EPISODE NO. 125

1 Sam. 15:7-35

Saul Did Not Obey God

7 Then Saul attacked the Amalekites. He fought them from Havilah all the way to Shur, which is at the eastern border of Egypt. 8 He captured Agag alive, the king of the Amalekites. But he wiped out all of Agag's army with the edge of the sword. 9 But Saul and his army allowed Agag to live. They also kept alive the best of the flocks, the fat cattle, and the rams. They kept every good animal alive. They did NOT want to destroy them all. But whenever they found an animal that was weak or useless, they killed it.

10 Then Yahweh spoke His Word to Samuel: 11 "Saul has turned completely away from following Me. And I am sorry that I ever made him king. He has NOT obeyed My commands." Samuel was upset, and he cried out to Yahweh all night long.

12 Early in the morning, Samuel got up to go meet Saul. But someone told Samuel, "Saul has gone to Carmel. And, look, he has put up a monument in his own honor! Then Saul crossed over and went down to Gilgal."

13 Then Samuel came to Saul. And Saul said to Samuel, "May Yahweh bless you! I have obeyed Yahweh's commands!"

14 But Samuel said, "Then why do I hear sheep baaing and cattle mooing?"

15 Saul answered, "The soldiers got them from the Amalekites. They saved the best sheep, goats, and cattle to offer them as sacrifices to Yahweh, your God. But we totally destroyed all the other animals!"

16 "Stop!" said Samuel to Saul, "Let me tell you what Yahweh said to me last night."

Saul answered Samuel, "Tell me."

17 Samuel said, "Once you did not think much of yourself. But now, you have become the head of all the tribes of Israel. Yahweh anointed you to be king over Israel. 18 Yahweh sent you on a mission. He said, 'Go and completely destroy those evil people, the Amalekites. Make war on them until ALL of them are dead.' 19 Why didn't you obey Yahweh!? Why did you take the best things!? Why did you do what Yahweh said was wrong!?"

20 Saul said to Samuel, "But I DID obey Yahweh! I did what Yahweh told me to do. I destroyed all the Amalekites. And I brought back Agag, their king. 21 It was the soldiers who took the best sheep, goats, and cattle — the best of what was devoted to God — to sacrifice them to Yahweh, your God, at Gilgal!"

22 But Samuel answered, "What pleases Yahweh more — burnt-offerings and sacrifices? Or, OBEDIENCE to His voice!?

> Listen, it is better to OBEY God
>   than to offer a sacrifice!
> It is better to pay attention to God
>   than to offer the fat of rams!
> 23 Refusing to obey is just as bad as the sin of witchcraft.
> Being stubborn is just as bad as the sin of worshiping idols.
> Because you have rejected Yahweh's command,
>   He now rejects you from being king!"

24 Then Saul said to Samuel, "I have sinned! I did NOT obey Yahweh's commands. I did NOT do what you told me because I was afraid of the army. I did what THEY said instead. 25 Now, I beg you, forgive my sin. Come back with me, so that I may give worship to Yahweh."

26 But Samuel said to Saul, "I will not go back with you because you rejected the Word of Yahweh! And now He rejects you from being king over Israel!"

Yahweh Rejected Saul

27 As Samuel turned to leave, Saul grabbed Samuel's robe, and it tore. 28 Then Samuel said to him, "Yahweh has torn the kingdom of Israel from YOU today! And, He has given it to one of your countrymen, to someone better than you! 29 Yahweh is the Glorious One of Israel. He does NOT lie or change His mind on a whim. He is NOT a human being. So He doesn't change His mind like people do."

30 Saul said, "I have sinned! But please show me honor in front of the elders of my people. Please honor me in front of the nation of Israel. Return with me, so that I may give worship to Yahweh, your God!"

31 Samuel finally decided to reconcile with Saul, and Saul did worship Yahweh.

32 Then Samuel said, "Bring me Agag, the king of the Amalekites."

Agag was in a good mood when he came to Samuel. Agag thought: "Surely the bitterness of death is gone!"

33 But Samuel said to Agag, "Your sword has caused mothers to live without their children. Now YOUR mother will be without her son!"

Then Samuel cut Agag to pieces in the presence of Yahweh at Gilgal.

34 Then Samuel left and went to Ramah. But Saul went up to his home in Gibeah-Saul. 35 And Samuel never saw Saul again for the rest of his life. Samuel cried for Saul, but Yahweh was very sorry that He had made Saul the king over Israel.