

1 Samuel 13 – The Fool

May 1, 2022

The fool says in his heart, "There is no God."... Psalm 14:1a (ESV)

1. Background

Saul lived for one year and then became king, and when he had reigned for two years over Israel,... 1 Samuel 13:1 (ESV)

Saul was thirty years old when he became king, and he reigned over Israel forty-two years. 1 Samuel 13:1 (NIV)

Saul was forty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned thirty-two years over Israel. 1 Samuel 13:1 (NASB)

2. When we obey God, sometimes things get worse before they get better.

Saul chose three thousand men of Israel. Two thousand were with Saul in Michmash and the hill country of Bethel, and a thousand were with Jonathan in Gibeah of Benjamin. The rest of the people he sent home, every man to his tent. 1 Samuel 13:2 (ESV)

Jonathan defeated the garrison of the Philistines that was at Geba,... 1 Samuel 13:3a (ESV)

...and the Philistines heard of it... 1 Samuel 13:3b (ESV)

...And Saul blew the trumpet throughout all the land, saying, "Let the Hebrews hear." 1 Samuel 13:3c (ESV)

And all Israel heard it said that Saul had defeated the garrison of the Philistines, and also that Israel had become a stench to the Philistines... 1 Samuel 13:4a (ESV)

- **Sometimes obeying God's Word leads to short-term difficulty.**

And the people were called out to join Saul at Gilgal. 1 Samuel 13:4b (ESV)

Then go down before me to Gilgal. And behold, I am coming down to you to offer burnt offerings and to sacrifice peace offerings. Seven days you shall wait, until I come to you and show you what you shall do." 1 Samuel 10:8 (ESV)

And the Philistines mustered to fight with Israel, thirty thousand chariots and six thousand horsemen and troops like the sand on the seashore in multitude. They came up and encamped in Michmash, to the east of Beth-aven. 1 Samuel 13:5 (ESV)

When the men of Israel saw that they were in trouble (for the people were hard pressed), the people hid themselves in caves and in holes and in rocks and in tombs and in cisterns, and some Hebrews crossed the fords of the Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead. Saul was still at Gilgal, and all the people followed him trembling. 1 Samuel 13:6–7 (ESV)

- **God tests us to see what we trust.**

3. Disobedience is always foolish.

He waited seven days, the time appointed by Samuel... 1 Samuel 13:8a (ESV)

But Samuel did not come to Gilgal, and the people were scattering from him. 1 Samuel 13:8b (ESV)

So Saul said, "Bring the burnt offering here to me, and the peace offerings." And he offered the burnt offering. 1 Samuel 13:9 (ESV)

As soon as he had finished offering the burnt offering, behold, Samuel came... 1 Samuel 13:10a (ESV)

...And Saul went out to meet him and greet him. 1 Samuel 13:10b (ESV)

Samuel said, "What have you done?"... 1 Samuel 13:11a (ESV)

...And Saul said, "When I saw that the people were scattering from me, and that you did not come within the days appointed, and that the Philistines had mustered at Michmash, I said, 'Now the Philistines will come down against me at Gilgal, and I have

not sought the favor of the LORD.' So I forced myself, and offered the burnt offering."
1 Samuel 13:11b–12 (ESV)

- **Blameshifting is not owning and repenting of my sin. It is blaming my sin on something or someone else.**
- **The way to fail a test from God is by believing in certain situations God's Word can be disobeyed.**

And Samuel said, "Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams. 1 Samuel 15:22 (ESV)

And Samuel said to Saul, "You have done foolishly"... 1 Samuel 13:13a (ESV)

...You have not kept the command of the LORD your God, with which he commanded you... 1 Samuel 13:13b (ESV)

...For then the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever.
1 Samuel 13:13c (ESV)

But now your kingdom shall not continue. The Lord has sought out a man after his own heart, and the Lord has commanded him to be prince over his people, because you have not kept what the Lord commanded you." 1 Samuel 13:14 (ESV)

And Samuel arose and went up from Gilgal. The rest of the people went up after Saul to meet the army; they went up from Gilgal to Gibeah of Benjamin...
1 Samuel 13:15a (ESV)

...And Saul numbered the people who were present with him, about six hundred men.
1 Samuel 13:15b (ESV)

4. There is a difference between helplessness and hopelessness.

And Saul and Jonathan his son and the people who were present with them stayed in Geba of Benjamin, but the Philistines encamped in Michmash. 1 Samuel 13:16 (ESV)

And raiders came out of the camp of the Philistines in three companies. One company turned toward Ophrah, to the land of Shual; another company turned toward Beth-horon; and another company turned toward the border that looks down on the Valley of Zeboim toward the wilderness. 1 Samuel 13:17–18 (ESV)

Now there was no blacksmith to be found throughout all the land of Israel, for the Philistines said, "Lest the Hebrews make themselves swords or spears." But every one of the Israelites went down to the Philistines to sharpen his plowshare, his mattock, his axe, or his sickle, and the charge was two-thirds of a shekel for the plowshares and for the mattocks, and a third of a shekel for sharpening the axes and for setting the goads.
1 Samuel 13:19–21 (ESV)

So on the day of the battle there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people with Saul and Jonathan, but Saul and Jonathan his son had them.

1 Samuel 13:22 (ESV)

And the garrison of the Philistines went out to the pass of Michmash.

1 Samuel 13:23 (ESV)

Application

1. **Expect God will test us to reveal our hearts.** Will we trust and obey God or will we break God's Word to follow our own wisdom?
2. **God tests us with delays.** God tested Saul by having him wait for Samuel at Gilgal for seven days. God may test us by forcing us to wait to do the right thing.
3. **God tests us by putting us in situations where obedience is hard.** God tested Saul by putting him in a stressful situation with the Philistines.
4. **God tests us by seeing what we do with our sin when we are caught in our sin.** Saul blameshifted his sin on everyone else. He didn't take responsibility for his sin so he could confess and repent.
5. **Jesus is the one who passed all the tests from God that we fail.** Jesus passed the tests of the temptations in the wilderness and the cross. He is the king worthy of following who can help us in our time of weakness.

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Hebrews 4:15–16 (ESV)

Life Group Questions

1. What did you learn in this week's lesson that you did not know? What questions do you have?
2. Why did Saul make the burnt offering to the Lord? Why did Samuel react in anger?
3. If you had been in Saul's place, what would you have done?
4. **Read 1 Samuel 13:14.** What does God's rejection of Saul's kingdom (family line) teach us about the danger of disobedience?
5. Is there ever a good reason for disobeying God's Word?
6. God tested Saul. What were the different ways God tested Saul? What are the different ways God tests us? **For examples of other times where God tested people in the Bible see Hebrews 4:15, Genesis 2:15-17, Hebrews 11:17-18.**
7. The chapter closed with Saul and Israel in a position of complete helplessness. Is being in a position of helplessness the same as being in a position of hopelessness?