



## I. OUTLINE SUMMARY OF 1 SAMUEL 15

- A. **God’s Clear Command 1 Samuel 15:1–3** — *“Strike Amalek & devote to destruction”* (v.3)  
1. God clearly tells Saul what to do.- Amalek is judged for attacking Israel in the past (Ex. 17).
- B. **Saul Half Obedience 1 Samuel 15:4–9** *“But Saul & the people spared Agag all that was good”*  
1. Saul wins the battle but disobeys God. - **Partial obedience is still disobedience.**
- C. **God Confronts Saul 1 Samuel 15:10–23** — *“To obey is better than sacrifice.”* (v.22)  
1. Saul says, *“I obeyed,”* but the king and plunder prove otherwise. Saul blames the people  
2. God rejects Saul as king because he disobeyed God’s total instructions.
- D. **Saul’s Weak Repentance 1 Samuel 15:24–31** — Good intentions don’t replace obedience.  
1. **Key Phrase:** *“I feared the people...”* (v.24) Saul admits sin but still shifts blame.  
2. He seems more worried about looking bad than changing to become a godly king.  
3. *And Samuel said to him, “The Lord has torn the kingdom of Israel from you (Vs. 28)*  
4. *“I have sinned; yet honor me now before the elders of my people and before Israel, and return with me, that I may bow before the Lord your God.”* (vs 30)  
5. **Saying sorry and giving excuses are not the same as surrender.**
- E. **Samuel Finishes the Job 1 Samuel 15:32–35** —  
**Key Phrase:** *“Samuel hacked Agag to pieces...”* (v.33) Samuel does what Saul refused to do.  
1. **Saul causes grief and loses the kingdom.** *“Samuel grieved over Saul. And the Lord regretted that he had made Saul king over Israel (Vs 35)*  
2. People who pray *“Your kingdom come,”* grieve when others sabotages it carelessly.

## II. BACKGROUND

### A. The Amalekites: Present Judgment for Past Evil

1. Saul was to attack Amalek for what they did to Israel during its journey out of Egypt<sup>1</sup> (Ex. 17:7–13; Deut. 25:17–19)
  - a. The Amalekites were likely **nomadic, tent-dwelling raiders** in Sinai & southern Israel.
  - b. Aaron and Hur held up Moses’ arms while Joshua fought, and Israel prevailed.
  - c. God declared: *“I will be at war against the Amalekites from generation to generation.”*
  - d. “Amalekites were the first who sought to deny Israel entry into the Promised Land.”<sup>2</sup>

## III. LANGUAGE:

- A. In **1 Samuel 15:2-3**, Saul is commanded by God to *“utterly destroy”* the Amalekites —
1. **“Utterly destroy”** הָרַם (*Herem*) **“set apart for destruction”** (Deut. 7:1–2; 20:16–18; 1 Sam. 15:2–3). Israel did this before at Jericho & Ai (Joshua 6:17–21; Joshua 8:24–29)
  2. Moabite & Israel’s languages are similar. King Mesha of Moab used the same word for conquering Nebo for his god “Chemosh”: *“And Chemosh said to me, “Go, take Nebo from Israel!”* (15) *So, I went by night and fought against it from the break of dawn until noon, taking it and slaying all, seven thousand men, boys, women, girls and maid-servants for I had devoted them to destruction* הָרַם (*Herem*) *to Chemosh*<sup>3</sup>
  3. הָרַם *Herem*, “Holy War” is a topic we can’t discuss today but can’t avoid; it’s in the Bible.
- B. **Regret: 1 Samuel 15:11** *“I regret making Saul king”* בְּתַמְתִּי *Nihamtea* **Genesis 6:7** *“I am sorry I made them [Mankind].”*
- C. **Monument to Himself: The Hebrew word for monument is “hand”** יָד *yad*. **Isaiah 56:5** uses hand for memorial/monument. Plus, a pillar with hands (from Hazor) and Pharaohs mighty hand (on Egypt’s walls) help understand better the metaphoric use of hand for a memorial.

<sup>1</sup> Diana Vikander Edelman, *King Saul in the Historiography of Judah*, vol. 121, Journal for the Study of the O.T. Supplement Series (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 99.

<sup>2</sup> David Tsumura, *The First Book of Samuel*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2007), 389.

<sup>3</sup> James Bennett Pritchard, ed., *The Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, 3rd ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), 320.

