

“The Sin of Impatience”  
1 Samuel 13:1-14  
(Preached at Trinity, January 29, 2017)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

**Disclaimer:** These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. In **Chapter 12** Samuel declares to Israel the wickedness of their request for a king, but God grants them their request. God sometimes allows us to follow a path to our great detriment. Sin always has its consequences.
2. Then Samuel sets before them an ultimatum. Although they requested and have received a king Samuel makes it clear that this in no way diminishes their duty to serve God.  
**1 Samuel 12:20 NAU** - "You have committed all this evil, yet do not turn aside from following the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart."
3. Israel and their new king were under obligation to serve God with their whole heart. If they refuse God's hand would be against them.  
**1 Samuel 12:15 NAU** - "If you will not listen to the voice of the LORD, but rebel against the command of the LORD, then the hand of the LORD will be against you, as *it was* against your fathers."
4. God will continue to demand of them perfect obedience. The chapter ends:  
**1 Samuel 12:25 NAU** - "But if you still do wickedly, both you and your king will be swept away."
5. Having described what God requires of Israel and her new king **Chapter 13** opens with the reign of Saul. There's a hint of optimism here. Perhaps he will heed the counsel of Samuel and enjoy a long reign blessed of God. It was a long reign.
  - A. There is a textual issue in **Verse 1** regarding the length of his reign.  
The ESV says Saul reigned for two years over Israel when he chose 3000 men  
The NASB says Saul began his reign at 30 and reigned 42 years.  
The length of his reign recorded in the NASB is consistent with Acts 13  
**Acts 13:21 NAU** - "Then they asked for a king, and God gave them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years."
  - B. Sadly, however, Saul disregarded Samuel's ultimatum and immediately turned from obedience to the true King of Israel.
6. During the rule of Samson as judge of Israel the Philistines had received a major blow. Samson destroyed much of the Philistine leadership.  
**Judges 16:27 NAU** - "Now the house was full of men and women, and all the lords of the Philistines were there. And about 3,000 men and women were on the roof looking on while Samson was amusing *them*."
7. But by the time of Samuel the Philistines had once again risen in strength. In **Chapter 4** they soundly defeated the Israelites in battle and captured the Ark of the Covenant.  
**1 Samuel 4:17 NAU** - "Israel has fled before the Philistines and there has also been a great slaughter among the people, and your two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God has been taken."

6. In **Chapter 6** the Philistines again experienced a great defeat and remained dormant for a season.  
**1 Samuel 7:10-14 NAU** - "Now Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, and the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel. But the LORD thundered with a great thunder on that day against the Philistines and confused them, so that they were routed before Israel. <sup>11</sup> The men of Israel went out of Mizpah and pursued the Philistines, and struck them down as far as below Beth-car. <sup>12</sup> Then Samuel took a stone and set it between Mizpah and Shen, and named it Ebenezer, saying, "Thus far the LORD has helped us." <sup>13</sup> So the Philistines were subdued and they did not come anymore within the border of Israel. And the hand of the LORD was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel. <sup>14</sup> The cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron even to Gath; and Israel delivered their territory from the hand of the Philistines. So there was peace between Israel and the Amorites."
7. But now as we enter **Chapter 13** the Philistines were once again a major threat to Israel. All of Saul's reign as king would be overshadowed by the Philistine threat.
8. In **Verses 2-3** we are introduced for the first time to Jonathan, Saul's son. He's probably less than 20 years old. Jonathan would play a major role in Saul's reign and in the early years of King David. Jonathan and David would enjoy a friendship that should serve as a model of masculine friendship.
9. Young as he was, Jonathan smote a garrison of Philistines that stirred up a hornet's nest.  
**1 Samuel 13:5 NAU** - "Now the Philistines assembled to fight with Israel, 30,000 chariots and 6,000 horsemen, and people like the sand which is on the seashore in abundance; and they came up and camped in Michmash, east of Beth-aven."
10. The people of Israel were terrified at the appearance of this powerful army and they fled for safety - " then the people hid themselves in caves, in thickets, in cliffs, in cellars, and in pits."
11. The people were scattering from Saul and Saul had reached a point of crisis. Saul was probably aware of the terrible defeat of the Philistines under the leadership of Samuel. We read in **Chapter 7**, as Samuel was offering up a burnt offering God thundered down upon the Philistines and threw them into confusion:  
**1 Samuel 7:10-14 NAU** - "Now Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, and the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel. But the LORD thundered with a great thunder on that day against the Philistines and confused them, so that they were routed before Israel."
12. There is no indication of Saul crying out to God for His defense. There is no indication that Saul confidently remembered God's mighty deliverance at the Red Sea or the powerful conquest of Canaan.  
 And didn't Samuel promise in the previous chapter the God would bless them if they followed Him with all their heart.  
 But Samuel didn't know God. Lacking a personal relationship with God Saul was anxiously awaiting the arrival of Samuel to offer a sacrifice and intercede on behalf of Israel. As Samuel delayed, however, Saul became desperate and decided to take matters into his own hands.  
**1 Samuel 13:9 NAU** - "So Saul said, "Bring to me the burnt offering and the peace offerings." And he offered the burnt offering."

