

GOD REJECTED SAUL BECAUSE OF SAUL'S DISOBEDIENCE

To obey God is better than sacrifice.



THE STORY: 1 SAMUEL 13:1-12

MONDAY

Saul doesn't wait for Samuel

Saul doesn't wait for Samuel – after Samuel anointed Saul as king he gave Saul a step-by-step prophetic account of the coming week. Everything happened just as Samuel predicted. The last bit of information was that Saul was to go to Gilgal and wait there for the prophet who would offer a sacrifice to God when he arrived. Saul went to Gilgal. There the Israelite men were afraid and began to scatter because the Philistines were gathering an enormous army. Saul, impatient to wait any longer, foolishly offered the sacrifice to God. He disobeyed God and then offered the sacrifice in a perfunctory way - more as a token than genuine worship. When Samuel confronted him about performing the sacrifice, Saul revealed his superficial attitude when he said, "I forced myself" to make the sacrifice (1 Samuel 13:12). Saul was afraid that if he waited any longer for the prophet, he would lose his men. So he went ahead and did what he should not have done.

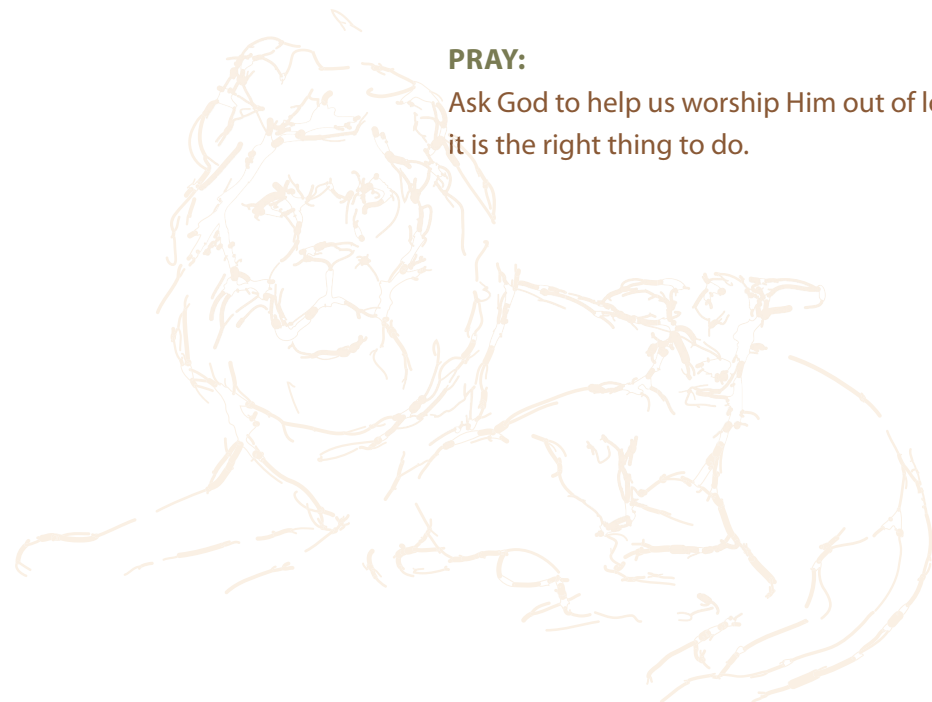
TALK ABOUT IT:

Did Saul trust God? (No.) How do you know? *(If Saul trusted God he would have waited for Samuel who arrived shortly after Saul made the sacrifice.)*

Read verse 12 again. Do you think God was more displeased with Saul doing Samuel's job or the attitude of Saul's heart? *(God was more interested in the bad attitude of Saul's heart. Saul did not offer up the sacrifice in honor to God, but as a formality.)*

PRAY:

Ask God to help us worship Him out of love in our hearts, not just because we think it is the right thing to do.





Samuel arrived and condemned Saul's actions

Samuel arrived and condemned Saul's actions – Samuel called Saul foolish and disobedient. Had Saul kept the command of the Lord, his kingdom would have been established forever. But now it would not continue. Instead, God would seek a man after His own heart. God wanted a king that would seek to please the Lord rather than himself. Even though Saul did not repent in response to Samuel's rebuke, God extended favor and allowed Saul to lead Israel to many victories (1 Samuel 14:47-48).

