

Wednesday, August 12, 2020 ▫ Read 1 Samuel 15:24–35

Questions from the Scripture text: What does Saul say he has done (v24)? What was this sin? But whom does he really blame? Where does he want Samuel to go (v25)? Why won't Samuel go (v26)? What does this suggest about the genuineness of Saul's "repentance" in v24–25? What does Samuel turn to do in v27? What does Saul do? What happens? What does Samuel say is torn (v28)? Who does the tearing? From whom? What is Yahweh going to do with it? What does Samuel call God in v29? What will God not do? What else? Why not—what is He not? What statement does Saul repeat in v30? And how does he repeat his previous request? How does Samuel respond this time (v31)? What does Saul do? What does Samuel ask for at the worship service (v32)? What is Agag thinking to himself? But what does Samuel say to him (v33)? What does Samuel do? Before Whom? Where? Then where does Samuel go (v34)? And where does Saul go? And where does Samuel go no more (v35)? Until when? But what does Samuel do for Saul? And what does Yahweh say about His having made Saul king?

v29 and v35 seem to be at odds with each other. But, when we step back, we can understand the truth of each and see that they are not really in conflict.

In v29, Samuel is telling Saul that the decision to reject him is final. Saul has grown accustomed to second chances and thought that he would get them forever. But, there is a point of no return with the Lord. This is most obvious at the final judgment, which is... well... *final*. But, there is also such a thing as someone who has had chance after chance and is finally hardened, and the Lord leaves him to himself (cf. Heb 6:6). Whenever someone—even who claims Christianity—rejects God in something, he takes his eternal soul into his hands, because he has no guarantee that he will be able to repent later. Let our hearts be sensitive to Him, and let us take for granted His great patience with us.

v35 gives us the human (Samuel) and divine sides of the same grief. Sin is wicked and brings great misery. The godly hate it and grieve over it. And the Lord is grieved by it and takes vengeance upon it. The word for "regretted" is the same as "sorry" in v6. The worst thing about our sin is not the violence that it does to ourselves, or even to others. The worst thing about our sin is that it grieves God and is directly opposite to the purposes for which He created us.

If we are people who have grown desensitized to our sin by strategic misuse of real truth about glorious grace, this passage re-sensitizes us to take our sin seriously and to sorrow over it. In so doing, it keeps us tender toward a gracious Savior, Whose salvation we come to appreciate all the more!

What sins in your life have you begun to brush off,
rather than taking them seriously?

Suggested songs: ARP32AB "What Blessedness" or TPH119W "Lord, Let My Cry Before You Come"