

**Dr. Robert Chisholm, 1 & 2 Samuel, Session 10,
1 Samuel 15-16 – Saul Forfeits His Throne, The Lord
Chooses a New King
Resources from NotebookLM**

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide Quiz, and 5) FAQs

**1. Abstract of Chisholm, 1 & 2 Samuel, Session 10, 1 Samuel
15-16 – Saul Forfeits His Throne, The Lord Chooses a New King,
Biblicalearning.org, BeL**

This lecture excerpt from Dr. Robert Chisholm's series on 1 & 2 Samuel covers 1 Samuel 15-16. **The main focus is Saul's disobedience**, leading to God's rejection of him as king and the subsequent anointing of David. **Chisholm discusses the Amalekites' annihilation**, exploring the complexities of God's commands and corporate judgment. He also **examines the contrast between Saul's outward actions and inner rebellion** versus David's inner character, chosen by God despite his youth and humble beginnings. The lecture concludes by introducing the David and Goliath story from 1 Samuel 17, highlighting the importance of God's spirit in leadership.

**2. 13 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of
Dr. Chisholm, Session 10 – Double click icon to play in
Windows media player or go to the Biblicalearning.org [BeL]
Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament →
Historical Books → 1 Samuel).**



**Chisholm_Samuel_S
ession 10.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Chisholm, 1 & 2 Samuel, Session 10, 1 Samuel 15-16 – Saul Forfeits His Throne, The Lord Chooses a New King

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas from the provided excerpts of Dr. Robert Chisholm's lecture on 1 Samuel 15-16:

Briefing Document: 1 Samuel 15-16 - Saul's Rejection and David's Anointing

Introduction This document summarizes Dr. Robert Chisholm's lecture (Session 10) on 1 Samuel chapters 15 and 16, focusing on the themes of Saul's disobedience leading to his rejection as king, God's emphasis on obedience over ritual, and the selection of David as Saul's replacement.

I. 1 Samuel 15: Saul's Disobedience and Rejection

- **Context:** Chapter 15 follows chapter 13, where Saul's disobedience resulted in the loss of his dynasty. In chapter 15, Saul loses the throne itself due to further disobedience.
- "In 1 Samuel 13, we saw that Saul, because of his disobedience, forfeited his dynasty. Here in chapter 15, he's going to forfeit his throne."
- **The Command:** God commands Saul to utterly destroy the Amalekites, including all people and livestock, as punishment for their past attack on Israel (Exodus 17, Deuteronomy 25).
- "Now go, attack the Amalekites and totally destroy all that belongs to them. Do not spare them, put them to death, men and women, children and infants, cattle and sheep, camels and donkeys."
- **The Amalekites' Sin:** The Amalekites were viewed as wicked because they attacked the Israelites when they were exhausted and lacked fear of God. God commanded that they be wiped out as a people.
- "They were unafraid of God. They had no fear of God."
- "The Lord decreed that he wanted them wiped out as a people."
- **Genocide and God's Authority:** The command to wipe out an entire people raises difficult moral questions. Chisholm emphasizes a key distinction: God is the creator and giver of life and therefore has the authority to take life when he deems it just.

- "God is the creator. He is the one who creates life. And all life comes from him. And therefore, as the source of all life, he has authority over everyone. And as the creator, can decide to take away a life that he gave."
- "It would always be wrong for us to commit genocide... because we don't have the authority to do so."
- **Corporate Thinking:** God often thinks in terms of groups, not just individuals (e.g., original sin in Adam). The Amalekites are viewed corporately as enemies of Israel.
- "In ancient Israelite thinking and in God's thinking, he often thinks in terms of a group."
- **Saul's Partial Obedience:** Saul partially obeys, sparing Agag (king of the Amalekites) and the best livestock.
- "Saul and the army spared Agag and the best of the sheep and cattle... they were unwilling to destroy."
- **God's Regret:** God expresses regret at making Saul king due to Saul's disobedience.
- "I regret that I have made Saul king... he has turned away from me and has not carried out my instructions."
- **Samuel's Confrontation:** Samuel confronts Saul about his disobedience.
- "What then is this bleating of sheep in my ears? What is this lowing of cattle that I hear?"
- **Obedience vs. Sacrifice:** Samuel emphasizes that God desires obedience, not just ritual sacrifices. This is a key theme of the passage and a recurring principle in the prophets.
- "Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the Lord? To obey is better than sacrifice..."
- **Saul's Excuses:** Saul blames the soldiers and claims he saved the best livestock for sacrifice. He's more concerned with the religious form of sacrifice than with obedience.
- "The soldiers brought them from the Amalekites. They spared the best of the sheep and cattle to sacrifice to the Lord your God..."

