

LESSON FOUR: SAUL’S DOWNFALL

Reading: 1 Samuel 13-15

Highlights:

1 Samuel 13

Jonathan’s ambitions stir up Philistines. Saul’s Unlawful Sacrifice. Samuel condemns Saul. Israel unprepared for battle.

1 Samuel 14

Jonathan attacks a Philistine Garrison leading to another battle with the Philistines. Saul places Israel under and oath which was broken by Jonathan, but is unable to enforce it. Saul’s family.

1 Samuel 15

Saul given orders to destroy the Amelekites. Before the battle Saul spares the Kenites. Saul fails to fully obey and is rejected a second time by Samuel.

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Questions:

Saul said he felt compelled to offer the sacrifice. For what reasons could offering this sacrifice seem to be the right thing to do?

Why was it the wrong thing to do?

What do 1 Samuel 14:1 and 3 tell us about Jonathan as a soldier?

How do you see the tension between Saul and his son Jonathan?

Do the events of chapter 14 make Saul look good or bad in your eyes?

Why did God say to completely destroy the Amalekites?

Did Israel defeat the Amalekites?

What did Saul do after the battle with Amelek? (15:12) What does this suggest about his heart?

What were Saul’s first words to Samuel when he saw him? (15:13) Do you think he really believed this?

What reasons does Saul give for his lack of full obedience?

What do you see in the statements of regret on the part of Saul (15:21-24). Do you see true repentance or something else?

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Worth Considering:

1 Samuel 13:11 And Samuel said, "What have you done?" And 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, 12 "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." 13 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.

1 Samuel 14:43 Then Saul said to Jonathan, "Tell me what you have done." And Jonathan told him, and said, "I only tasted a little honey with the end of the rod that was in my hand. So now I must die!"

1 Samuel 15:22 Then 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 heed than the fat of rams. 23 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.”