

## WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

### MONDAY

Commanded to annihilate the Amalekites, Saul first sent word to the Kenites (who evidently lived among the Amalekites) to get out so that they would not be part of the slaughter. Then he led the attack and all Amalek was destroyed. (not counting the King and some of the livestock)

#### **I Samuel 15:6-9**

While the Jews were in the wilderness of Sinai and troubled on every hand by enemies, a Kenite named Jethro and his family befriended them. Jethro's actions reaped benefits for the generations to follow him that he could never have imagined!

In this passage, God spares the Kenite nation! Jesus once said, *I was hungry and you gave me meat.* God keeps the books and he knows perfectly every deed we do in His name and for His sake. They will not go unnoticed. He is the One to requite kindness and avenge injury. And He will do so!

### TUESDAY

God spoke to Samuel again and told him that He was sorry He had appointed Saul to be king. Samuel prayed through the night for King Saul. In the morning, he went to see him, and Saul greeted him with a hearty, "I did everything the Lord commanded me!" Samuel asked him why, if that were true, he could hear the noises of Amalekite livestock? Saul said that at the request of the people, he had spared some livestock.

#### **I Samuel 15:10-15**

Is not the heart of Samuel exposed in these verses? When he heard that God was sorry He had appointed Saul to be king, Samuel understood that God planned to take the kingdom from him. And while others slept, he pleaded with God on Saul's behalf. Remember, before Saul became king, Samuel had judged Israel. Saul had, in a sense, replaced him. But Samuel was not jealous, nor secretly pleased that the one who replaced him was himself now being replaced. Instead, he prayed earnestly for him! We all need so desperately to know and pray the mind and will of God.

### WEDNESDAY

Samuel reminded Saul that, at first, had been little in his own sight, meaning, I think, humble in spirit. And that God had appointed him to be head, or king. Then God had commanded him to destroy and consume "the sinners, the Amalekites." But Saul did not obey God, but did "fly upon the spoils" the King James Bible says. That gives us a glimpse at Saul's heart: he couldn't wait to get his hands on the goods!

#### **I Samuel 15:16-19**

A great principle is seen in Saul's appointment to be king. It's this: God exalts the humble! That is not to say that God exalts those with the lowest job on the totem pole. The heart's the issue! Has God put you into a great job? Has He blessed you with good pay and great benefits? Do fellow employees vote you "Winner of the Week" every week? Remember that every good thing comes from His hand. And humble yourself in the sight of the Lord.

### THURSDAY

Saul denied that he had disobeyed the Lord. He insisted that he had "utterly destroyed the Amalekites." He said that the people were the ones responsible, and that he had only done so in order to sacrifice them to the Lord. Samuel told Saul that God preferred obedience over sacrifices. He identified Saul's sin as rebellion and told him that because he had rejected the Lord, God would reject him.

#### **I Samuel 15:20-23**

Saul blamed the people, and in doing so, suggested that there were mitigating circumstances which might explain the bleating of the sheep which Samuel was hearing. In a sense, he blamed God when he introduced the argument that the spoils were to be used for sacrifices. In other words, he was determined to deflect the blame from this own sinfulness. And, we know from the Bible, and from our own experience, that should have been the very first place all of us should always look.

### FRIDAY

Samuel confronted Saul with his sin and spoken of God's judgment upon it. Saul responded by admitting that he had indeed sinned, and added that he did so because he feared the people. He asked Samuel to forgive him and allow him worship the Lord. Samuel refused and Saul grabbed his robe and tore it as Samuel tried to leave. Samuel predicted that, in the same way, the Lord would tear the kingdom from Saul.

#### **I Samuel 15:24-29**

Does it surprise you that Samuel refuses to accept Saul's apology? Don't let it. Look again at the apology: he still blames the people and still treats sin lightly. "There. I said the right words. Now, let's get on with it." When Samuel hesitates, Saul becomes forceful as if to say, "You will do what I say!" God will have none of that!! True confession requires a broken spirit and a contrite heart. (Ps.51) "I have sinned against heaven and against you. I deserve only your punishment and I ask only for your mercy." And, *if we confess our sins this way, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sin and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness!*

### SATURDAY

Saul asked Samuel to appear with him before the people (trying to give the appearance that all was well) and Samuel did so. Then Samuel confronted an enemy king, Agag, judged him for his crimes, and had him executed on the spot. Finally, he returned to his home in Gibeah, never to see King Saul again.

#### **I Samuel 15:30-34**

Things have not changed much over the centuries, have they? Saul is more concerned with appearances than with solving the problem, and that's a dangerous game to play! We do that, too - we wear masks... we say the right things... we smile... we pretend... so that people will think the best of us. And in the process, we deceive our own selves and never fix what's wrong. The Lord will have none of that! He *regretted that He had made Saul king over Israel.*

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