

**COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH
FIRST AND SECOND SAMUEL
LESSON 8
TO OBEY IS BETTER
1 SAMUEL 15
WEEK OF NOVEMBER 1 – NOVEMBER 6**

Chapter 15 marks the transition in Saul's reign. As a result of Saul's rebellious disobedience and lack of true repentance, God tears the kingdom from Saul. From this time forward the attention is on the selection of David and his rise as God's choice for king, a man after God's own heart. The rest of I Samuel is the historical account of David's rise to royalty and the decline and end of Saul's reign.

In **chapter 15** we are challenged to examine our own hearts (**Ps 139:23-24**) as we consider the events recorded in this chapter. Remember, the Old Testament accounts are preserved for us, for our instruction; to learn from their examples. (**Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 10:6,11**) Ask God to use the many lessons and applications in this chapter to grip our hearts with the importance of whole-hearted obedience to His Word, and when we fail to obey, to be quick to repent and confess our sins and seek His forgiveness.

Read 1 Samuel 15:1-9 God's Command to Execute Just Vengeance

1. From **verses 15:1-3**, what is Yahweh's very clear and explicit instruction to Saul?
2. From **Exodus 17:8-16**, how did the wicked Amalekites terrorize the Israelites as they were making their exodus from Egypt? Because of the evil of the Amalekites, what did Yahweh command Moses and the Israelites in **Deut. 25:17-19**?
3. How do the following verses emphasize that God's holiness requires His response to sin, wickedness and evil?
 - **Habakuk 1:13**
 - **Psalms 5:4-6**
 - **Nahum 1:2-3**
 - **Hebrews 10:30-31**
 - **2 Thess. 1:6-9**
4. A.W. Pink writes, "*Partial Obedience is no obedience at all.*" How did Saul "*partially*" obey Yahweh's command? What are ways we show partial obedience?

Read 1 Samuel 15:10-23 God's Priority of Obedience

5. What does Saul's construction of the monument at Carmel (**verse 12**) and his claim of full obedience (**verse 13**) reveal about the condition of his heart?

6. When Samuel confronts Saul with his disobedience, what excuses and justifications does Saul use to avoid or downplay the significance of his disobedience?
7. How did Saul rationalize the failure to destroy the animals in **verse 21**? How did Samuel reply to that in **verses 22 and 23a**?
8. How is disobedience characterized in **verse 23a**? How did Yahweh judge Saul's disobedience in **verse 23b**?
9. How do you view your disobedience to God's Word? How does this passage impact your response to your own disobedience?

Read 1 Samuel 15:24-31 Repentance or Remorse?

True repentance is characterized by zealous turning away from sin and embracing obedience to the Lord resulting in a changed life. Worldly sorrow or remorse is mere regret or emotional distress often focusing only on self, consequences or covering shame.

10. From **verses 24-31** do you conclude Saul repented of his sin of disobedience or is he expressing remorse? What do you see from Saul's interaction with Samuel to support your conclusion?

Read 1 Samuel 15:32-35 God's Vivid Expression of Wrath

11. How does Samuel demonstrate the seriousness of God's justice, wrath and judgment against wickedness and sin and the destruction of the sin in **verses 32-33**?
12. John Macarthur has a classic sermon entitled "Hacking Agag to Pieces" available on the Grace Community Church website. He uses this graphic picture of Samuel's execution of Agag to show how believers must seriously and completely deal with sin in our own lives. Puritan John Owen writes "*be killing sin or it will be killing you.*" Read **Romans 8:13, Col. 3:5-10** and explain how we must respond to sin that we see in ourselves.

Application:

- What sins or partial obedience have you tolerated and failed to eradicate in your life? What action will you take in true repentance of those sins?

What Does it Mean that God Regrets? 1 Samuel 15:11, 29 and 35 all contain the same Hebrew word "*naham*". In English it is commonly translated regret or sometimes repent. It can mean to feel sorrow or grief, or depending on the context to change one's mind or repent. **First Samuel 15: 11 and 35** use regret meaning that God grieved over Saul's sin. It was an emotional grief that He expressed. In **verse 29**, the word was used to show that God's decision about Saul was final and fixed. He would not change His mind. As regret is used in **verses 11 and 35** we see God's expression of grief over Saul's sin. In **verse 29** we see an expression of God's firmness that His judgment against Saul's sin would not change. God is not a God who changes. He is immutable. (**Malachi 3:6; Ps 102:25-27; Heb, 13:8**)