

## INTRODUCTION

1. Saul was not the first, nor has he been the last man to whom God has plainly declared his will. Romans 1:19: "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them."
2. God declares his will to man to day just as plainly as he declared his will to Saul. Examples:
  1. Every person who has read the Bible knows as well as he knows anything that God commands all men to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation from sin, John 20:30,31; Acts 16:30-33; 1 John 1:6-10.
  2. He knows too that God has ordered us to exterminate all evil, all Amalekites, from the soul, Rom. 8:12,13; 1 Thess 5:22; 1 Peter 1:15, 16. "But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation: (16) Because it is written, By ye holy, for I am holy." (See Leviticus 11:44)
3. Saul versus men today.
  1. Today, men do not dispute in formal terms the authority of God, any more than Saul did. Examples:
    1. Often men prefer not repent of sin, to cast out sinful desires.
    2. They would rather not to commit themselves to Christ.
    3. They would rather not bow in all things to his will.
    4. To an extent Saul did the will of God, but not completely.

## THE DANGER OF POWER A contrast in Saul:

1. At first he would gladly hide himself and withdraw himself from the people's choice, and that out of a genuine modesty, 1 Sam. 10:20-23.
2. Saul rises in power.
  1. There is nothing which so often oversets the whole balance of a mind as power and a sudden rise to power.
    1. It brings out faults unsuspected before.
    2. It reveals what a man's true character is. Examples:
      - A. The man who finds himself in a policeman's uniform, wearing a badge and carrying a gun. May not be the same man as before.
      - B. The man who has never done the work of an elder, who suddenly finds himself an elder, is apt to go off in nearly any direction. Like the policeman newly inflated with power, he just must fire a few shots.
  2. Saul fights a successful battle at Jabesh-gilead and is officially made king at Gilead, 1 Sam. 11:1-15.
    1. The self-will of Saul begins to show when he had reigned two years over Israel.
      - A. Because Samuel did not arrive in the seven days appointed, Saul intrudes into the priest's office at Gilead.
      - B. It was here and at this time that Saul's divine rejection as king was announced, 1 Sam. 13:1-14.
    2. It is in our lesson today that Saul's real character and attitude toward the authority of God shows up in his incomplete obedience to God's word as delivered to him by Samuel 1:15:1-35.

GOD'S ORDER TO SAUL: "Go now and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass." 1 Sam. 15:3

We will consider four points out of our lesson text:

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## THE LORD SPEAKS TO SAMUEL REGARDING SAUL 1 Sam. 15:11

1. Three things the Lord said.
  1. "It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king."
  2. "For he is turned back from following me."
  3. "And hath not performed My commandments."
2. Samuel's grief.
  1. "And it grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the Lord all night."
    1. Samuel prayed for Saul as Christ prayed for Peter in Luke 22:32: "But I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren."
    2. Samuel no doubt prayed for the nation of Israel too.

## SAUL'S, "I HAVE OBEYED THE VOICE OF THE LORD." 1 Sam. 15:19-21

1. The facts are:
  1. Saul had nearly obeyed the voice of the Lord. Saul did not lie outright.
  2. Saul's act, like the action of many, was but a piece of cheating.
    1. Saul had utterly destroyed the Amalekites; except king Agag.
    2. Very likely Saul spoke the truth when he said, "...the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of things which should have been destroyed." Why did they do it?:
      - A. "To sacrifice to the Lord thy God in Gilgal."

## 3- SAMUEL'S REPLY TO SAUL 1 Sam. 15:22

1. "Samuel said, Hath 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 hearken than the fat of rams." These words contain a lesson which Saul and many others have never learned:
  1. He served God and actually appeared zealous in God's cause so far as the way of doing God's will suited his own pleasure and purpose.
  2. When self had to be denied and God's will made the rule of action instead of his own, then he rebelled.
  3. Actually, Saul never really worshipped God, he worshipped SELF.
  4. Saul apparently never learned the great truth: that obedience to God is the only thing pleasing in His eyes.
2. Saul as a type of many.
  1. Saul stands a type of those who profess to be Christians, and act in a measure as Christians. They have never learned:
    1. They follow their own ways as if they were under no obligation to God. They have never learned the great lesson of obedience.
    2. They have never learned the lesson that Obedience to God requires:
      - A. Self-denial and discipline of ourselves.
      - B. That faith and obedience are necessary parts of each other.
      - C. That there can be no obedience without faith, and that faith without obedience is dead and worthless. James 2:20, 24

## 4- THE BEGINNING OF THE END FOR SAUL 1 Sam. 15:23

1. How many follow the example of Saul.
  1. Saul was the first king, as in a mirror behold Israel herself.
    1. I srael, like Saul, has turned to his own way.
  2. Look at the multitudes among ourselves reflected in this mirror. How many follow the example of Saul?
    1. While time and eternity tremble in the balance, the question is whether they will serve the Lord in life or whether they will not.
    2. They live for the world, there is remorese behind and misery before, death is coming on with rapid strides, and eternity is a dismal blank, the thought of which strikes terror to the soul. Will you continue in that way?