

# 23-1008p Transcript

## 23-1008p - *Lessons From King Saul, Part 2, Jim Lokenbauer*

**Bible Reader:** Roger Raines

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## Lessons From King Saul, Part 2

Transcript (0:03 - 36:44)

### Scripture Reading

**Bible Reader: Roger Raines**

**1 Samuel 15:22-23 (NASB),**

(0:03) Good evening. (0:06) I'll be reading 1 Samuel chapter 15, verses 22 and 23.

(0:13) Samuel said, "Has the LORD as much 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. 23 "For rebellion is as the sin of divination, And insubordination is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He has also rejected you from being king." (0:51)

### Transcript

**Preacher:** Jim Lokenbauer

(0:56) So, hello again, everybody. (0:59) And we're going to see that King Saul (1:03) countermanded what God told Israel to do (1:06) in regard to Amalek. (1:10) And to countermand is to go against what was ordered, (1:15) to go against the command. (1:18) And as we read from this morning, chapter 15, (1:25) hopefully that's still fresh in your memories.

(1:29) We have the king being given his commission as king (1:36) and receiving his first mission, (1:41) and that was to go and destroy Amalek. (1:45) And if you remember, Amalek was one of the testable nations (1:49) in Canaan that they were to dispossess, (1:54) take over their land, (1:56) and they did a particularly egregious sin (2:04) by killing the stragglers as the Israel horde (2:11) moved through the desert. (2:13) The stragglers were the old people, (2:15) moms with children, the infirm, (2:19) and the Amalekites would come down and kill those people (2:23) and then run back up in their mountains.

(2:26) They were ancient terrorists, if you will, (2:31) and perhaps maybe terrorists of today have roots in the Amalekites. (2:36) So anyhow, God commanded Moses to write down as history, (2:47)

as a memorial, this terrible act so that they would not forget. (2:54) Isn't that what people in the United States say (2:58) when the terrorists flew planes into the towers in New York? (3:04) Never forget.

(3:08) You know, some people are just evil and they won't change, (3:14) and God saw that in Amalek, (3:17) and so he ordered their extermination. (3:21) This was going to be a genocide. (3:25) So keep in mind what we had gone over this morning (3:31) in regard to following God's orders, (3:34) and we will see the errors Saul made (3:38) and what the consequences were for him.

(3:41) So we're going to do a verse-by-verse walkthrough, (3:45) 1 Samuel chapter 15, starting at verse 1. (3:52) Then Samuel said to Saul, (3:55) The Lord sent me to anoint you as king over his people, over Israel. (4:00) Now, therefore, listen to the words of the Lord. (4:04) So here is Saul's coronation as king, (4:08) and Saul is about to receive his very first instruction or mission from God.

(4:17) And don't forget, Saul is anointed king, (4:22) and that's where the priest or the prophet pours the oil on the king's head, (4:28) and God sends Holy Spirit upon the king. (4:32) So the king, and I'm going to use this term, has a measure of Holy Spirit. (4:40) He's got Holy Spirit in him.

(4:42) Now, he doesn't have power like Moses had, (4:47) but he certainly has the Spirit of God in him. (4:51) And as we go through this, we should keep in mind, (4:55) just because someone has the Spirit of God in him, (5:02) if he is stubborn and unwilling to be molded by God, (5:09) he's fighting against Holy Spirit. (5:12) He'll still do his will rather than the will of God.

(5:17) So, verses 2 and 3. (5:21) Thus says the Lord of Hosts, this is Samuel speaking, (5:26) I will punish Amalek for what he did to Israel, (5:29) how he set himself against him on the way while he was coming up out of Egypt. (5:35) Now go and strike Amalek and utterly destroy all that he has, (5:41) and do not spare him, (5:43) but put both man and woman, child and infant, ox and sheep, camel and donkey to death. (5:54) So God has not forgotten what Amalek did to his people.

(5:59) Remember, he told Moses 400 years earlier to write it down as a history (6:05) so that they wouldn't forget. (6:08) Well, this is now payback time. (6:10) Look at how long it took for this to happen.

(6:17) It didn't happen in someone's lifetime. (6:20) This took generations. (6:25) So Saul is given an explicit command that was plainly stated (6:30) with no gray areas or any ambiguity or wondering, (6:35) what does God want from me? (6:37) All human life and all creatures belonging to the Amalekites were to be destroyed.