- **Rebellion as Idolatry:** Samuel says that rebellion is like divination, and arrogance is like idolatry.
- "For rebellion...is like the sin of divination, and arrogance is like the evil of idolatry."
- **Rejection of Saul:** God rejects Saul as king due to his disobedience.
- "You have rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord has rejected you as king over Israel."
- **Symbolic Tearing:** Samuel tearing his robe symbolizes God tearing the kingdom from Saul.
- "The Lord has torn the kingdom of Israel. Just as you've torn my garment, the Lord has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today and has given it to one of your neighbors..."
- **God's Unchanging Decree:** God, unlike humans, will not change His mind when He announces unconditional judgment.
- "He who is the glory of Israel does not lie or change his mind, for he is not a human being and he should change his mind."
- **Samuel's Execution of Agag:** Samuel executes Agag, fulfilling the command Saul disobeyed. This demonstrates divine justice and the seriousness of Saul's partial obedience.
- "Your sword has made women childless... and Samuel put Agog to death before the Lord at Gilgal."

II. 1 Samuel 16: The Anointing of David

- **Mourning for Saul:** God tells Samuel to stop mourning for Saul and move forward by anointing a new king.
- "How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him as king over Israel?"
- **Deception as Judgment:** God instructs Samuel to deceive Saul by saying he is going to offer a sacrifice, as Saul has forfeited his right to the truth.
- "Take a heifer with you and say, I've come to sacrifice to the Lord."
- "God sometimes uses deception as a form of judgment and that sometimes individuals can forfeit their right to the truth because of their immorality."

- **The Rejection of Eliab:** Samuel initially assumes that Eliab, Jesse's eldest son, is God's choice, based on his outward appearance, but God corrects Samuel, emphasizing He looks at the heart, not appearances.
- "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance... But the Lord looks at the heart."
- **David's Anointing:** David, the youngest son, is selected by God. David's physical description contrasts with God's emphasis on the heart.
- "He was glowing with health and had a fine appearance and handsome features... Then the Lord said, Rise and anoint him. This is the one."
- **Spirit of the Lord:** The Spirit of the Lord comes powerfully upon David from that day forward.
- "From that day on, the Spirit of the Lord came powerfully upon David."
- **The Spirit Departs from Saul:** The Spirit of the Lord departs from Saul, and an "evil spirit" from the Lord torments him. The "evil spirit" may be an agent of God's judgment rather than an actual demon.
- "Now the spirit of the Lord had departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord tormented him."
- **David the Musician:** David is sought to play music to soothe Saul's torment.
- **David's Dual Role:** David enters Saul's service as both a musician and an armor-bearer, but also returns home to his family.
- **God's Providence:** God is working providentially to bring David to the royal court and advance his future role as king.

III. Key Themes and Lessons

- **Obedience Over Ritual:** God places greater importance on obedience than on religious practices and sacrifices.
- **God's Authority:** God is the ultimate authority, having the power to give and take away life as the Creator.
- **God's Perspective:** God's perspective and understanding are different from that of humans.

- **Divine Judgment:** Disobedience has consequences, and God will carry out His judgment, sometimes without relenting.
- **The Importance of the Heart:** God values inner character and the heart over outward appearances.
- **God's Providence:** God is working behind the scenes to orchestrate His plans.

