

## Obedience Better than Sacrifices

### 1 Sam.15:1-26

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A great number of people know that God loves them for he gave his own Son to save them. However, there are lots of people who don't know how to love God. Jesus said that if you truly love him, you would obey his instructions. This is how you show God that you love him. You cannot love God whichever way you think or desire; you must do it in the manner he prescribed otherwise you may find yourself in violation to his word.

There was a man in the Bible, a king, who thought he could accomplish The LORD's mission his own way.

### 1 Samuel 15

**God sent king Saul on a mission (v.1-9):** to destroy the Amalekites (v.3), to destroy them completely. Destroy everything that belongs to them, people and animals. (v.3)

*Why did God want to destroy this people? (v.2)* The Amalekites waylaid Israel after they came out of Egypt. God was angry with them and vowed to destroy them.

**Exodus 17:14** 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. NIV

It took 400 years from the exodus to king Saul. God would use Saul to punish this wicked nation.

### **-Saul's strategy (v.4-7)**

-200,000 foot soldiers; 10,000 men from Judah

-Told the Kenites to move away from the Amalekites lest they too be destroyed.

*The Kenites showed kindness to Israel when they came out of Egypt.* (God now showed them kindness by sparing them) (v.6)

### **-Saul's victory: (v.7-9)**

-Defeated the Amalekites, but captured their king

-spared the plunder (sheep, cattle, lambs) *everything that was good they kept for themselves.*

### **God's response (v.10-12)**

-The LORD was grieved by Saul's actions. God is grieved, saddened when we neglect his instructions. (Saul did not obey the instructions of the LORD.)

The prophet Samuel went to look for Saul and he had gone to celebrate his victory. Saul set up a monument for himself at mount Carmel. There is a problem when God is grieved, and you are celebrating.

### **Samuel and Saul (v.13-26)**

*-Saul believed in his heart that he had done the work of God (v.13)*

*-Samuel informed Saul that he didn't do God's mission. (v.14)*

*-Saul did not want to take responsibility for his actions (v.15). The soldier brought them from the Amalekites, we got the best so we can offer them in worship to God. (v.15, 21)*

This sounds like a legitimate reason, right? You don't have to follow God's instructions, as long as you offer the best offering to God in worship. Right? This is wrong. **This is like robbing a bank and putting the money in the offering plate thinking God will accept it.**

**Stop!** Let me tell you that the LORD said to me last night. (v.16)

### **God's accountability (v.17-19)**

*-I chose you to be the leader of Israel*

*-Sent you on a mission: to completely destroy the Amalekites.*

**Why did you not obey the LORD? (v.19) Why did you pounce on the spoil (plunder) and do evil in the eyes of the LORD?**

### **Saul's excuses (v.20-21)**

*-I did obey the LORD, I went on the mission the LORD assigned me.*

*I completely destroyed the Amalekites and brought back Agag their king.*

*The soldiers took sheep and cattle from the plunder, the best of what was devoted to God, in order to sacrifice to the LORD your God. God's instructions were very specific, to destroy even their animals. Thus, Saul disobeyed the LORD.*

**(v.22) Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the LORD?**

Obedience is better than Sacrifices. And to listen is better than the fat of rams.

Obedience to God, listening to his instructions is better than any service you could offer to him. The sacrifices and burnt offerings were offered to God in worship; but before the worshiper offered these offerings, they had to make sure it was done in accordance to the LORD's instructions.

*Obedience to God is better than anything you can offer him.* Giving God your best gift in disobedience count for nothing because he would not receive your gift or offering. This is what is known in the Bible as vain worship.

**Sometimes, your best intentions don't align with God's instruction and mission and therefore not pleasing to God.**

*-Rebellion* is likened to the sin of divination or witchcraft; to God this practice was abomination.

*Arrogance* (presumption) is like the sin of idolatry. (placing something between you and God)

Samuel was saying that Saul committed both sins. He was rebellious and arrogant in what he did.

**To reject God's instruction is to be rejected by God. (v.23)**

Saul was rejected as king because he rejected to follow God's mission. He only obeyed partially, and partial obedience is disobedience.

The Bible tells us that those who reject God's word, are doomed. **John 3:18** God gave Jesus to the world to save the world through him. Only those who believe in Jesus get saved. The rest are condemned all because they rejected God's offer.

**To reject God's word is to desire to be rejected by him.**

***-Saul finally repented (.24-26)***

*He admitted his wrongdoing and asked for forgiveness.*

*"You have rejected the word of the LORD and the LORD has rejected you as king"*

Saul would be forgiven, but he won't be king over Israel. Our rebellion against God has severe consequences.

*God's word, his instructions are not suggestions, which we follow whichever way we choose.* We must do exactly what he has prescribed in his word.

***-We cannot blackmail God in worship.*** He knows the motivation and intentions of our heart. ***Psalm 51:16-17***

**A repentant (contrite) heart is what impresses God.**

You and I cannot love God, worship God and serve God in whatever forms we think or want. We must do it according to his word. ***To deviate from God's instruction is disobedience.*** Nothing you offer God while neglecting his instructions will be accepted by him.

Obedience to God is better than sacrifices; anything you could offer to him.

***How do you know what you are offering God will be accepted?***

He already has spoken and given us his instructions in his book.