13. With few exceptions, there was always a strict division between the office of priest, the prophetic office, and the office of king. Those who crossed the line were sorely judged. This is precisely what Saul did.
- A. What vanity to think that making a religious sacrifice would take priority over obeying the Word of God. And then thinking that in offering the sacrifice God would be enticed to rescue them from the hand of their enemies.  
**1 Samuel 12:21 NAU** - "You must not turn aside, for *then you would go* after futile things which can not profit or deliver, because they are futile."
- B. This was the same heart that led Israel to carry the Ark into battle without first seeking the face of God.  
**1 Samuel 4:3 NAU** - "Let us take to ourselves from Shiloh the ark of the covenant of the LORD, that it may come among us and deliver us from the power of our enemies."
14. Samuel declared to Saul the great folly of his actions.  
**1 Samuel 13:11-14 NAU** - "But Samuel said, "What have you done?" And Saul said, "Because I saw that the people were scattering from me, and that you did not come within the appointed days, and that the Philistines were assembling at Michmash, <sup>12</sup> therefore I said, 'Now the Philistines will come down against me at Gilgal, and I have not asked the favor of the LORD.' So I forced myself and offered the burnt offering." <sup>13</sup> Samuel said to Saul, "You have acted foolishly; you have not kept the commandment of the LORD your God, which He commanded you, for now the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. <sup>14</sup> "But now your kingdom shall not endure."
15. Saul's sins in this action were many.
- First, he presumed to take upon himself the role of priest. This was not his to assume.
  - Second, he presumed that God could be bribed by offering a sacrifice. It was a faithless act. Saul superstitiously believed he could entice God to act. William Blaikie – "It was substantially the carnal mind's view of God. It says, no doubt there is a God, and He has an influence on things here below; and to keep Him from thwarting us, we must perform certain services which seem to please Him. But what a pitiful view it is of God! As if the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth eternity could be induced to bestow or to withhold His favour simply by the slaughter of an animal."<sup>1</sup>
  - Third, he gave no regard for placing his life and the life of the nation into the hand of God. Compare this with David, his successor.  
**Psalm 18:2-3 NAU** - "The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, My God, my rock, in whom I take refuge; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. <sup>3</sup> I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised, And I am saved from my enemies."
16. Saul also demonstrated a faithless impatience.  
 Tonight I want us to consider the sin of impatience.

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<sup>1</sup> Blaikie, William. *Expository Lectures on the Book of First Samuel*. Birmingham: Solid Ground Christian Books, 2005, Page 212-213.