#### IV. GEOGRAPHY:

A. **City of Amalek: vs 5** “Saul came to the city of Amalek.” Only mentioned here. However, we have the area Saul attacked.

1. **The Kenites, Jethro’s people, were allowed to leave & show us a location. Judges 1:16** the descendants of the Kenite, Moses’ father-in-law, went up with the people of Judah from the city of palms into the wilderness of Judah, in the Negev near Arad,
  - a. **Numbers 13:29** “The Amalekites dwell in the land of the Negev...”

B. **Monument at Carmel** (This is a location for sheep shearing in Saul and Davids time).

1. **1 Samuel 15:12** “Saul came to Carmel, and behold, he set up a monument for himself and turned and passed on and went down to Gilgal.” In hills between Hebron & Arad.
2. **1 Samuel 25:2** here was a businessman Carmel. The man was very rich; he had three thousand sheep and a thousand goats. He was shearing his sheep in Carmel.

V. **ADVANTAGES:** “It’s not what you got. Nor what you do with what you have. It’s whose you are and how much of you he has to work through. A surrendered life.

- A. **1 Samuel 9:2:** taller than any of the people- among the people of Israel more handsome
- B. **1 Samuel 10:1:** Anointed by Samuel, chosen by God. “Has not the Lord anointed you to be prince over his people Israel?”
- C. **1 Samuel 10:6:** God supernaturally changes him “you shall be changed into another man.”
- D. **1 Samuel 10:9-10:** God gave him another heart. - Spirit of God rushed upon him - prophesied
- E. **1 Samuel 10:26:** Saul gains a loyal band of supporters who God moved to follow him.
- F. **1 Samuel 11:6-11:** Led a Spirit-inspired victory over the Ammonites.
- G. **1 Samuel 11:15:** Confirmed as king with public support.
- H. **1 Samuel 10:24** — Samuel declares, “Do you see him the LORD has chosen?”
- I. **1 Samuel 12:14–15** — Saul is given a genuine opportunity to succeed if obedient.

VI. **INSECURITIES:** Insecurity becomes dangerous when it controls your choices.

- A. **1 Samuel 9:21:** Saul calls his family insignificant.
- B. **1 Samuel 10:22:** He hides when he’s chosen as king.
- C. **1 Samuel 13:11-12:** Saul offers a sacrifice out of fear the people would scatter.
- D. **1 Samuel 14:24-30:** His rash oath weakened the army, showing his need for control.
- E. **1 Samuel 15:24:** He admits he disobeyed God out of fear of the people.

VII. **POOR DISCERNMENT:** Poor discernment usually starts with self-justification.

- A. **1 Samuel 13:8-14:** He didn’t wait for Samuel and unlawfully offered the sacrifice.
- B. **1 Samuel 14:36-46:** Saul nearly executes Jonathan due to a rash vow.
- C. **1 Samuel 15:9-23:** He spares King Agag and livestock disobeying God’s clear command.
- D. Saul was full of excuses and his own agenda, not repentance or desire to do Gods will.

VIII. **CONCLUSION: King Saul & King David.**

A. **King Saul 1 Samuel 15:23-24** “*To Obey is better than Sacrifice*”

1. Supporting Verses: (Ps. 40:6–8; 50:8–15; 51:16–17; Prov. 15:8; 21:3, 27; 28:9; Isa. 1:11–15; Jer. 6:19–20; Hos. 6:6; Amos 5:21–24; Mic. 6:6–8).<sup>4</sup>
2. “Sacrifice never was intended as a substitute for obedience.”<sup>5</sup>

B. **King David** Past failure does not have to define your future.

1. **Psalm 51:1, 16-17** David...Bathsheba...The Sacrifices of God
2. **Ps 51:4** Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight,
3. **Psalm 51:10-12** “Create in me a clean heart”
4. David viewed his potential or peril though the person of Saul. It could happen to me.
5. **Psalm 40:8** “I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart.
  - a. Delight in God’s will, don’t just tolerate it. Pray **Psalm 51** Preventatively.

<sup>4</sup> Dale Ralph Davis, *1 Samuel: Looking on the Heart*, Focus on the Bible Commentary (Scotland: Christian Focus Publications, 2000), 158.

<sup>5</sup> Robert D. Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel*, vol. 7, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 172.