Conclusion: 1 Samuel 15 and 16 reveal the consequences of disobedience (Saul's rejection) and the importance of a heart devoted to God (David's selection). These chapters highlight God's sovereignty, His desire for obedience, and the tension between outward appearances and inward character.

4. Study Guide: Chisholm, 1 & 2 Samuel, Session 10, 1 Samuel 15-16 – Saul Forfeits His Throne, The Lord Chooses a New King

1 Samuel 15-16 Study Guide

Quiz

1. What specific command did God give to Saul regarding the Amalekites, and what was the historical basis for this command? God commanded Saul to completely destroy the Amalekites, including people and livestock, due to their past ruthless attack on the Israelites during their exodus from Egypt. This was also due to the fact that they showed no fear of God.
2. How did Saul disobey God's command regarding the Amalekites, and what reason did he initially give for his actions? Saul spared Agag, the king, and kept the best livestock, claiming the best were spared for sacrifice, while the rest was totally destroyed. He claimed this was to improve upon God's command, not realizing his error in disobedience.
3. What does Samuel emphasize regarding God's priorities when he confronts Saul about his disobedience? Samuel emphasizes that God values obedience over sacrifice, highlighting that ritualistic acts do not compensate for disobedience to God's clear commands. Samuel suggests that Saul's actions were akin to rebellion, divination, and idolatry.
4. What does Samuel tell Saul about the consequences of his disobedience, and how does he illustrate it? Samuel tells Saul that God has rejected him as king. To illustrate this, he uses the torn hem of Samuel's robe, symbolizing the tearing away of the kingdom from Saul and giving it to someone better.
5. What is the significance of the statement that "God does not lie or change his mind" in the context of this passage? The statement highlights that when God makes an irrevocable judgment, it is final; however, it contrasts with God's common practice of relenting when people repent, showcasing different aspects of God's nature. When God does not relent, it is usually because an uncrossable line has been met.
6. Why does God tell Samuel to use a form of deception when going to Bethlehem to anoint a new king? God instructs Samuel to say he is going to Bethlehem to offer a sacrifice, which is partially true, in order to protect him from Saul, who

had forfeited his right to the truth by disobeying God, and the fact that Saul had turned into a murderer. This act demonstrates how God can use deception in situations when truth is forfeited.

7. When Samuel first sees Eliab, what does he initially think, and what does the Lord then reveal to him? Samuel initially thinks Eliab, who is tall and impressive like Saul, is the one God has chosen; however, God tells him that he looks at the heart, not outward appearance, emphasizing inner character over physical attributes.
8. What is the main difference in how God chooses Saul as king versus how He chooses David, and what does this say about God's values? God chose Saul based on outward appearances and the people's desire for a king, while he chooses David based on his heart, demonstrating God's preference for inner character and faithfulness, not merely outward impressiveness.
9. How does the author's description of David's physical appearance after God emphasizes inner character create a sense of tension or irony? The narrator notes David's good looks, despite God's emphasis on the heart, suggesting that these attractive qualities could become a temptation for David leading to pride and abuse of power, highlighting a potential flaw despite David's heart for God.
10. What happens to Saul after the Lord chooses David, and how does this set the stage for David's introduction into the royal court? The Spirit of the Lord departs from Saul, and an evil spirit torments him, leading his attendants to suggest using music to calm him. This results in David being brought to the royal court, thus allowing the Lord to providentially orchestrate events promoting David and bringing Saul down.

Answer Key

1. God commanded Saul to completely destroy the Amalekites, including people and livestock, due to their past ruthless attack on the Israelites during their exodus from Egypt. This was also due to the fact that they showed no fear of God.
2. Saul spared Agag, the king, and kept the best livestock, claiming the best were spared for sacrifice, while the rest was totally destroyed. He claimed this was to improve upon God's command, not realizing his error in disobedience.
3. Samuel emphasizes that God values obedience over sacrifice, highlighting that ritualistic acts do not compensate for disobedience to God's clear commands.