- I. First of all, we must understand that God works according to His purpose
- A. God works with perfect wisdom according to His eternal decree  
**Ephesians 1:11 NAU** - "we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will"
1. He works all things for His own glory.
  2. There will be many times when we do not know why God's Providence is unfolding in a particular way. There will be times when we suffer and we cannot understand God's reasoning behind it. We are sometimes tempted to complain. Complaints are a dissatisfaction with God's wisdom and direction. We are tempted to correct Him or share a better way.
  3. God asked Job, **Job 38:4 NAU** - "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell *Me*, if you have understanding,"
- B. God works according to His timeframe.
1. For us, weeks can seem like an eternity. For God it is but a moment.  
**2 Peter 3:8 NAU** - "But do not let this one *fact* escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day."
  2. God made a promise to Abraham  
**Genesis 12:2 NAU** - "And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing;"  
**Genesis 15:5 NAU** - "Now look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be."
    - a. Abraham never saw the fulfillment  
**Hebrews 11:13 NAU** - "All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth."
    - b. After a season he became impatient and took Sarah's handmaid Hagar to bear a child. God's ways are not our ways. He is not restricted to our timetable.
- II. Our duty is to patiently wait even when God seems to delay
- A. We tend to want everything right away
1. We want the line to move quicker. We are irritated when the light turns red as we approach the intersection. The constant ringing telephone is a nuisance. And who wants to sit on hold while the most irritating music plays in the background.
  2. Most of the stresses of life are due to our lack of patience.
- B. Faith demands patience
1. Saul leaped into action instead of patiently trusting and waiting upon God. It's interesting that Samuel showed up immediately upon Saul's sinful act. If only Saul had waited just a little while longer.
  2. Patience demands resting upon God's goodness. It demands confidence in His love. It demands assurance in our position before God. We are His dear children.

3. God has promised His abiding comfort if we wait upon Him  
**Isaiah 51:12-13 NAU** - "I, even I, am He who comforts you. Who are you that you are afraid of man who dies And of the son of man who is made like grass, <sup>13</sup> That you have forgotten the LORD your Maker, Who stretched out the heavens And laid the foundations of the earth, That you fear continually all day long because of the fury of the oppressor, As he makes ready to destroy? But where is the fury of the oppressor?"  
**Isaiah 41:10 NAU** - "Do not fear, for I am with you; Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, Surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand."
- C. Waiting upon God is difficult. We are tempted to desire immediate answers to our prayers and when God doesn't act we leap forward trusting in our ingenuity.
1. God often delays in order to increase our dependence upon Him. There will be times when He seems quite distant.  
**LBC 5:5** – "The most wise, righteous, and gracious god doth oftentimes leave for a season His own children to manifold temptations and the corruptions of their own hearts, to chastise them for their former sins, or to discover unto them the hidden strength of corruption and deceitfulness of their hearts, that they may be humbled; and to raise them to a more close and constant dependence for their support upon Himself . . ."
  2. God demands that we press on in prayer and not grow weary or impatient
    - a. Too often we pray and if we don't see immediate results we become discouraged and leave off praying
    - b. Prayer demands patience while we wait in patience, confidence, and courage.  
**Psalm 27:14 NAU** - "Wait for the LORD; Be strong and let your heart take courage; Yes, wait for the LORD."

#### Conclusion:

1. This is the nature of the Christian life. It demands patience. It demands that we wait upon God.  
**2 Thessalonians 3:5 KJV** – "And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ."  
**Psalm 33:20 NAU** - "Our soul waits for the LORD; He is our help and our shield."
2. This means we must be patient while we wait upon God.  
 This is true in every aspect of life. William Carey labored seven years in India before he had his first convert.
3. Saul's actions came from a faithless heart of unbelief. It was actually the actions of a coward rather than confidently waiting upon God. And it was a sinful heart. How differently it would have been if Saul had trusted his life and the life of God's people safely in the hands of God.

4. We must patiently wait upon God. Your trials may last a long time – still you must trust and wait  
**James 1:2-4 KJV** – “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing *this*, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have *her* perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.”
5. Waiting upon God demands a child-like faith in our great God  
He will provide for us. He will give us what is needful.  
Wait must upon Him.  
**1 Peter 5:6-7 NAU** - "Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, <sup>7</sup> casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you."