

I Samuel Lesson 13

I Samuel Chapter 13

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Memory verses for this week: *John 14:27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*

Introduction: We continue our study on Samuel this week. In last week's lesson, we studied about the proclamation that Samuel made to Israel as he reminded them of how God had granted them a king at their request, but reminds them again that they should have just trusted God to be their king.

I. Conditions in Israel

1 Sam 13:1 Saul reigned one year; and when he had reigned two years over Israel,

1 Sam 13:2 Saul chose him three thousand men of Israel; whereof two thousand were with Saul in Michmash and in mount Bethel, and a thousand were with Jonathan in Gibeah of Benjamin: and the rest of the people he sent every man to his tent.

Chapter 13 opens explaining that Saul had reigned two years over Israel when he first established an army of 3,000 men. There was also an army of 1,000 men who were under the command of his son Jonathan in Gibeah. This was in the tribe of Benjamin. The Philistines still remained a threatening force to Israel, and because of this, there were garrisons established in many of the towns. In verse 3, it mentions that Geba was one of those cities in which the Philistines had control.

1 Sam 13:3 And Jonathan smote the garrison of the Philistines that was in Geba, and the Philistines heard of it. And Saul blew the trumpet throughout all the land, saying, Let the Hebrews hear.

1 Sam 13:4 And all Israel heard say that Saul had smitten a garrison of the Philistines, and that Israel also was had in abomination with the Philistines. And the people were called together after Saul to Gilgal.

Jonathan led his army into Geba and smote the garrison of the Philistines. Geba was a Levite city from the tribe of Benjamin which was a distance from Jerusalem. When Jonathan smote the garrison at Geba, this aroused the Philistines against Israel. Saul blew a trumpet to summon the Israelites to come out and meet the Philistines in battle. When Saul wins this battle, the

news of the victory spreads all through Israel. He then sends out a call for the armies to gather at Gilgal.

1 Sam 13:5 And the Philistines gathered themselves together to fight with Israel, thirty thousand chariots, and six thousand horsemen, and people as the sand which is on the sea shore in multitude: and they came up, and pitched in Michmash, eastward from Bethaven.

The Philistines gather together to fight Israel with 30,000 chariots and 6,000 horsemen. It says the number of foot soldiers was virtually innumerable calling them as the sand which is on the sea shore in multitude. They moved into Israel and spread themselves along the way to Bethaven in the mountains of Benjamin. They went further to east unto Michmash where there was a pass leading down into the valleys.

1 Sam 13:6 When the men of Israel saw that they were in a strait, (for the people were distressed,) then the people did hide themselves in caves, and in thickets, and in rocks, and in high places, and in pits.

1 Sam 13:7 And some of the Hebrews went over Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead. As for Saul, he was yet in Gilgal, and all the people followed him trembling.

Most of the Israelites were scared and distressed. Instead of coming out in battle against the Philistines, many hid out in caves, thickets, rock, and mountains. Some even hid in high places and in pits. Some of those even more fearful fled the land to another country intending to reside there until the danger be passed. Many crossed the Jordan into the tribe of Gad and stayed in the land of Gilead. Saul stayed in Gilgal with his trembling army, expecting Samuel to come and make a sacrifice before the battle. The people were unwilling to answer the trumpet call and to fight for their country. They did not have confidence that they could drive out the enemy. Many times in our lives, when the odds look insurmountable, we just need to trust God to win the battle for us. God is always there with us.

Heb 13:5 Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

Heb 13:6 So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

The people of Israel demonstrated a great lack of faith and confidence in their king, but even more so in God. We have a promise when we look to God that he will help us in all things.

Phil 4:13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

II. Saul Intrudes Into the Priest's Office

1 Sam 13:8 And he tarried seven days, according to the set time that Samuel had appointed: but Samuel came not to Gilgal; and the people were scattered from him.

1 Sam 13:9 And Saul said, Bring hither a burnt offering to me, and peace offerings. And he offered the burnt offering.

1 Sam 13:10 And it came to pass, that as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt offering, behold, Samuel came; and Saul went out to meet him, that he might salute him.

Samuel had promised to come within seven days, but on the seventh day, when he did not come, Saul showed his impatience. His army was beginning to disband, and he felt he must take things into his own hands. Once before Samuel had asked Saul to go to Gilgal and wait, but Saul refused. This time he refuses to wait the full seven days. Patience is one of the hardest attributes to acquire, and if we don't master it, God will begin to train us to gain it. And how do we gain patience? By tribulation the Word of God says.

Rom 5:2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Rom 5:3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

Rom 5:4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope:

Rom 5:5 And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

Saul did not wait on Samuel, but calls for the animals to sacrifice without the priest. This was not allowed back in this day. Only the priests could administer the sacrifices. After Saul had offered the burnt offering, Samuel arrived and Saul went out to meet him.

III. The Divine Rejection of Saul

1 Sam 13:11 And Samuel said, What hast thou done? And Saul said, Because I saw that the people were scattered from me, and that thou camest not within the days appointed, and that the Philistines gathered themselves together at Michmash;

1 Sam 13:12 Therefore said I, The Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication unto the LORD: I forced myself

therefore, and offered a burnt offering.