Samuel suggests that Saul's actions were akin to rebellion, divination, and idolatry.

4. Samuel tells Saul that God has rejected him as king. To illustrate this, he uses the torn hem of Samuel's robe, symbolizing the tearing away of the kingdom from Saul and giving it to someone better.
5. The statement highlights that when God makes an irrevocable judgment, it is final; however, it contrasts with God's common practice of relenting when people repent, showcasing different aspects of God's nature. When God does not relent, it is usually because an uncrossable line has been met.
6. God instructs Samuel to say he is going to Bethlehem to offer a sacrifice, which is partially true, in order to protect him from Saul, who had forfeited his right to the truth by disobeying God, and the fact that Saul had turned into a murderer. This act demonstrates how God can use deception in situations when truth is forfeited.
7. Samuel initially thinks Eliab, who is tall and impressive like Saul, is the one God has chosen; however, God tells him that he looks at the heart, not outward appearance, emphasizing inner character over physical attributes.
8. God chose Saul based on outward appearances and the people's desire for a king, while he chooses David based on his heart, demonstrating God's preference for inner character and faithfulness, not merely outward impressiveness.
9. The narrator notes David's good looks, despite God's emphasis on the heart, suggesting that these attractive qualities could become a temptation for David leading to pride and abuse of power, highlighting a potential flaw despite David's heart for God.
10. The Spirit of the Lord departs from Saul, and an evil spirit torments him, leading his attendants to suggest using music to calm him. This results in David being brought to the royal court, thus allowing the Lord to providentially orchestrate events promoting David and bringing Saul down.

Essay Questions

1. Explore the ethical implications of God's command to destroy the Amalekites in 1 Samuel 15. How does the text attempt to justify such an extreme action, and what are some potential counterarguments?
2. Analyze the theme of obedience versus ritual in 1 Samuel 15. How does Saul's focus on sacrifice reveal his flawed understanding of God's will, and what lessons can be drawn from Samuel's rebuke?
3. Compare and contrast the way God selected Saul as king with how He selected David in 1 Samuel 16. What do these choices reveal about God's priorities and the nature of leadership?
4. Discuss the significance of the statement "the Lord looks at the heart" in 1 Samuel 16:7. How does this verse challenge conventional notions of leadership, and what implications does it have for understanding God's view of humanity?
5. Examine the tension created by the narrator's description of David's physical appearance in 1 Samuel 16, after God's emphasis on inward character. How does this tension foreshadow future conflicts and challenges in David's life?

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Amalekites:** A nomadic people who were enemies of Israel. They attacked the Israelites as they came out of Egypt. God decreed they should be totally destroyed due to their ruthlessness and lack of fear for God.
- **Genocide:** The deliberate killing of a large group of people, especially those of a particular ethnic group or nation. God commanded this of the Amalekites, which creates complex theological questions.
- **Corporate Thinking:** A perspective emphasizing the group or community over the individual. God often thinks this way, judging a whole people for the actions of a few.
- **Obedience:** Compliance with God's commands and will; considered more important than ritual or sacrifice. Obedience indicates true faithfulness.
- **Ritual:** Religious ceremonies or practices; while having their place, rituals are secondary to obedience to God's will. The danger exists in following religious rules without true devotion.

- **Divine Omniscience:** The quality of being all-knowing. Questions about how God's all-knowing nature interacts with his apparent change of mind and emotional states are raised in the text.
- **Relent:** To change one's intention or action, often in response to repentance. God is characterized as one who will typically relent in judgment when repentance is shown.
- **Deception:** The act of intentionally misleading or concealing the truth; God uses deception in specific cases, such as protecting Samuel, but only when one has forfeited their right to truth.
- **Heart:** In biblical terms, the center of one's inner being, including thoughts, emotions, and will; where God focuses when judging. It represents a person's true character.
- **Evil Spirit:** The spirit sent by God to torment Saul after the Lord departs from him; it is an agent of judgment, but the text does not indicate it is necessarily a demonic entity.
- **Proleptic:** Referring to a future event as though it has already occurred; when used in a narrative context, it is often used for foreshadowing. It is used here to refer to Saul's servant anticipating David's battle skills.

