

Friday July 10, 2020

Opening

Selected verses from Psalm 119

Leader: You have done good for your servant, O LORD,

Family: **According to your words.**

Teach me good judgment and knowledge,

For I believe in your commandments.

Before I was afflicted I strayed,

But now I keep your saying.

It was good for me that I was afflicted,

So that I might learn your statutes.

Better for me is the law from your mouth

Than thousands of pieces of silver and gold. Amen.

Bible Reading - 1 Samuel 15:1-23

15 Samuel said to Saul, “I am the one the Lord sent to anoint you king over his people Israel; so listen now to the message from the Lord. ² This is what the Lord Almighty says: ‘I will punish the Amalekites for what they did to Israel when they waylaid them as they came up from Egypt. ³ Now go, attack the Amalekites and totally destroy all that belongs to them. Do not spare them; put to death men and women, children and infants, cattle and sheep, camels and donkeys.’ ”

⁴ So Saul summoned the men and mustered them at Telaim—two hundred thousand foot soldiers and ten thousand from Judah. ⁵ Saul went to the city of Amalek and set an ambush in the ravine. ⁶ Then he said to the Kenites, “Go away, leave the Amalekites so that I do not destroy you along with them; for you showed kindness to all the Israelites when they came up out of Egypt.” So the Kenites moved away from the Amalekites.

⁷ Then Saul attacked the Amalekites all the way from Havilah to Shur, near the eastern border of Egypt. ⁸ He took Agag king of the Amalekites alive, and all his people he totally destroyed with the sword. ⁹ But Saul and the army spared Agag and the best of the sheep and cattle, the fat calves and lambs—everything that was good. These they were unwilling to destroy completely, but everything that was despised and weak they totally destroyed.

¹⁰ Then the word of the Lord came to Samuel: ¹¹ “I regret that I have made Saul king, because he has turned away from me and has not carried out my instructions.” Samuel was angry, and he cried out to the Lord all that night.

¹² Early in the morning Samuel got up and went to meet Saul, but he was told, “Saul has gone to Carmel. There he has set up a monument in his own honor and has turned and gone on down to Gilgal.”

¹³ When Samuel reached him, Saul said, “The Lord bless you! I have carried out the Lord’s instructions.”

¹⁴ But Samuel said, “What then is this bleating of sheep in my ears? What is this lowing of cattle that I hear?”

¹⁵ Saul answered, “The soldiers brought them from the Amalekites; they spared the best of the sheep and cattle to sacrifice to the Lord your God, but we totally destroyed the rest.”

¹⁶ “Enough!” Samuel said to Saul. “Let me tell you what the Lord said to me last night.”

“Tell me,” Saul replied.

¹⁷ Samuel said, “Although you were once small in your own eyes, did you not become the head of the tribes of Israel? The Lord anointed you king over Israel. ¹⁸ And he sent you on a mission, saying, ‘Go and completely destroy those wicked people, the Amalekites; wage war against them until you have wiped them out.’ ¹⁹ Why did you not obey the Lord? Why did you pounce on the plunder and do evil in the eyes of the Lord?”

²⁰ “But I did obey the Lord,” Saul said. “I went on the mission the Lord assigned me. I completely destroyed the Amalekites and brought back Agag their king. ²¹ The soldiers took sheep and cattle from the plunder, the best of what was devoted to God, in order to sacrifice them to the Lord your God at Gilgal.”

²² But Samuel replied:

“Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices
as much as in obeying the Lord?

To obey is better than sacrifice,
and to heed is better than the fat of rams.

²³ For rebellion is like the sin of divination,
and arrogance like the evil of idolatry.
Because you have rejected the word of the Lord,
he has rejected you as king.”

Questions for Discussion

Take whatever time is necessary or possible to discuss these questions. Discussion does not have to be lengthy.

For the kids: How did Saul fail to obey God?

For the grownups: Saul seems to have believed that he would honor God by saving some of the plunder to offer to God, even though God had given him orders to do otherwise. What can we learn about what God wants from this story, especially Samuel’s response in verses 22-24?

Prayer

Luther's Morning Prayer:

I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, your dear Son, that you have kept me this night from all harm and danger. Keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please you. Into your hands I commend my body and soul and all things. Let your holy angel be with me, that the wicked foe may have no power over me. Amen.

or

Luther's Evening Prayer:

I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, your dear Son, that you have graciously kept me this day. Forgive me all my sins, and graciously keep me this night. Into your hands I commend my body and soul and all things. Let your holy angel be with me, that the wicked foe may have no power over me. Amen.

The head of the household may lead other prayers and petitions. The members of the family may also take turns with their own prayers and petitions. The head of the household closes the prayer in Jesus' name.

Blessing

Leader: The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve us.

Amen.

Hymn

Read or sing the hymn verse as a family.

**Oh, that the Lord would guide my ways
To keep his statutes still!**

**Oh, that my God would grant me grace
To know and do his will!**

(CW 462)

A recording of this hymn can be found on [YouTube](#).

Large Catechism Study

Optional: Briefly discuss and apply this portion of Luther's Large Catechism.

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT (Continued)

Yet there is need that this also be urged upon the populace, that those who would be Christians are under obligation in the sight Of God to esteem them worthy of double honor who minister to their souls, that they deal well with them and provide for them. For that, God is willing to add to you sufficient blessing and will not let you come to want. But in this matter everyone refuses and resists, and all are afraid that they will perish from bodily want, and cannot now support one respectable preacher, where formerly they filled ten fat paunches. In this we also deserve that God deprive us of His Word and blessing, and again allow preachers of lies to arise to lead us to the devil, and, in addition, to drain our sweat and blood.

But those who keep in sight God's will and commandment have the promise that everything which they bestow upon temporal and spiritual fathers, and whatever they do to honor them, shall be richly recompensed to them, so that they shall have, not bread, clothing, and money for a year or two, but long life, support, and peace, and shall be eternally rich and blessed. Therefore only do what is your duty, and let God take care how He is to support you and provide for you sufficiently. Since He has promised it, and has never yet lied, He will not be found lying to you. This ought indeed to encourage us, and give us hearts that would melt in pleasure and love toward those to whom we owe honor, so that we would raise our hands and joyfully thank God who has given us such promises, for which we ought to run to the ends of the world [to the remotest parts of India]. For although the whole world should combine, it could not add an hour to our life or give us a single grain from the earth. But God wishes to give you all exceeding abundantly according to your heart's desire. He who despises and casts this to the winds is not worthy ever to hear a word of God. This has now been stated more than enough for all who belong under this commandment.