

## Wednesday Night Adult Bible Study

April 15, 2020

*1 Samuel chapters 15 & 16 offer us some insight into human nature, the character of God, and the relationship between the two. (All scripture is copied from the New King James Bible.)*

### 1 Samuel 15:10-13

<sup>10</sup> Now the word of the Lord came to Samuel, saying, <sup>11</sup> “I greatly regret that I have set up Saul as king, for he has turned back from following Me, and has not performed My commandments.” And it grieved Samuel, and he cried out to the Lord all night. <sup>12</sup> So when Samuel rose early in the morning to meet Saul, it was told Samuel, saying, “Saul went to Carmel, and indeed, he set up a monument for himself; and he has gone on around, passed by, and gone down to Gilgal.” <sup>13</sup> Then Samuel went to Saul, and Saul said to him, “Blessed are you of the Lord! I have performed the commandment of the Lord.”

So what’s going on here? Saul said he had performed the commandment of the Lord but that was simply not true, and the Lord said He regretted making Saul king – wait, what? I think perhaps the issue with Saul was his intentional disobedience for his own personal gain. Saul rejected the Lord in favor of himself. But what about the Lord’s regret? Let’s read a little further.

### 1 Samuel 15:22-23, 28-29, 32-34

<sup>22</sup> So Samuel said:

“Has the Lord as great 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.

<sup>23</sup> For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, he also has rejected you from being king.”

<sup>28</sup> So Samuel said to him, “The Lord has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today, and has given it to a neighbor of yours, who is better than you. <sup>29</sup> And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor relent. For He is not a man, that He should relent...”

<sup>32</sup> Then Samuel said, “Bring Agag king of the Amalekites here to me.” So Agag came to him cautiously.

And Agag said, “Surely the bitterness of death is past.”

<sup>33</sup> But Samuel said, “As your sword has made women childless, so shall your mother be childless among women.” And Samuel hacked Agag in pieces before the Lord in Gilgal.

<sup>34</sup> Then Samuel went to Ramah, and Saul went up to his house at Gibeah of Saul. <sup>35</sup> And Samuel went no more to see Saul until the day of his death. Nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul, and the Lord regretted that He had made Saul king over Israel.

I think verses 22-23 are addressing the issue of thinking we can willfully sin as long as we feel sorry about it later. Almost as if the sacrifice is the accepted cost of doing what we want. While the Lord is saying if that is what you think, you are missing the point. I think He wants a genuine relationship. It is like the man who buys his wife flowers on the way home from an all night poker game instead of choosing to spend the night with his family. That guy is kidding himself if he doesn’t think there are consequences, and flowers aren’t going to make them disappear. Similarly, Samuel tells Saul there are consequences and then shows him in pretty dramatic fashion, hacking King Agag to pieces. Still, Samuel was hurt by Saul’s choices and so perhaps was the Lord.

In verses 10 and 34 we read of the Lord's 'regret' but in verse 29 we read that the Lord is not a man and does not 'relent' or 'change his mind' as NIV translates it. So I think this idea of the Lord's regret was more about his sorrow for Saul's choice.

God is perfect and his character never changes. You can verify this in [James 1:17](#), [Malachi 5:6](#) and [Hebrews 13:8](#). God is also alive and working amongst his people to achieve His perfect plan in spite of our free will.

### **1 Samuel 16:1, 11-13**

<sup>1</sup> Now the Lord said to Samuel, "How long will you mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and go; I am sending you to Jesse the Bethlehemite. For I have provided Myself a king among his sons."

<sup>11</sup> And Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all the young men here?" Then he said, "There remains yet the youngest, and there he is, keeping the sheep."

And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him. For we will not sit down till he comes here." <sup>12</sup> So he sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, with bright eyes, and good-looking. And the Lord said, "Arise, anoint him; for this is the one!" <sup>13</sup> Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel arose and went to Ramah.

I can't help but see Jesus, the root of Jesse, in verse 1, Check out [Matthew 1:1](#). In verses 11-13 we see the biblical promise that the least shall be greatest, and we see another image of Jesus. David was out keeping the sheep compare that to [John 10:14-15](#). Verse 13 says the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward so Samuel left for home. Have you ever seen the Spirit of the Lord come upon someone? Apparently Samuel did, and was satisfied.

### **1 Samuel 16:14-17, 19-23**

<sup>14</sup> But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and a distressing spirit from the Lord troubled him. <sup>15</sup> And Saul's servants said to him, "Surely, a distressing spirit from God is troubling you." <sup>16</sup> Let our master now command your servants, who are before you, to seek out a man who is a skillful player on the harp. And it shall be that he will play it with his hand when the distressing spirit from God is upon you, and you shall be well."

<sup>17</sup> So Saul said to his servants, "Provide me now a man who can play well, and bring him to me..."<sup>19</sup> Therefore Saul sent messengers to Jesse, and said, "Send me your son David, who is with the sheep." <sup>20</sup> And Jesse took a donkey loaded with bread, a skin of wine, and a young goat, and sent them by his son David to Saul. <sup>21</sup> So David came to Saul and stood before him. And he loved him greatly, and he became his armorbearer. <sup>22</sup> Then Saul sent to Jesse, saying, "Please let David stand before me, for he has found favor in my sight." <sup>23</sup> And so it was, whenever the spirit from God was upon Saul, that David would take a harp and play it with his hand. Then Saul would become refreshed and well, and the distressing spirit would depart from him.

A key difference between Job and Saul is in [Job 1:20-22](#). Both had distressing spirits, Job chose to praise the Lord anyway, while Saul looked to his own strength. It is ironic that the very person who would take the kingdom from Saul is the one he chose to make himself feel better. As the Lord works in our lives, I think He sometimes exhibits a sense of humor.