

Day 278 - THURSDAY: November 2nd

1 Samuel 13

1 Samuel 13:1–23 NKJV

Saul reigned one year; and when he had reigned two years over Israel, Saul chose for himself three thousand men of Israel. Two thousand were with Saul in Michmash and in the mountains of Bethel, and a thousand were with Jonathan in Gibeah of Benjamin. The rest of the people he sent away, every man to his tent. And Jonathan attacked the garrison of the Philistines that was in Geba, and the Philistines heard of it. Then Saul blew the trumpet throughout all the land, saying, "Let the Hebrews hear!" Now all Israel heard it said that Saul had attacked a garrison of the Philistines, and that Israel had also become an abomination to the Philistines. And the people were called together to Saul at Gilgal. Then the Philistines gathered together to fight with Israel, thirty thousand chariots and six thousand horsemen, and people as the sand which is on the seashore in multitude. And they came up and encamped in Michmash, to the east of Beth Aven. When the men of Israel saw that they were in danger (for the people were distressed), then the people hid in

caves, in thickets, in rocks, in holes, and in pits. And some of the Hebrews crossed over the Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead. As for Saul, he was still in Gilgal, and all the people followed him trembling. Then he waited seven days, according to the time set by Samuel. But Samuel did not come to Gilgal; and the people were scattered from him. So Saul said, "Bring a burnt offering and peace offerings here to me." And he offered the burnt offering. Now it happened, as soon as he had finished presenting the burnt offering, that Samuel came; and Saul went out to meet him, that he might greet him. And Samuel said, "What have you done?" Saul said, "When I saw that the people were scattered from me, and that you did not come within the days appointed, and that the Philistines gathered together at Michmash, then I said, 'The Philistines will now come down on me at Gilgal, and I have not made supplication to the LORD.' Therefore I felt compelled, and offered a burnt offering." And Samuel said to Saul, "You have done foolishly. You have not kept the commandment of the LORD your God, which He commanded you. For now the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. But now your kingdom shall not continue. The LORD has sought for Himself a man after His own heart, and the LORD has

commanded him to be commander over His people, because you have not kept what the LORD commanded you." Then Samuel arose and went up from Gilgal to Gibeah of Benjamin. And Saul numbered the people present with him, about six hundred men. Saul, Jonathan his son, and the people present with them remained in Gibeah of Benjamin. But the Philistines encamped in Michmash. Then raiders came out of the camp of the Philistines in three companies. One company turned onto the road to Ophrah, to the land of Shual, another company turned to the road to Beth Horon, and another company turned to the road of the border that overlooks the Valley of Zeboim toward the wilderness. Now there was no blacksmith to be found throughout all the land of Israel, for the Philistines said, "Lest the Hebrews make swords or spears." But all the Israelites would go down to the Philistines to sharpen each man's plowshare, his mattock, his ax, and his sickle; and the charge for a sharpening was a pim for the plowshares, the mattocks, the forks, and the axes, and to set the points of the goads. So it came about, on the day of battle, that there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people who were with Saul and Jonathan. But they were found with Saul and Jonathan his son. And the

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

Daily Deep Dive:

The UCG reading program states: “Saul creates a small standing army. The thousand under his son Jonathan's leadership (a bold and courageous fellow, as we will see further in the next chapter) attacks a garrison of the occupying Philistine forces. This incites the Philistines to gather against Israel to put down the rebellion, and Saul assembles his worried forces at Gilgal, while others in the threatened region hide themselves in the caves and thickets. As Samuel had instructed (10:8), Saul waits seven days for Samuel to arrive to make the offerings. But Samuel does not arrive right on time. Perhaps his slight delay was a test for Saul. Whatever the case, Saul becomes impatient and, just before Samuel arrives, he presumptuously makes the offering himself. This sin of not following God's explicit instructions is enough to lose the kingdom for Saul's descendants (verse 14). But greater offenses follow. It is interesting to consider that verse 13 says Saul's dynasty would have continued forever if he had followed God's commands—when God had earlier prophesied that

the kingly line to the Messiah would come from Judah and not from Benjamin (Genesis 49:10; see 1 Chronicles 5:1–2). Yet, this would actually have been a rather simple matter. Probably, God would have had Saul's lineage merge with the Judahite lineage through intermarriage. Indeed, Saul's daughter will later marry David. But there will be no children from their marriage.

An insight into the dominance of the Philistines over the Israelites at this time is shown by the fact that no smiths were allowed to work in the land. As a result, only Saul and his son Jonathan had swords.” [END]

Verse 1 – “Saul reigned one year” should likely end chapter 12. Chapter 13 then opens with what occurred when Saul had reigned two years over Israel.

Verse 5 – The translation of 30,000 chariots may not be accurate. Adam Clarke’s commentary states: “There is no proportion here between the chariots and the cavalry. The largest armies ever brought into the field, even by mighty emperors, never were furnished with thirty thousand [sheloshim](#), Thirty, is a false reading שלשים chariots. I think [shalosh](#), Three. The Syriac has [telotho alpin](#), and the שלש for Arabic [thalathato alf](#), both signifying Three thousand; and

this was a fair proportion to the horsemen. This is most likely to be the true reading.” [END]

Verse 8 – Saul waited until the 7th day, but the day was not over. God allows us to be tested and through those tests to see our true character revealed. Abraham was willing to give God everything, even his one and only son that he had waited so long for and God said “now I know.” These moments in our lives are important.

Verse 9 – JFB commentary states: “Saul, though patriotic enough in his own way, was more ambitious of gaining the glory of a triumph to himself than ascribing it to God. He did not understand his proper position as king of Israel; and although aware of the restrictions under which he held the sovereignty, he wished to rule as an autocrat, who possessed absolute power both in civil and sacred things. This occasion was his first trial. Samuel waited till the last day of the seven, in order to put the constitutional character of the king to the test; and, as Saul, in his impatient and passionate haste knowingly transgressed (1Sa_13:12) by invading the priest’s office and thus showing his unfitness for his high office (as he showed nothing of

the faith of Gideon and other Hebrew generals), he incurred a threat of the rejection which his subsequent waywardness confirmed.” [END]