

Waiting on God's Timing

In 1st Samuel 13, we see Saul, now early in his reign, facing a dire military threat. Initially, his son Jonathan and a group of soldiers achieve a notable victory against a Philistine garrison, and Saul sounds the trumpet to announce this success. However, when a massive Philistine army gathers—with numbers and equipment that far outmatch his own—panic spreads. Soldiers hide in caves, and many flee. Amid this crisis, Saul finds himself alone at Gilgal, waiting for Samuel as promised.

The appointed time had come, yet Samuel had not arrived. Feeling the pressure and desperate to act, Saul decides to take matters into his own hands. He instructs someone to bring him a burnt offering and proceeds to offer it himself—a duty reserved for Samuel. When Samuel finally arrives, he confronts Saul with these words:

“You have done foolishly; you have not kept the commandment of the LORD your God which He commanded you.” (1st Samuel 13:13 NKJV)

Saul's impulsive act, born out of fear and a sense of urgency, resulted in a tragic misstep. God had clearly set a time for everything, and by not waiting for Samuel's guidance, Saul not only disobeyed God's explicit command but also jeopardized the very kingdom that had been entrusted to him. Samuel's rebuke is a reminder that when we take initiative in ways that contradict God's timing or instructions, we risk losing the blessing and favor that come from obedience.

This story resonates with me on several levels:

- **The Danger of Impulsive Decisions:**
Like Saul, I've sometimes been tempted to “fix” situations on my own—especially when I'm anxious or feel pressured by circumstances. But God's timing is perfect, and our best course of action is to trust His instructions rather than rushing ahead based on our own fears.
- **Waiting on God's Timing:**
The lesson here is clear: waiting for God's clear direction, even when it's difficult or the stakes are high, is essential. Just as Saul's kingdom would have been established if he had waited, I too must learn to be patient and rely on God's timing rather than forcing a solution.
- **The Importance of Obedience:**
Saul's decision reminds me that obedience isn't always about taking bold, dramatic action—it's often about quietly following the steps God has laid out. Even in moments of uncertainty, a spirit of obedience can pave the way for lasting success and peace.
- **Facing Overwhelming Odds with Faith:**
Here, Saul's army was vastly outnumbered and out-equipped by the Philistines. Yet rather than turning to God in faithful waiting, he let fear drive his actions. In my own life, when I feel overwhelmed, I'm challenged to lean on God's strength instead of my own limited resources.

Reflecting on this chapter, I'm reminded that true leadership and victory come not from our own initiative but from aligning our actions with God's will. When I'm tempted to act out of fear or

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impatience, I can look to this example and ask myself, “Am I waiting on the Lord? Am I obeying His commands?” May this story encourage me—and you—to trust in God’s perfect timing, obey His word, and remember that true strength is found in patience and faithful waiting.