

Samuel Rebukes Saul

1 Samuel 12:1 – 13:15

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Samuel addressed all Israel, "Down through the years the Lord has appointed all your leaders and has protected you even when you rebelled by worshiping other gods. I have served you well. But you asked for a king, even though the Lord your God was already your king. The Lord has granted your request. But you are not released from your covenantal relationship. The Lord will remain faithful to you. Will you remain faithful to your God?"

Samuel prayed, and the Lord sent thunder and rain at a time of year when such weather was unheard-of. The people realized how wrong they had been to ask for a king.

Samuel exhorted Israel, "Worship the Lord with all your heart, and don't turn back to worthless idols. If you do, you and your king will be swept away."

The Philistines marched into Israel with a massive army. Saul had mustered his men, but Samuel told him, "Wait for me. I will come to you, and we will sacrifice to the Lord."

Saul waited, the whole time watching his army dwindle as his men slipped away in fear. On the seventh day, he offered the sacrifice on his own. Just as he was finishing, Samuel arrived and asked, "What have you done?"

Saul replied, "The Philistines are ready to attack. I couldn't wait any longer."

"You fool," said Samuel, "If you had obeyed the Lord's command, your kingdom would have been established forever. But now the Lord has chosen someone else, a man devoted to the Lord, willing to do the Lord's work."

Saul went to prepare for battle. His army had numbered in the thousands. Now only six hundred men were left.