

## Lesson 2 – 1 Samuel 13-15

Text: 1 Samuel 13-15

Main Characters: God, Samuel, Saul, Jonathan, Amalekites, Philistines, Israelites

Key Passages:

- 1 Samuel 13:13-14 – Because of Saul's disobedience, God would replace Saul as king.
- 1 Samuel 14:6 – Jonathan was willing to attack the Philistines because he trusted God's power.
- 1 Samuel 15:22-23 – Saul was rejected as king by God; obedience is better than any sacrifice.

Main Storyline:

Saul continued his rule as king over Israel for about two years before another battle broke out with the Philistines. Saul chose 3000 men for his army and placed 1000 of them under the command of his son, Jonathan. The Philistines gathered to fight against the Israelites with a far stronger force, including chariots and horsemen. Many Israelites became afraid, so they hid in various places or even deserted the army. Samuel had told Saul to wait for him to arrive and perform a burnt offering, but Saul, fearful, did not wait and did it himself. When Samuel arrived, he rebuked Saul and told him that because of his disobedience, the kingdom was to be taken and given to a man after God's own heart.

By that time, only 600 men were left with Saul. Because of the Philistines' oppression, the men (except Saul and Jonathan) did not even have swords to use, and were forced to use farm tools. Jonathan and his armor-bearer secretly decided to attack the Philistine garrison alone. Jonathan understood that God would give them the victory if He desired to do so; God is not restrained by how many men are fighting for Him. They went and attacked the Philistines, killing 20 men very quickly. At that point, God sent an earthquake which frightened and confused the Philistines enough that they began to kill each other. Saul's men, including many deserters, joined the battle against the Philistines.

Saul took a vow that his men would not eat until he had had his revenge against the Philistines. Of course, after fighting for so long without sustenance, the people began to be very faint. Jonathan, not having heard of the vow, ate some honey, which gave him some much-needed strength. The other men rebuked him because of the vow Saul had made. Jonathan did not agree with his father's decision.

After the battle was over, the men were so hungry that they began killing animals and eating them with the blood. Saul did not want them to sin, so he built an altar to allow the men to sacrifice and eat properly. This was the first altar that Saul had ever built. Following this, Saul decided that he wanted to attack the Philistines during the night. The priest suggested that they inquire of the Lord, and Saul agreed and did so. When God did not answer him, Saul assumed that there was sin in the camp. Saul vowed to kill the sinful man, even if it turned out to be his son. When it turned out to be Jonathan (broke the vow), Saul was ready to kill him, but the people spoke against Saul and rescued Jonathan.

Later, Samuel instructed Saul to fight against the Amalekites and completely destroy them, leaving no animals or people alive. This was to fulfill God's promise in Exodus 17. Saul attacked the Amalekites, but spared Agag, the king, and the best animals. They only destroyed the despised and worthless things in the city. When Samuel confronted him about it, Saul made many excuses, claiming that the people had done it, and that the animals were taken for sacrifices. Samuel rebuked Saul and told him that God would tear his kingdom from him and give it to someone who was better than him. Samuel went away and mourned over Saul's disobedience. God regretted that He had made Saul king.

Lessons/Applications:

- 1.) God is able to accomplish His goals no matter how many or few people choose to follow Him.
- 2.) God does not just want our sacrifices (money, time, etc.), He wants our faithful obedience.