(6:47) So here we have 210,000 men of Israel, fighting men. (7:10) Picking up arms and going to battle with the Amalekites, verse 5. (7:18) So Saul came to the city of Amalek and set an ambush in the valley. (7:23) So all of these men, how do you set an ambush with 210,000 men? (7:31) Could they all be hiding behind a bush? (7:34) That's a lot of guys.

(7:35) But, you know, they tried the old surprise ambush ploy. (7:42) And in verse 6 it says, (7:43) So Saul said to the Canaanites, go, depart. (7:47) Go down from among the Amalekites so that I do not destroy you with them.

(7:52) For you showed kindness to all the sons of Israel when they came up from Egypt. (7:57) So the Canaanites departed from among the Amalekites. (8:01) And who were the Canaanites? (8:03) Well, the Canaanites lived in the crags of the mountains.

(8:07) They were part billy goat or something. (8:10) They were mountain dwellers. (8:12) But we see in Judges 1, 6, they were descendants of Moses' father-in-law, Jethro.

(8:23) Which is interesting. (8:25) And in Numbers 24, verses 20 and 21, it says, (8:30) and this was the story of Balaam that we're all familiar with. (8:35) Balaam, the Gentile prophet, he prophesied about Amalek and the Canaanites.

(8:42) He said Amalek would be destroyed and kindness in a permanent place would be given to the Canaanites. (8:50) And the Canaanites showed Israel peace and comfort and attended to them as they were coming up out of Egypt. (9:00) So God punishes evil behavior and rewards good behavior.

(9:08) Verse 7, so Saul defeated the Amalekites from Havilah as you go to Shur, which is east of Egypt. (9:16) He captured Agag, the king of the Amalekites, alive and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword. (9:26) And remember this morning we went over the principles of following a command.

(9:31) So did Saul add to or take away from the command of God? (9:35) By sparing Agag, what a name, Agag, I don't know why I'm having this, Agag. (9:46) By not following the command completely, he's taking away from the command. (9:52) So he's not actually following the command at all.

(9:56) Verse 9, but Saul and the people spared Agag and the best of the sheep, the oxen, the fatlings, and the lambs, (10:06) and all that was good, and were not willing to destroy them utterly. (10:12) But everything despised and worthless, that they utterly destroyed. (10:18) So it wasn't useful to them, they got rid of it.

(10:22) But it looked really good, like the perfect lamb, the perfect cattle. (10:29) Oh, they wanted that for their own flocks. (10:32) And they didn't listen to the Lord.

(10:39) So that is more taking away from God's word by not doing it. (10:45) Verses 10 and 11, (11:06) So here is the meaning of God's regretting, or repenting as some versions call it. (11:13) God's repenting is simply the changing of a purpose according to the conditions already laid down or mentally determined.

(11:25) So God was expecting certain behavior out of Saul. (11:31) Saul was told what to do, but he knew that he would fail. (11:36) But he's there rooting for him anyhow, hoping that he would listen to him.

(11:45) So God's actions were sort of predetermined by the free will choices that Saul was going to make. (11:55) And God was rooting for him to do the right thing, to follow his command, and he would be blessed if he did. (12:05) But Saul unfortunately made the wrong decision and disobeyed God's command.

(12:12) And God was disappointed in Saul's choices. (12:15) And there lays the sources of God's regret. (12:18) Saul was a king who followed his own reasoning rather than faithfully following God's instructions.

(12:28) And we know this to be true because in 1 Samuel 13-13, Saul now has a track record. (12:36) In 13-13, when Samuel confronted Saul after he reasoned to himself that he should offer the sacrifice, (12:46) remember us reading that this morning, (12:51) Samuel was slow to get to them as

they faced the Philistine army. (12:57) And the men were starting to desert because they panicked.

(13:01) And so Saul took it upon himself to offer the sacrifice to God so they could inquire of God. (13:09) But Samuel arrived and saw him do that, and he wasn't pleased. (13:14) And Samuel said to him, (13:15) You have acted foolishly.

You have not kept the commandment of the Lord your God, which he commanded you. (13:23) For now the Lord would have established your kingdom forever over Israel, but now your kingdom shall not endure. (13:33) So the Lord sought out for himself a man after his own heart, and that's in reference to David.

(13:40) And the Lord has appointed him as ruler over his people because you have not kept what the Lord has commanded you. (13:48) So God was willing to bless Saul's kingship if he were obedient. (13:55) Instead, Saul reasoned to himself and thought there was fudge room within God's commands.

(14:05) There is no fudge room. (14:09) You just do what God says, period. (14:15) So God made David, the son of Jesse, kings.

