

## LESSON PLAN

### KING SAUL TESTED

#### I Samuel 10-13

**Lesson Memory Verse: Psalm 34:19** – “Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivers him out of them all.”

**Lesson Aim:** We need to learn to look to the Lord for His help when we are tested.

**Lesson Plan:** Use the KEY – HE – SEE – WE – BE plan (explained in the Introductory Notes).

**KEY (for Attention):** It is always wise to test a bicycle’s brakes before you ride it very far to be sure they are working. This is especially important if the bicycle is new to you. If the bicycle’s brakes do not work well, then you had better not ride it. You could get into a serious accident.

Can you think of other things you should test before using them? (We should test a rope to see if it can hold us. We test shoes to see if they feel comfortable before we buy them.)

People need to be tested, too. We test students to see if they learned their lessons. We test pilots to see if they can fly airplanes. God tests Christians to see if He can use them for important jobs. Today, we will learn how God tested Saul to see if he was worthy to be Israel’s king.

**HE (for Authority):** Our memory verse says that we will face many troubles. The Lord uses troubles to test us, but He will help us overcome them, if we put our trust in Him. Then He will remove the troubles.

Explain the following words in the verse:

“Afflictions” – troubles or sufferings that come into our lives

“Righteous” – true Christians that live a godly life

“Delivers him” – saves the believer

**SEE (for Apperception) and WE (for Application): PLEASE do not read these comments until you have read the Scriptures for this lesson. First let the Holy Spirit teach you directly from His Word.** In today’s lesson we will see how God used troubles to test Saul. From this lesson we will see how God can use troubles in our lives to test us. We will want to learn how to pass these tests so we can be useful to God.

#### I. Saul’s Compassion Tested at Jabesh-gilead (11:1-15)

##### A. Reproach of Ammonites on Jabesh-gilead (11:1-3)

The reproach of the Ammonites was to pluck out the right eye of the people they conquered. At this time they planned to do this to some Israelites that they had conquered. Why would they want to do this?

1. It would make it impossible for the Israelite soldiers to fight against them in the future, because they needed both eyes to fight effectively.
2. It humiliated the Israelite soldiers who had to carry the mark of their defeat on their faces for the rest of their lives.

**WE:** When we surrender to Satan’s temptation, he tries to destroy us so that we can no longer fight against him and be a good soldier for the Lord. Furthermore, he will try to humiliate us, so that we will be ashamed of our defeat. He will try to make it a mark against us for the rest of our lives.

##### B. Reaction of Saul to the Ammonites (11:4-7)

When Saul heard what the Ammonites were going to do to the men of Jabesh-gilead, he reacted in the right way. He became angry at this insult to God’s people and showed compassion for these poor people at Jabesh. He commanded the men of Israel to follow both him and Samuel to war against the cruel Ammonites or they would be punished. Saul passed the test that God gave him.

**WE:** We should be angry against sin and show love for those harmed by sin. We should lead others to join us in our fight against sin and lift up the fallen Christian. Remember, the weapon we use against Satan is the sword of the Spirit. What is that sword? It is the Word of God – Eph. 6:17.

##### C. Response of Israel to Saul (11:8-15)

1. **Grand army joined Saul (11:8).** 330,000 men joined Saul to fight against the Ammonites.
2. **Good news reached Jabesh-gilead (11:9).** They were glad that Saul was coming to help.

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3. **Glorious victory given to Saul (11:10, 11).** The Ammonites were completely defeated.

4. **Great joy blessed Israel (11:12-15).** They praised the Lord and honored Saul as their king.

Saul passed the test that God gave to him. His compassion was good. He showed love and concern for the people of Jabesh-gilead when he came to their rescue. It took real courage and faith, but God blessed him with a mighty victory.

**WE:** We also will have our love for others tested. We need to be ready to help those in trouble. God will help us to pass this test, if we look to Him for help.

## II. **Saul's Obedience Tested at Gilgal (13:1-15)**

### A. **Reason for War (13:1-4)**

Jonathan fought against the Philistines and got a victory over one of their garrisons. He was a brave man and a man who trusted the Lord. As a result, the Lord gave him several important victories.

**WE:** We can expect the Lord give us victories over Satan, when we trust in the Lord. He will give us the power to defeat him and his temptations.

### B. **Retaliation of the Philistines (13:5-7)**

The Philistines were not happy with Jonathan's victory, so they gathered a huge army to fight against Israel. They were going to punish Israel for Jonathan's victory and it frightened Israel.

**WE:** We will make Satan angry when we have a victory over him. He will try to scare us and hurt us if he can, but he will be defeated if we trust the Lord.

### C. **Rebellion of Saul (13:8-10)**

Saul had been told by Samuel to wait for him for seven days (10:8; 13:8). Samuel did not come exactly when Saul thought he should and so he went ahead and offered sacrifices before Samuel came. This was the sin of rebellion against God's leader. He was told to wait and he did not wait. Saul was being tested for obedience and he failed. As soon as he offered the sacrifices, Samuel came.

**WE:** If we deliberately disobey the Lord, it is a very wicked sin and we fail His test. He may not be able to use us for an important job. All we can do is to sincerely confess our sin and ask Him to forgive us and use us wherever He chooses. But, if we cover our sin, He cannot bless and use us.

### D. **Rejection of Saul (13:11-15)**

#### 1. **Saul's Excuses (13:11-12)**

When Samuel asked Saul what he had done, Saul failed again. Instead of confessing his sin of willful disobedience, he made excuses for his sin. He said he had to offer the sacrifices without waiting for Samuel because (1) the people were scattered from him; (2) he (Samuel) had not yet come; and (3) the Philistines were about to fight against him. Therefore, he thought he had a right to disobey the command.

#### 2. **Saul's Punishment (13:13-15)**

It is never right to disobey the Lord. He needed to confess His sin and not make excuses. When Saul rejected the Lord's commandment, the Lord rejected him. Therefore, he would lose his kingdom. With that judgment on him, his army dwindled to 600 men.

**WE:** We must not follow Saul's example and make excuses or we will fail the test and be punished. The Lord is looking for those who obey Him and those are the kind of people He will honor.

**BE (for Action):** Learn the memory verse well (Psalm 34:19). Repeat it each day in your prayers. Think about its meaning. Tell the Lord that you realize there may be afflictions (troubles) during the day, but that you are looking to Him for help so that you will not sin and fail your tests. If you will try to do this each day of this next week, raise your hand, and then I will pray for you.