

When Faith In God's Word Is Tested

Series: Sustainable Faith: The Word

1 Samuel 13:5-14 NIV (0930)

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FRANK A. CLARK *Faith on a full stomach may be simply contentment—but if you have it when you're hungry, it's genuine.*

I. The test of faith comes

a. When danger mounts (v. 5-6)

⁵*The Philistines assembled to fight Israel, with three thousand chariots, six thousand charioteers, and soldiers as numerous as the sand on the seashore. They went up and camped at Micmash, east of Beth Aven.* ⁶*When the men of Israel saw that their situation was critical and that their army was hard pressed, they hid in caves and thickets, among the rocks, and in pits and cisterns.*

b. When fear takes over (v. 7)

(v. 6b) *...they hid in caves and thickets, among the rocks, and in pits and cisterns...*⁷*Some Hebrews even crossed the Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead. Saul remained at Gilgal, and all the troops with him were quaking with fear.*

TIM HANSEL *One of the ways that our faith expresses itself is by our ability to be still, to be present, and not to panic or lose perspective. God still does his best work in the most difficult of circumstances.*

OSWALD CHAMBERS *Faith is deliberate confidence in the character of God whose ways you cannot understand at the time.*

c. When human support fails (v. 8)

⁸*He waited seven days, the time set by Samuel; but Samuel did not come to Gilgal, and Saul's men began to scatter.*

GEORGE MACDONALD *The principal part of faith is patience.*

II. Failing the test results in

a. Disobedience (v. 9-10)

⁹So he said, "Bring me the burnt offering and the fellowship offerings." And Saul offered up the burnt offering. ¹⁰Just as he finished making the offering, Samuel arrived, and Saul went out to greet him.

A. W. TOZER True faith commits us to obedience.

b. Excuses (v. 11-12)

¹¹"What have you done?" asked Samuel. Saul replied, "When I saw that the men were scattering, and that you did not come at the set time, and that the Philistines were assembling at Micmash, ¹²I thought, 'Now the Philistines will come down against me at Gilgal, and I have not sought the LORD'S favor.' So I felt compelled to offer the burnt offering."

NASB So I forced myself and offered the burnt offering

SAINT AUGUSTINE God does not expect us to submit our faith to him without reason, but the very limits of reason make faith a necessity.

c. The loss of God's blessing (v. 13-14)

¹³"You acted foolishly," Samuel said. "You have not kept the command the LORD your God gave you; if you had, he would have established your kingdom over Israel for all time. ¹⁴But now your kingdom will not endure; the LORD has sought out a man after his own heart and appointed him leader of his people, because you have not kept the LORD'S command."

PAUL TOURNIER He who claims never to have doubted does not know what faith is, for faith is forged through doubt.

JOHN POWELL Once you and I are face to face with the Word of God. . . we can only accept or reject it. Jesus becomes the two-edged sword that cuts right down the middle, dividing us into believers and nonbelievers.