1 Samuel Chapter 13

Please **pray before beginning to read and study your bible**. **Repent of any sin or attitude** that would prevent you from hearing the Holy Spirit and ask him to guide your heart and mind as you read. **Read through the entire chapter first** before going back to read and answer questions. **Take notes** when God reveals Himself to you.

Chapter 13

1. Saul created for himself a standing army of how many men to defend Israel against her enemies. In what three locations were they headquartered? What were the rest of the able-bodied men of Israel told to do?

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2. During the early years of Saul's reign, the king and men of Israel became complacent about preparedness for defending the land God gave to them. They did not maintain the power of the "militia" from each of the tribes of Israel that defeated the Ammonites in 1 Samuel, chapters 7 and 11. How did Israel's enemy gain control over the region, leading to Saul's predicament in verses 5-7? (See vs. 19-22)

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3. Give a description of the Philistine army that advanced against Saul's detachment in Micmash. Considering the odds of defeat, is it any wonder that the men of Israel hid in caves and thickets, among the rocks and in pits and cisterns?

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4. How many men stood with Saul against the Ammonites in 1 Samuel 11: 8? With that kind of support from his countrymen, would the Philistines have posed such an incredible threat to the Israelites? How many people continued to follow Saul to Gibeah after the defeat at Micmash and desertion at Gilgal? Why couldn't Saul muster the same number of troops that he did against the Ammonites?

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5. Saul realizes that desperate times call for desperate measures. He wants to motivate the men of Israel to stay in the fight by publicly petitioning God for His favor. Rather than wait even a day past the anticipated arrival of Samuel, Saul takes it upon himself to offer sacrifices to the LORD. How long after the ceremony did Samuel appear? Do you think Samuel's delay may have been a test of Saul's faith?

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6. Did Saul show any fear of rebuke by Samuel for the sin he knowingly committed? How do we know that he was aware of his wrongdoing? Who did Saul blame for his sin? What other excuses did he make? How do they compare to excuses Christians make for compromising their obedience to God's law.

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7. Does persuasive justification for a disobedient act convince God of a person's innocence? See 1 Corinthians 4:4.

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8. According to Psalm 40: 6-8, what does King David later declare about sacrifice and obedience?

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9. Read John 14: 15-17, 21-24 and John 15: 9-17. What does Jesus say about the relationship between our love for Him and having and obeying His commands? What does Jesus promise to those who love Him? Is remaining in Jesus's love conditional upon obedience to His commands? Why does He want His disciples to understand this correlation? What is His command? (John 13: 34, John 15: 12,17) What does obedience to this command look like? (John 15: 12-16)

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10. What does Saul's self-righteous act of disobedience reveal about his love for the LORD? Was his unholy sacrifice motivated by zeal for God's love and counsel or by a manipulative spirit using religious practices to get what he wanted – self-preservation?

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11. Did the strength of Israel increase or decrease with their reliance upon the king? Do you see the same concession of responsibility and authority from America's

Christians to their appointed leaders?

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12. Saul knew he was anointed by God for leadership over Israel. However, rather than confess wrongdoing, he made excuses for compromise and disobedience, which stripped him of God's presence and blessing and set a bad example for those subjected to his leadership. How have you handled yourself in positions of influence and leadership over your family, church, coworkers, community, or government? Are you loving God by obeying His commands, or are you excusing compromise? When confronted with sin, do you humbly accept responsibility and repent or do you accept a widening gap between yourself and the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

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Meet with God in the morning when you rise and continue communication with Him throughout the day. Thank Him for his mercy, love and direction in your life and ask Him to continue showing you Himself, refining you, and increasing your faith, hope, and joy through His word and Spirit. Love like Jesus.