5. FAQs on Chisholm, 1 & 2 Samuel, Session 10, 1 Samuel 15-16 – Saul Forfeits His Throne, The Lord Chooses a New King, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions About 1 Samuel 15-16

- Why did God command the complete destruction of the Amalekites, including women and children?** God commanded the Israelites to destroy the Amalekites as a judgment for their historical wickedness. Specifically, the Amalekites attacked the Israelites when they were vulnerable after their exodus from Egypt, showing a disregard for God and His people. This command was not a typical directive for human conduct. As the creator and giver of life, God has the authority to take life as he deems just, a distinction not applicable to humans. Moreover, God often thinks in corporate terms, viewing the Amalekites as a whole entity rather than just a collection of individuals, which plays into His judgment. God also sees that the current generation of Amalekites is as wicked as their ancestors.
- How can the concept of corporate punishment, where children suffer for the sins of their fathers, be justified?** The concept of corporate punishment stems from God's way of thinking. In the Old Testament, God often considers groups as single entities, similar to how original sin affects all humanity through Adam. While human courts are forbidden from punishing children for the sins of their parents, God, as the creator, retains the authority to do so. This is not to say it is without tension. God does not want human courts punishing children for the sins of the fathers, but he as creator can make that decree. Furthermore, the present generations of Amalekites are viewed as wicked, thus also guilty.
- What was Saul's major sin that led to God's rejection of him as king?** Saul's major sin was disobedience to God's direct command to completely destroy the Amalekites. He spared King Agag and the best livestock, prioritizing his own desires and perceived benefit (religious sacrifice) over God's explicit instructions. This act of disobedience revealed a lack of radical obedience that God requires. Saul's actions showed a heart that was not fully committed to following God's will, instead prioritizing self-interest.

- **Why does God express regret for making Saul king, even though He is omniscient?** God's expression of regret is more of an emotional response to the situation. It does not imply God is not omniscient. The regret is an expression of sorrow that human beings feel when things don't go according to the ideal, despite knowing it would happen. It is meant to emphasize the seriousness and consequences of Saul's disobedience.
- **What does the story of Saul's disobedience teach about obedience versus religious ritual?** This story emphasizes that obedience is more important to God than religious rituals. God desires a heart that is fully committed to following his will and doing what he instructs. Sacrifices, devotions and religious formality are meaningless when coupled with disobedience. Saul's attempt to justify his actions by saying that he was going to offer a sacrifice demonstrates that religious actions do not compensate for disobedience.
- **Why did God instruct Samuel to use deception when going to anoint the new king?** God instructed Samuel to use deception, telling people he was going to sacrifice rather than anoint a new king, because Saul had forfeited his right to the truth. As a would-be murderer, Saul no longer deserved the truth. God sometimes uses deception as a form of judgment for those who disobey Him. God does not hold to truth at all costs for all people, especially when those people have given up their right to the truth.
- **How does God's choice of David as king differ from his choice of Saul?** God's choice of David prioritizes inner character (the heart) over outward appearance, which was a focus when Saul was selected. God chose David not because of how he looked or for his physical prowess, but because he was a man after God's own heart. This emphasizes that God values internal qualities more than superficial ones and the outward appearance can be misleading. When God chose Saul, it was in part to discipline the people because of their wrong motives for wanting a king.

- **Why does the narrator describe David as handsome despite the lesson that God looks at the heart and not the eyes?** The narrator's description of David's handsome appearance after God emphasizes he looks at the heart creates a tension. It highlights that while David is indeed chosen because of his heart, he also possesses outward qualities that could become a source of temptation and pride. David's beauty, as a strength, could also become his weakness. This foreshadows future challenges that David will encounter. It also highlights that, while God is focused on the heart, humans can be drawn to the outward appearance which can cause problems.