

Commentary on 1 Samuel Chapters 13 and 14:1-18, by Chuck Smith 9.8.21

Pastor John Donovan, cell phone 508-380-0471

Pastor Terry Gerlarneau, cell phone 603-455-4399

Web site todbc.org email us at opendoorbiblechurch@todbc.org

Friday October 1, Dr Michael Youssef, Northfield, MA see Terry or Lisa for tickets

September memory verse, Romans 6:23 (NKJV)

²³ For the wages of sin *is* death, but the gift of God *is* eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

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Chapter 13

Now Saul reigned for one year over Israel; and in the second year of his reign, He chose three thousand men of Israel; and he took two thousand under his command in Michmash and a thousand were given to Jonathan under his command the son of Saul in Gibeah: and the rest of the people he sent to their own tents. And Jonathan smote the garrison of the Philistines that was in Geba, and the Philistines heard it. And Saul blew the trumpet throughout all the land, saying, Let the Hebrews hear. And all Israel heard say that Saul had smitten the garrison of the Philistines, and that Israel also was had in abomination with the Philistines. And the people were called together after Saul to Gilgal ([1Sa 13:1-4](#)).

So Jonathan was out wiping out the Philistines and Saul was around blowing the trumpet, and taking the glory and announcing that he had smitten the Philistines so that the Israelites heard that Saul had smitten the Philistines with a great slaughter.

Now the Philistines gathered themselves together to fight with Israel, [They really gathered the whole army.] thirty thousand chariots, six thousand horsemen, and people like the sand of the sea were in multitude: and they came up, and pitched in Michmash, eastward from Bethaven. And when the men of Israel saw that they were there sort of trapped, (for the people were distressed) then the people started hiding in caves, in thickets, in rocks, in the mountain tops, and in the pits. And some of the Hebrews went over Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead. For Saul, was down there in Gilgal, and all the people followed him trembling ([1Sa 13:5-7](#)).

I mean this was a tremendous formidable force of the Philistines that had come against them. People were hiding. Some were actually deserting, crossing Jordan going over to the other side to Gad, to Gilead, and those that were with Saul were trembling.

And he waited for seven days, according to the set time that Samuel had appointed: [for Samuel said, I'll meet you there in Gilgal in seven days.] And Saul said, Bring hither a burnt offering to me, and a peace offering. And he offered the burnt offering. And it

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came to pass that as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt offering, behold, Samuel came; and Saul went out to meet him that he might greet him. And Samuel said, What have you done? And Saul said, Because I saw that the people were scattered from me, and that you did not come within the days that were appointed, and that the Philistines gathered themselves together at Michmash; Therefore I said, The Philistines will come now upon me to Gilgal, and I have made supplication to the Lord: so I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt offering. And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God which he commanded thee: for now he would have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever ([1Sa 13:8-13](#)).

In other words, He would have made it the dynasty of Saul.

Now Samuel is straightforward. "What have you done?"

"Oh, I forced myself." and gave all of his excuses.

He said, "You have done foolishly in that you have not obeyed the commandment of the Lord."

Anytime you deliberately, willfully disobey the commandment of God, you are doing foolishly. God's ways are best. God's ways are right, and for me to presume that I can do, or improve on God's ways is sheer folly. If I think I can improve my position by disobeying God, that's sheer folly. So the prophet laid it out to him, "You have done foolishly in that you have not obeyed the commandment of the Lord. For the Lord would've established your kingdom for ever upon Israel."

But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the Lord hath commanded him to be captain over his own people, because thou hast not kept that which the Lord commanded thee ([1Sa 13:14](#)).

So here is Saul's rejection by God as the continuing king. God is now searching out a man to take his place.

And Samuel arose, and went from Gilgal to Gibeah there among the tribe of Benjamin. And Saul numbered the people that were present with him, about six hundred men ([1Sa 13:15](#)).

Now you remember there are thirty thousand chariots, six thousand horsemen and Philistines, like the sands of the sea. Saul has six thousand or six hundred that haven't deserted him.

