

Chapter 15

v.2 “Amalekites. A Bedouin people descended from Esau (see Gen 36.12, 16) usually located in the Negev and Sinai regions.” (NIV) “Saul is sent on a campaign against the Amalekites in retaliation for their ancient attack on Israel (Exod 17.8-13).” (McCarter)

v.6 “Kenites. A Bedouin people of the Siani, closely related to the Midianites. Moses had married a Kenite woman, and some of the Kenites had accompanied the Israelites when they settled in the land of Canaan.” (NIV)

v.9 “When Saul saw the fatness of the Amalekite sheep and cattle and when he considered the enhancement of his own glory and prestige in bringing back Agag, king of Amalek, as prisoner, he could not resist returning them as public exhibits of his leadership. That this was Saul’s intent is clear from verse 12, which speaks of Saul’s erecting a monument to his own honor.” (Missler) “Giving to the Lord by destruction only what was despised and weak was a contemptible act (see Mal 1.8).” (NIV)

v.15 “Saul attempts to shift responsibility from himself to the army and to excuse their action by claiming pious intentions.” (NIV)

v.22f To obey is better than sacrifice. cf. Isaiah 66.2b-4; Hosea 6.6; Jer 7.21-26; Amos 5.21-24

v.23 “A king who sets his own will above the command of the Lord ceases to be an instrument of the Lord’s rule over his people.” (NIV)

v.24 “Saul’s confession retains an element of self-justification and a shift of blame (contrast David’s confession, 2 Sam 12.13; Psalm 51).” (NIV) **To mostly obey doesn’t cut it.**

v.25 “Saul’s greatest concern was not to worship God but to avoid an open break with the prophet Samuel, a break that would undermine his authority as king.” (NIV)

v.31 “Samuel went back with Saul. Not to honor Saul, but to carry out the divine sentence on Agag and in so doing to reemphasize Saul’s neglect of duty.” (NIV)

v. 35 “Though still recognized by the people as their king for about 15 more years, Saul was deposed by the LORD right then. The finality of it all was not missed by Samuel, for from that day Samuel never visited the king again.” (Missler)

“Ironically, it was Samuel’s capitulation to the importunate “voice of the people” that led to Saul’s election in the first place, and now it is because Saul has listened to “the voice of the people,” i.e. to the soldiers, that he is dismissed.” The prophetic story of Saul’s rise, which began with a stern warning against kingship in any form, ends with an outright rejection of the first king.” (McCarter)

End of the Story of Saul (ch’s 9-15)

Beginning of the Story of David’s rise (ch’s 16ff)

Chapter 16

v.2 “The road from Ramah (where Samuel was) to Bethlehem passed through Gibeah of Saul.” (NIV)

v.6 “David’s life illustrates Matthew 25.21—he began as a servant and became a ruler; he was faithful with a few sheep and then inherited the whole nation; he knew how to work, so God gave him joy.” (Missler)

v.7 “Samuel is not to focus on these outward features, which had characterized Saul. . . . The Lord is concerned with man’s inner disposition and character.” (NIV)

v.10 “The LORD has not chosen these.” Samuel displays confidence in his ability to hear the voice of God. **How confident are we?** cf. Joseph and his brothers.

“Popular acclaim of the handsome, towering son of a powerful Benjaminite nobleman [Saul] is replaced by the free divine selection of a shepherd boy from Judah.” (McCarter)

v.14 “This statement and similar ones in Scripture indicate that evil spirits are subject to God’s control and operate only within divinely determined boundaries (see judges 9.23; 1 Kings 22.19-23; Job 1.12; 2.6...).” (NIV)

“When Saul loses place to David and Yahweh’s spirit falls upon the young Bethlehemite, an evil spirit arrives in Gibeah as though rushing into the vacuum Saul’s loss of favor has created.” (McCarter)

v.16 “It would appear that. . .the Spirit of the Lord was active in David’s music to suppress the evil spirit temporarily.” (NIV)

v.19 “Saul unknowingly invites to the court the person God chose to be his replacement.” (NIV)