(14:24) So here's a combination of two New Testament scriptures that show the principles of being faithful to God's commands. (14:34) And they're rooted in like Romans 10, 17. (14:37) Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of God.

(14:45) And Romans 14, 23, it says, (14:54) So if you look at those two verses, you know, if you're acting on something that God tells you to do, (15:02) if you don't have written marching orders or scripture backing you up, it's sin. (15:12) You just can't act presumptuously in the Lord's name or countermand any of his commands. (15:22) So faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ, and whatever is not from faith is sin.

(15:30) So Saul could not say that he acted faithfully by not carrying out the command fully. (15:41) He took away, so to speak. (15:49) The two scriptures that will help us in our understanding of following God's commands, (15:54) we went over this morning, was Deuteronomy 4.2 and 1 Corinthians 4.6. (16:03) That you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you, and do not go beyond what is written.

(16:14) So these verses tell us that in order to keep a command, we can either add to or take away from the command, (16:22) and we can't hide behind the silence of scripture to be permissible, (16:29) because 1 Corinthians 4.6 dispels that. (16:34) Do not go beyond what is written. (16:38) A lot of people who claim to have freedom in Christ, which we do, (16:46) will use silence of scriptures to say, well God didn't say, so I can.

(16:53) And you can fill in the blank of whatever activity they try to do. (16:58) But 1 Corinthians 4.6 takes that away by saying, don't go beyond what's written. (17:06) So silence of scripture is not permissible to do something.

(17:14) If it's silent, you don't act on it. (17:20) So important are these four verses to our understanding, (17:25) and I would encourage everybody to commit those to memory, (17:28) because by them you can dispel false worship, false teaching, (17:37) and you can approve of that which is good. (17:41) So comparing these principles to Saul's situation, Saul did not walk by faith and obedience.

(17:48) He acted presumptuously, relying on his own reasoning, rather than doing what he was told by God. (17:56) Okay, back to our story. (17:58) Samuel, 1 Samuel 15.12. (18:07) Samuel, hey Joe, get that, it might be your phone.

(18:13) Verse 12, Samuel rose early in the morning to meet Saul. (18:17) And it was told to Samuel, saying, Saul came to Carmel, (18:23) and behold, he set up a monument for himself, (18:27) and then he turned and proceeded to go down to Gilgal. (18:30) So the prophet is out looking for Saul, because he's got a message for him from God.

(18:38) And Saul was probably taken back by seeing a monument raised by the king in honor of himself (18:48) for this great battle that he had victory in. (18:53) And so he goes to where Saul went. (18:57) Verse 13, Samuel came to Saul, and Saul said to him, (19:02) Blessed are you of the Lord, I have carried out the command of the Lord.

(19:07) So Saul's idea of carrying out a command is much different than God's idea of carrying out a command. (19:15) And he's about to find that out. (19:18) Saul was indeed excited by the victory.

(19:20) As you can imagine, engaging in mortal combat, having victory, you're juiced, you're charged. (19:29) He built a monument for himself. (19:32) And he thought he was doing great because they got victory.

(19:41) He was quick to take credit for that. (19:44) Verse 14, but Samuel said, (19:50) What then is this bleating of the sheep in my ears and the lowing of the oxen which I hear? (19:58) And though this is a serious rebuke, there is sarcastic humor in it. (20:04) You've got to admit, God has a sense of humor.

(20:07) There should have been no sheep spying and no cows mooing. (20:15) Verse 15, Saul said, (20:18) They have brought them from the Amalekites, for the people spared the best of the sheep and the oxen, (20:25) to sacrifice to the Lord your God, but the rest we have utterly destroyed. (20:31) So in light of God's command, Saul, by his own words, admits the guilt, (20:37) though he doesn't think he's guilty, and he shifts the blame to the soldiers.

(20:43) They brought them back. (20:49) Didn't Truman have a little placard on his desk in the White House Oval Office? (20:55) The buck stops here. (20:57) Well, the same here.

(20:59) You know, he is the leader of God's army on earth. (21:05) And he just won't fess up to it. (21:10) So he blameshifts.

(21:12) And he was hoping to gain Samuel's approval because he said, (21:16) They were going to sacrifice them to your God, not my God or our God, your God. (21:24) So what does that tell us about Saul? (21:30) Strong faith? (21:32) Personal faith in God? (21:36) I don't know. (21:37) Words mean things.