And spoilers came out of the camp of the Philistines in three companies: and one company turned unto the way that leads to Ophrah, unto the land of Shual: And another company turned by way of Bethoron: and another company turned to the way of the

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border that looks to the valley of Zeboim toward the wilderness. Now there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel ([1Sa 13:17-19](#)):

So at this time, interestingly enough, the Jews had not yet developed any forging kind of processes, or iron, the development of iron implements, although the Philistines and all the people of the land around them had entered into the Iron Age. The Hebrews had not yet really developed the capacity for smelting and all, and they had not yet themselves entered into the Iron Age. In fact, when they wanted to sharpen their picks, or their hoes or their farm implements, they had to go down to the Philistines to have them sharpened because they really didn't have any blacksmiths in Israel at this particular time. By the time of Solomon they began to really develop in these skills. In fact, they were highly developed by the time of Solomon. But at this time they had not yet developed these skills. Actually the Philistines had deliberately kept them from developing these skills because they didn't want them making swords and really being able to create real fighting implements.

So all the Israelites had to go down to the Philistines, to sharpen every man his share, or coulter, or the axe, or the mattock. And yet they had a file for the mattocks, and for the coulters, for the forks, and for the axes, and to sharpen the goads. So it came to pass in the day of battle, that there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people that were with Saul and Jonathan: only Saul and Jonathan had spears ([1Sa 13:20-22](#)).

Now that's not a very well-equipped army against the thirty thousand chariots and the horsemen. "Guys all you've got are sticks; fashion a club or something." But you're going out against guys with shields, and spears and swords and all, and so you've got a small army and surely you are mismatched in equipment and all, hopelessly mismatched. There's absolutely no way that you can go out against this highly developed army with their superior weapons and superior numbers and hope to have any kind of victory. You've got six hundred men with clubs and sticks, and you're facing an army that can't even be counted with spears, swords, shields.

Which introduces chapter fourteen, which is one of my favorite chapters in the Bible.

Chapter 14 verses 1-18

Now it came to pass upon a day, that Jonathan the son of Saul said to the young man that bear his armour, Come, and let us go over to the Philistines' garrison on the other side. But he did not tell his father. And Saul tarried in the uttermost parts of Gibeah under a pomegranate tree which is in Migron: and the people that were with him were about six hundred men; And Ahiah, the son of Ahitub, Ichabod's brother, the son of Phinehas ([1Sa 14:1-3](#)),

And so forth, it gives these guys ancestral background. You don't remember them anyhow, let me just tell you the story.

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Jonathan the son of Saul woke up early one morning. He got to thinking, no one else was awake yet. He got to thinking "You know, there's a whole army of the Philistines over there. Maybe God wants to give Israel the victory over that army of the Philistines today. Now if the Lord wants to give the victory to Israel over those Philistines, He doesn't need a whole army. He can give the victory to one man as well as six hundred or to two. It really doesn't make any difference to God whether we have a huge army, or whether we just have a few if God wants to give the victory to Israel."

He was just lying there thinking about these kinds of wild thoughts. "After all God is great, and the greatness and the power of God, He doesn't need a whole army, He can give the victory to just two men."

So he woke up his armorbearer. He said, "I've been thinking about something really weird and wild, I want to pass it by you. I've been thinking if God wants to give the victory to Israel today over the Philistines, He doesn't need the whole army. He can give the victory to just a couple guys. Why don't we go over there and see if God wants to give the victory to Israel today." Talk about a venture in faith. I love 'em.

So he and the armourbearer dressed quietly and they slipped out of camp while everybody else was still sleeping. Jonathan on the way towards the Philistines said, "Now we want to make sure God's in this thing."

"So when we get near the garrison of the Philistines, when the centurions spot us, if they say, 'Hey you fellas come up here we'll show you a thing or two.' Then we'll know that God wants to give the victory to Israel, and we'll go at them. But if they say, 'Wait you guys, we're gonna come down and show you a thing or two.' Then we'll know that God doesn't want to give the victory to Israel and we'll get out of here as fast as we can."

So as they got over near the garrison of the Philistines, and the centurion spotted these two guys coming, they said, "Look at those stupid fools coming right up here to the camp. Hey you guys come up here, we'll show you a thing or two."

John said, "All right man let's go." It said, "They started climbing with their hands and feet," really just scrambling up that hill to get into the camp of the Philistines. Man, they jumped right in the middle of the garrison. Jonathan started knocking the guys over, and his armourbearer was running them through. About a half acre of ground, they wiped out twenty of the Philistines and the rest of the guys began waking up, they were all discomfited. They began to swing at each other. They began to run and flee, and over on the other side of the valley old Saul finally woke up, and he rubbed his eyes, and he looked across, and he saw the Philistines all running. He saw the battles going on. He saw two guys in the middle just really wiping them out.

He said, "Number off quick who's missing?" They numbered off, and they said, "It's Jonathan and his armourbearer."