), **Noel & Patricia Barnes** (813-767-2881), **Derek & Emily Beaty** (813-763-4421), or **Tim & Joni Hughey** (850-464-1156).

## discussionquestions

These open-ended questions are designed to help you LIVE what you LEARN with your Family, Friends, or Small Group.

### 1 Samuel 15:1-9 – The Command & Compromise

1. Read 1 Samuel 15:1-3. What exactly did God command Saul to do? Why was it so specific?
2. In verses 7-9, how did Saul and the troops respond? What parts of God's command did they obey, and what parts did they compromise on?
3. Why do you think they spared Agag and the "best" animals? What does this reveal about their values?

### 1 Samuel 15:10-23 – The Confrontation

4. Read verses 12-15. How does Saul try to defend himself? What do you notice about his excuses?
5. Verse 22 says, "To obey is better than sacrifice." How does this verse connect with Saul's actions? How does it challenge our own tendency to justify partial obedience?
6. In verses 22-23, Samuel compares rebellion to divination and defiance to idolatry. Why do you think disobedience is compared to these serious sins?

### 1 Samuel 15:24-35 – The Rejection

7. In verses 24-25, Saul admits he sinned, but what reason does he give for his disobedience? What does this reveal about who he feared most?
8. In verses 27-29, Samuel tells Saul that God has "torn the kingdom" away. What does this symbolize? What can we learn about God's unchanging nature here?
9. Why do you think Samuel mourned for Saul (v. 35)? What does that show us about God's heart and Samuel's heart?

### 1 Samuel 16:1-13 – The Selection

10. Read 16:1-5. Why was Samuel afraid to anoint a new king? What does this show about the cost of obedience?
11. In verse 7, God says He looks at the heart, not outward appearance. How does this verse contrast Saul and David? How does it challenge the way we evaluate leaders or people today?
12. Jesse didn't even invite David to the gathering (vv. 10-11). What does that tell us about how David was viewed by his family? What does it show about God's way of choosing?
13. In verse 13, what happens immediately after David is anointed? Why is the Spirit's presence so important for his future as king?

### Pointing to Christ

14. **Read Isaiah 53:2-6.** How does Jesus' appearance and rejection compare to David's? Why was it necessary for Jesus to be rejected?
15. **John 1:10-12** says Jesus was rejected by His own but gives the right to become children of God to those who receive Him. According to this passage, what changes a person's position from God's creation into **God's child**?