(21:44) He said that he was going to sacrifice them to God, which God did not ask for. (21:49) And whether this was true or maybe just something he was making up, we don't know. (21:56) But if they did have intentions for them to make sacrifices to God, (22:01) what is the old saying? (22:04) The road to hell is paved with good intentions? (22:08) Would have been a good intention to sacrifice to God, but did he ask for it? (22:17) Saul should have obeyed God.

(22:19) He should have stressed to the soldiers that everything must be destroyed. (22:29) Verse 16,

Then Samuel said to Saul, Wait, and let me tell you what the Lord said to me last night. (22:37) And Saul said, Speak.

(22:41) I don't think Saul realized the mess that he was in (22:45) and that Samuel was aiming his double-barreled shotgun of reality right at his head. (22:52) Verse 17, Samuel says, Is it not true, though you were little in your own eyes, (22:58) you were made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the Lord anointed you king over Israel? (23:06) So Samuel references Saul coming from the smallest tribe, which was Benjamin, (23:13) and the smallest clan in that tribe, which was little four-letter word Amri or something like that. (23:26) So God chose him out of all the people to be king.

(23:32) Verse 18, And the Lord sent you on a mission and said, (23:36) Go and utterly destroy the sinners, the Amalekites, and fight against them until they were exterminated. (23:47) Remember, don't feel sorry for these folks because they were exterminated. (23:52) Don't feel bad for them.

(23:55) Think of what they were doing. (23:58) Not only were they nipping at Israel's heels all the way out of Egypt, (24:04) you know, killing the moms with children, (24:07) killing the old and firm people straggling behind as Israel was leaving, (24:13) but these were the people who worshiped Marduk. (24:18) That involved not only animal sacrifices to a false god, but human sacrifices.

(24:27) They're children. (24:31) And God even spoke plainly about that to Moses in Deuteronomy, (24:36) about worshiping Marduk and offering children to the flames. (24:44) He said, Don't do that.

(24:48) That's why you're going to eliminate the people of Canaan. (24:51) They were detestable, not to mention other evil practices. (25:00) Their worship consisted of temple prostitutes, (25:05) where they would engage in sexual activity in the name of their god in order to get a good crop.

(25:14) That's how low the people had sunk in that region. (25:19) Verse 19, Why then did you not obey the voice of the Lord, (25:24) but rushed upon the spoil, and did what was evil in the sight of the Lord? (25:31) So God knows the heart of man. (25:35) It was greed that made them keep the livestock.

(25:39) It was just a subterfuge to say that they were going to do it (25:45) and offer sacrifices to God with it. (25:49) That was a lie. (25:52) And God called them on it through Samuel.

(26:03) Verse 20, Then Saul said to Samuel, (26:06) I did obey the voice of the Lord, and went on the mission on which the Lord sent me, (26:11) and have brought back Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. (26:17) But the people, verse 21, the people took some of the spoil, (26:22) sheep and oxen, and the choices of the things devoted to destruction, (26:28) to sacrifice to the Lord your God at Gilgal. (26:32) And again we see Saul not owning up to the sin.

(26:39) He was blaming others. (26:43) In his mind he did follow God's command. (26:46) And though it is plain to all of us, he missed by a long shot.

(26:51) And what we see here is Saul practicing a form of deism. (26:57) And deism is believing in a God but using human rationale as to this being's nature. (27:11) And so deism is really me-ism.

(27:15) It's a form of will-worship. (27:18) And who do we know was one of the first people, or was the first person, to practice will-worship? (27:29) Did I hear someone say Cain? (27:31) Yes, Cain. (27:34) He offered God what he wanted to offer God, (27:38) which was not the correct thing to offer for a sacrifice to cleanse of sin.

(27:44) So, verse 22, Samuel said, (27:52) Has not the Lord as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? (28:04) Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams. (28:13) So right there, Samuel is spelling it out to Saul. (28:20) Keep your sacrifices.

(28:26) Just obey. (28:28) That's way better than offering sacrifices. (28:36) So obedience.

(28:37) That's how we follow the commands and how we show our love to God. (28:42) And isn't that what Jesus told his disciples in John 14, 23? (28:51) If you love me, you will keep my commands. (28:56) How do you show love to God? (28:58) An invisible being, even though he's in us, we can't wrap our arms around him and say, I love you.

(29:07) You do what he says. (29:11) And that's how we show love and respect for God. (29:15) Verse 23, For rebellion is as the sin of divination, and insubordination is as iniquity and idolatry.

(29:28) Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, he has also rejected you from being king. (29:37) So going against God's word, either taking away or adding to it, is rebellion. (29:48) And it is equated with divination.

