

#598 Salem Rebellion, Salem Witchcraft – 1 Samuel 15:23: For Rebellion is as Witchcraft

The key verse that is a part of the prophetic understanding of the Salem Witchcraft Trials of 1692 is 1 Samuel 15:23.

1 Samuel 15 relates the Lord's rejection of Saul as king of Israel. The Lord had asked Saul and Israel to attack the Amalekites and totally destroy everything that belonged to them (1 Samuel 15:3). But Saul and his army spared Agag, king of the Amalekites, and spared the best of the sheep and cattle and everything that was good (1 Samuel 15:8-9). The word of the Lord came to the prophet Samuel that the Lord was grieved that he (the Lord) had made Saul king (1 Samuel 15:10-11). Saul attempted to make his case before Samuel that he had followed the Lord's instructions, but Samuel easily pointed out to him that the opposite had occurred (1 Samuel 15:12-19). Samuel tells Saul that rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft (1 Samuel 15:23).

*1 Samuel 15:23 (KJV) **FOR REBELLION IS AS THE SIN OF WITCHCRAFT,** and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king [speaking of Saul].*

Saul's ultimate excuse was that he was afraid of the people, and had done their will in the sparing of the best of everything that was good. Samuel informed Saul that the Lord was rejecting him as king.

*1 Samuel 15:24-28 (KJV) And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD, and thy words: **because I FEARED THE PEOPLE, AND OBEYED THEIR VOICE.***

25 Now therefore, I pray thee, pardon my sin, and turn again with me, that I may worship the LORD.

26 And Samuel said unto Saul, I will not return with thee: for thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD hath rejected thee from being king over Israel.

27 And as Samuel turned about to go away, he [Saul] laid hold upon the skirt of his mantle, and it rent.

28 And Samuel said unto him, The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, that is better than thou.



Saul laid hold upon the skirt of Samuel's mantle, and it rent, a sign that the Lord would rend the kingdom from Saul and give it to another, who would be David.

Key Understanding: *Saul obeyed the voice of the people.* In 1 Samuel 15's account of Saul *obeying the voice of the people* instead of obeying the voice of the Lord through Samuel regarding the destruction of the Amalekites, the Lord likened *rebellion* against the Lord to the sin of *witchcraft*.

Rebellion was associated with *obeying the voice of the people* rather than the will of the Lord. With that understanding, it will be easier to see why and how the Lord connects 1 Samuel 15:23 with the unfolding history of the Cottons and the Mathers and the Salem Witchcraft Trials.

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