

## Saul Disobeys Commandment Violates Separation of State and Worship

*The King and the People Series*

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### What We Will Learn

- God will provide relief from rulers that disobey his rules
- Saul disobeyed God's command regarding separation of state and worship
  - Assumed priesthood authority
    - No training or right of inheritance
    - Assumed role of priest because he was king
  - Imposed state authority over the priesthood
- God terminated his kingdom
- 1 Samuel 13:1–15 and 22:6–23

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### Saul Usurps Priesthood Authority

- Invited Israel to Gilgal to prepare for war against Philistines
- His army was over-matched and fearful
- He officiated over offerings
- When Samuel didn't arrive as expected
- Saul assumed authority to function as priest because he was king
- 1 Samuel 13:1–9

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### 1 Samuel 13 (NKJV)

1 Saul reigned one year; and when he had reigned two years over Israel,

2 Saul chose for himself three thousand men of Israel. Two thousand were with Saul in Michmash and in the mountains of Bethel, and a thousand were with Jonathan in Gibeah of Benjamin. The rest of the people he sent away, every man to his tent.

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### 1 Samuel 13 (NKJV)

3 And Jonathan attacked the garrison of the Philistines that was in Geba, and the Philistines heard of it. Then Saul blew the trumpet throughout all the land, saying, "Let the Hebrews hear!"

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### 1 Samuel 13 (NKJV)

4 Now all Israel heard it said that Saul had attacked a garrison of the Philistines, and that Israel had also become an abomination to the Philistines. And the people were called together to Saul at Gilgal.

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### 1 Samuel 13 (NKJV)

5 Then the Philistines gathered together to fight with Israel, thirty thousand chariots and six thousand horsemen, and people as the sand which is on the seashore in multitude. And they came up and encamped in Michmash, to the east of Beth Aven.

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### 1 Samuel 13 (NKJV)

6 When the men of Israel saw that they were in danger (for the people were distressed), then the people hid in caves, in thickets, in rocks, in holes, and in pits.

7 And some of the Hebrews crossed over the Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead. As for Saul, he was still in Gilgal, and all the people followed him trembling.

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### 1 Samuel 13 (NKJV)

8 Then he waited seven days, according to the time set by Samuel. But Samuel did not come to Gilgal; and the people were scattered from him.

9 So Saul said, "Bring a burnt offering and peace offerings here to me." And he offered the burnt offering.

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### Samuel Rebukes Saul

- Saul officiated over offering at Gilgal
- Usurped authority of priesthood
- Assumed king has authority over everything
- Samuel arrived later and rebuked him
- Pronounced his kingdom will terminate
- Because he disobeyed God's command
- 1 Samuel 13:10–14

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### 1 Samuel 13 (NKJV)

10 Now it happened, as soon as he had finished presenting the burnt offering, that Samuel came; and Saul went out to meet him, that he might greet him.

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### 1 Samuel 13 (NKJV)

11 And Samuel said, "What have you done?" Saul said, "When I saw that the people were scattered from me, and that you did not come within the days appointed, and that the Philistines gathered together at Michmash,

12 then I said, 'The Philistines will now come down on me at Gilgal, and I have not made supplication to the Lord.' Therefore I felt compelled, and offered a burnt offering."

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### 1 Samuel 13 (NKJV)

13 And Samuel said to Saul, "You have done 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.

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### 1 Samuel 13 (NKJV)

14 But now your kingdom shall not continue. The Lord has sought for Himself a man after His own heart, and the Lord has commanded him to be commander over His people, because you have not kept what the Lord commanded you."

- Violated principle of separation of state and worship when he assumed authority of priest in burnt offering. God terminated his kingdom.

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### Saul Applies State Authority Over Priesthood

- Long after the interaction at Gilgal
- Saul assumed authority to judge priestly interactions
- Accused priest of Nob of conspiracy
- Passed judgment against priest
- Furthermore, his judgment was unfair
- 1 Samuel 22:9–16

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### 1 Samuel 22 (NIV)

9 But Doeg the Edomite, who was standing with Saul's officials, said, "I saw the son of Jesse come to Ahimelek son of Ahitub at Nob.

10 Ahimelek inquired of the Lord for him; he also gave him provisions and the sword of Goliath the Philistine."

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### 1 Samuel 22 (NIV)

11 Then the king sent for the priest Ahimelek son of Ahitub and all the men of his family, who were the priests at Nob, and they all came to the king.

12 Saul said, "Listen now, son of Ahitub." "Yes, my lord," he answered.

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### 1 Samuel 22 (NIV)

13 Saul said to him, "Why have you conspired against me, you and the son of Jesse, giving him bread and a sword and inquiring of God for him, so that he has rebelled against me and lies in wait for me, as he does today?"

14 Ahimelek answered the king, "Who of all your servants is as loyal as David, the king's son-in-law, captain of your bodyguard and highly respected in your household?"

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### 1 Samuel 22 (NIV)

15 Was that day the first time I inquired of God for him? Of course not! Let not the king accuse your servant or any of his father's family, for your servant knows nothing at all about this whole affair."

16 But the king said, "You will surely die, Ahimelek, you and your whole family. "

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### Saul Massacres Priests of Nob

- Extended his authority over the priesthood
- Ignored evidence that the priest simply performed his function with David
- Ignored counsel against passing judgment against the priests
- Murdered 85 priests
- Destroyed city of Nob
- 1 Samuel 22:17–19

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### 1 Samuel 22 (NIV)

17 Then the king ordered the guards at his side: "Turn and kill the priests of the Lord, because they too have sided with David. They knew he was fleeing, yet they did not tell me."

But the king's officials were unwilling to raise a hand to strike the priests of the Lord.

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### 1 Samuel 22 (NIV)

18 The king then ordered Doeg, "You turn and strike down the priests." So Doeg the Edomite turned and struck them down. That day he killed eighty-five men who wore the linen ephod.

19 He also put to the sword Nob, the town of the priests, with its men and women, its children and infants, and its cattle, donkeys and sheep.

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### What We Learned

- Saul disobeyed God's commandment regarding separation of state and worship
- God terminated his kingdom over Israel
- Government has authority over state affairs
- Does not have authority over the clergy
- Nor authority to regulate worship
- God will provide relief from rulers that disobey his rules

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