(29:51) Some versions say witchcraft or sorcery. (29:58) With divination, you seek out the unseen world to give you direction. (30:04) When you employ deism, it's like practicing divination.

(30:12) Because you are seeking out a path that God didn't send you down, relying on your own reasoning, (30:20) rather than on what God plainly says. (30:25) And likewise, insubordination. (30:28) Wally, you were in the service.

(30:30) You know what it is to be insubordinate. (30:32) If the sergeant tells you to go do something and you don't, you're insubordinate. (30:40) And guess how many potatoes you get to peel that day.

(30:43) Or how many push-ups, how many dust bunnies you get to do push-ups with with your nose. (30:51) So anyhow, that's what not doing what the Lord tells you to do is like to him. (31:00) He lumps you in with the worst of sins.

(31:06) Idolatry. (31:09) So in Paul's case, he was no more than a sorcerer practicing idolatry. (31:21) By reasoning to himself, I can spare this king.

(31:25) Why did he spare the king? (31:27) He was the leader of those detestable people. (31:34) His men took all the choice stuff out of there. (31:37) Why didn't he open his mouth and say, kill it? (31:42) So he was a weak leader.

(31:45) And not what God wanted. (31:47) So the bottom line is, Saul didn't have the proper regard for God or his word. (31:54) So God rejected him as king.

(31:59) Verse 24, (32:01) Then Saul said to Samuel, (32:03) I have sinned, I have indeed transgressed the command of the Lord in your words, (32:09) because I feared the people and listened to their voice. (32:15) Saul finally admits that he sinned against God, (32:18) but he still offers excuses as to why he sinned. (32:23) He still blamed the people, (32:24) but at least he admitted why he let them do what they did.

(32:30) He was afraid of them. (32:32) He saw them in battle. (32:35) He saw them hacking people to pieces.

(32:38) And when they probably turned to him and said, let us keep this plunder, (32:44) okay, take what you want. (32:45) Leave me alone. (32:47) Who knows? (32:48) So anyhow, if Saul would have feared God the same way that he feared the people, (32:55) he wouldn't have made as many bad choices as he did.

(33:00) But that is just part of the reason God rejected him. (33:04) As the leader of Israel, he should have followed God's word to the T. (33:09) He should have used his authority as king and commanded his troops (33:14) not to sin against God by rushing to the spoil. (33:19) And he should have used his sword to kill King Agag rather than spare him.

(33:26) Instead, he caved in to the desires of the people to do wrong. (33:30) He used his own logic and reasoning to guide him on his mission (33:34) rather than God's revealed word and will to him. (33:41) What we see in this story is a reminder to us (33:44) of the importance of following God's word in our lives.

(33:49) As Christians today, we do have liberty and freedom in Christ, (33:54) not being bound by the law, but we must always use his words as our guide (34:00) in order to be pleasing to him. (34:03) We must use the same principles and following commands (34:07) to be pleasing to God, even if it's unpopular with the people. (34:13) We must do the right thing.

(34:15) One of the reasons that God included these Old Testament stories in the Bible (34:20) was for us future generations of believers to learn from. (34:26) So even though we're blessed in Christ to be free from the law, (34:30) let's love, respect, honor, and obey our Savior. (34:36) Why do you think Paul warned the New Testament Christians (34:39) with these Old Testament examples, like from Hebrews 3, verse 7? (34:46) So the Holy Spirit says, (34:48) Today if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion (34:53) during the time of testing in the desert, (34:57) where your fathers tested and tried me and for 40 years saw what I did.

(35:02) That is why I was angry with you, with that generation, (35:07) and I said, their hearts are always going astray and they have not known my ways. (35:13) So I declared on oath in my anger, they shall never see my rest. (35:19) Why would Paul tell New Testament Christians who have freedom in Christ these words? (35:28) See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart (35:33) that turns away from the living God, (35:37) but encourage one another daily so long as it is called today, (35:42) so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.

(35:47) Paul just tells it like it is. (35:49) And finally, let's close this lesson with some of these wise words from Paul. (35:58) In particular, Galatians 5.13. (36:05) You were indeed called to be free, brothers and sisters.

(36:09) Don't turn this freedom into an excuse for your corrupt nature to express itself. (36:15) Rather, serve each other through love. (36:19) So we must always listen to God's word and put him first in our lives.

(36:23) And if you haven't, why not? (36:26) So we extend the opportunity for you to make things right with God. (36:30) If you've been following your own way, (36:35) we'll do whatever it takes to get you back on the right path. (36:39) So this is the invitation, so come while we stand and sing the invitation song.