When Samuel saw what Saul had done, he rebuked him severely. Saul explains in verse 11 and 12 why he had hurried and done the sacrifice. The people were scattering away from him and the Philistines were gathering at Michmash and threatening him. He was about to be force into battle with the Philistines without having made sacrifice and calling on the Lord. He felt he was forced to do it. Sometimes when the trials of this life beat us down, we can get to feeling this same way. The car breaks down or the water heater breaks, and we just can't stand the pressure anymore and respond with a giant bill to pay for. Is getting a new car or a new hot water heater a sin? No, not if God wants us to have one. But we need to go slow and be sure that we are doing things God's way and not responding to the crisis of this life. God wants us to pray, and then sometimes we need to wait. Saul should have waited on Samuel.

Psa 27:14 Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.

Psa 37:34 Wait on the LORD, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it.

Prov 20:22 Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but wait on the LORD, and he shall save thee.

I certainly wish I had learned to wait on the Lord more in my earlier years. I don't suppose we ever arrive to the perfection we need, but if we seek the Lord's face, we will certainly have much more patience and learn that waiting on God is always the best policy. Saul did not pray about doing the sacrifices. If he had, I believe God would have clearly indicated to him that he should wait on Samuel.

Matthew Henry said that Saul's bigger error was failing to repent of his sin.

Saul determined to engage the Philistines without Samuel's directions, though he had promised to show him what he should do. So self-sufficient Saul was that he thought it not worth while to stay for a prophet of the Lord, either to pray for him or to advise him. This was Saul's offence, and that which aggravated it was, (1.) That for aught that appears, he did not send any messenger to Samuel, to know his mind, to represent the case to him, and to receive fresh directions from him, though he had enough about him that were swift enough of foot at this time. (2.) That when Samuel came he rather seemed to boast of what he had done than to repent of it; for he went forth to salute him, as his brother-sacrificer, and seemed pleased with the opportunity he had of letting Samuel know that he needed him not, but could do well enough without him. He went out to bless him, so the word is, as if he now thought himself a complete priest, empowered to bless as well as sacrifice, whereas he should have gone out to be blessed by him. (3.) That he charged Samuel with breach of promise: Thou camest not within the days appointed (v. 11), and therefore if any

thing was amiss Samuel must bear the blame, who was God's minister; whereas he did come according to his word, before the seven days had expired. Thus the scoffers of the latter days think the promise of Christ's coming is broken, because he does not come in their time, though it is certain he will come at the set time. (4.) That when he was charged with disobedience he justified himself in what he had done, and gave no sign at all of repentance for it. It is not sinning that ruins men, but sinning and not repenting, falling and not getting up again.

1 Sam 13:13 And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the LORD thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the LORD have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever.

1 Sam 13:14 But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the LORD commanded thee.

Samuel told Saul that he had committed a foolish act in not keeping the Lord's commandments. We've heard it so many times, but it is still true. God is much more impressed with obedience than sacrifice. If Saul had done as commanded, his kingdom would have been established forever in Israel. Saul was reminded that it was God who sought him out to be the king. He wanted a man after God's own heart. But Saul never ever really accomplished this. The man who claimed this victory was David.

1 Sam 16:7 But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.

Acts 13:22 And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will.

Acts 13:23 Of this man's seed hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus:

1 Sam 13:15 And Samuel arose, and gat him up from Gilgal unto Gibeah of Benjamin. And Saul numbered the people that were present with him, about six hundred men.

1 Sam 13:16 And Saul, and Jonathan his son, and the people that were present with them, abode in Gibeah of Benjamin: but the Philistines encamped in Michmash.

After his conversation with Saul, Samuel left Gilgal and went to Gibeah. There he numbered the people and found he had 600 men left with him. Saul and Jonathan come together and move down to Gibeah. The Philistines were still camped at the pass of Michmash which was about 25 miles northeast of Gibeah.

1 Sam 13:17 And the spoilers came out of the camp of the Philistines in three companies: one company turned unto the way that leadeth to Ophrah, unto the land of Shual:

1 Sam 13:18 And another company turned the way to Bethhoron: and another company turned to the way of the border that looketh to the valley of Zeboim toward the wilderness.

There were 3 companies of Philistines with one heading to Ophrah, one to Shual, and one the way of Bethhoron. Apparently they were spreading out to seek out the Israelites wherever they might find them.

1 Sam 13:19 Now there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel: for the Philistines said, Lest the Hebrews make them swords or spears:

1 Sam 13:20 But all the Israelites went down to the Philistines, to sharpen every man his share, and his coulter, and his ax, and his mattock.

1 Sam 13:21 Yet they had a file for the mattocks, and for the coulters, and for the forks, and for the axes, and to sharpen the goads.

It was during this time that there were no blacksmiths in the tribes of Israel. When Israel needed to sharpen their work tools and their plows, they had to bring them to the Philistines. So there was no one to make them swords or spears to fight.

In the King James Study bible, it said that the Philistines had a monopoly on the smith's craft until David's Day.

13:19. At this time the Philistines enjoyed a monopoly on iron and the smith's craft, a condition that remained until David's day (1 Chr. 22:3).

1 Sam 13:22 So it came to pass in the day of battle, that there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people that were with Saul and Jonathan: but with Saul and with Jonathan his son was there found.

1 Sam 13:23 And the garrison of the Philistines went out to the passage of

Michmash.

Verse 22 says that there was no sword or spear in the people with Saul and Jonathan. We can look on this and relate to the sad condition God's people can be in when they have no spiritual weapons to fight against Satan. We need the weapons, and we need to know God's word. His word is always a defence against the trials and battles we face.

Eph 6:11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

Eph 6:12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Eph 6:13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Eph 6:14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

Eph 6:15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

Eph 6:16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

Eph 6:17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

Eph 6:18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

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Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

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Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be

blessed.