TALK ABOUT IT:

Is there a king among men who could completely follow the Lord? *(Not until Jesus was there a king who completely followed the Lord. Even David sinned against the Lord greatly.)*

Who is the only king who completely follows God? *(Jesus is the only king who could do so. That is why he sits upon the throne of God's kingdom forever.)*

What kind of man does God seek? *(God seeks a man after His own heart. We should all aspire to be men and women who seek after the heart of God. We can do this by studying His Word, obeying God, and living for Him.)*

PRAY:

Ask God to help you be a man or woman after God's own heart.



Where is Jesus?

As a king, Saul failed. One day God would anoint another man to be king who would not fail. Even when it was difficult, Jesus, the greatest king, obeyed God. King Jesus faced the difficult task God had given him. He obeyed to the point of death, even death on a cross (Acts 13:22-23).

When faced with the cross, Jesus prayed to His father in heaven saying, "...not my will, but yours be done" (Luke 22:42). In contrast, Saul placed his own will above God's. As a result of Jesus' obedience, we have salvation through His sacrificial death.

TALK ABOUT IT:

Samuel told Saul “to obey is better than sacrifice.” How did Jesus do both perfectly? *(Jesus became obedient unto death on a cross, becoming a perfect sacrifice for us. See Philippians 2:8-10.)*

It is easy to say we will obey God. When is it hardest to obey? *(Our convictions are most tested when we are asked to do something we don’t want to do. It is easy to obey parents when they tell you to eat a cookie. It is much harder to obey when they tell you that you should not eat a cookie.)*

PRAY:

Read Matthew 21:28-32. Ask God to help you follow through and not just say you will obey. Ask God to help you to obey when it is most difficult, following Jesus’ example.



THE STORY: 1 SAMUEL 15:1-23

THURSDAY

Saul disobeyed God again and is rejected by God

Saul disobeyed God again and is rejected by God – God sent Samuel again to give Saul a step-by-step battle plan against the Amalekites. Whenever God called His servant to battle and gave instructions, it was important to follow them exactly. The instructions were simple: strike Amalek and destroy everyone, including the animals.

Saul defeated the Amalekites, but he and the people spared Agag (their king) and the best of the sheep, oxen, calves and lambs, and all that was good (1 Samuel 15:9). They only destroyed what was despised and worthless. Saul went even further and set up a monument to himself just like the other heathen kings (1 Samuel 15:12).

God spoke to Samuel and informed him that Saul had “turned back from following me” (1 Samuel 15:11). In spite of his clear disobedience, Saul objected and claimed he obeyed the Lord (see 1 Samuel 15:13). Even after Samuel reprimanded him, Saul replied, “I have obeyed the voice of the Lord” (1 Samuel 15:20).

Samuel then brought a scathing rebuke to Saul saying, “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” (1 Samuel 15:22). This rebuke was a reference to Saul’s first mistake in offering the peace offering instead of waiting for Samuel. Samuel finished by saying, “Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, He has also rejected you from being king.” After that day, Samuel did not see Saul again until the day Saul died (1 Samuel 15:35).

TALK ABOUT IT:

What did Saul reject? *(Saul rejected God's Word.)*

Are we showing respect to someone when we disobey him? *(If we reject the instructions of those who have authority over us, we disrespect them and exalt ourselves over them.)*

When you disobey someone, who are you really following? *(In a word, we obey ourselves, not him. We make ourselves the authority. This can be true when children disobey their parents or when we disobey God. We are saying I will follow my own word over yours.)*

PRAY:

Ask God to help you honor God and your parents by obeying their words.



THE STORY: MALACHI 3:1-2

FRIDAY

Jesus is the one who will come as the refiner to judge us according to what we have done. Malachi and Peter both prophesied the same events.

On the road to Emmaus.

TALK ABOUT IT:

Compare Malachi 3:2-3 with 2 Peter 3:10-11. How are they similar? *(They are both speaking of a final day of judgment.)*

In light of the fact that Jesus is coming back in judgment on that final day, how should we live? *(According to 2 Peter 3:11, we ought to live holy and godly lives.)*

PRAY:

Ask God to help you live in a way that keeps the day of judgment in mind but does not lose sight of the cross. It is important to remember that we do not obey to earn God's favor. Rather, we obey because we have His favor. This is because Christ lived a perfect life in our place.

