

Leader Guide

Here I AM

Spring 2025 | Week 4

Message Date 4/27/2025

THE GOAL

This week we are stepping back into the story of Saul and Samuel in 1st Samuel. In this passage we find Saul facing an army of the Philistine's and being instructed by Samuel to wait for his arrival before he does anything. Unfortunately, Saul doesn't. He does some things correctly and another thing poorly. There are four things that we can glean from this story. The goal this week will be to unpack each of those four things in light of when we face conflict in our lives.

MY STORY

- 1) If you could have a theme song play every time you entered a room, what would it be?
- 2) You just discovered a new planet—what weird name are you giving it?

QUICK REVIEW

- 3) What caught your attention from Sunday's message?

DIGGING DEEPER / TAKING IT HOME

This past Sunday Pastor Craig pointed out that there are four things Saul and his army did in this passage. They are: 1) hide, hoping to avoid the fight, and therefore pain; 2) leave, hoping to escape the fight, and therefore pain; 3) stand and face the fight, willing to endure the pain; 4) call on God.

Read 1 Samuel 13:1–18

- 4) In verse six why do some of the men of Israel hide in caves and thickets? What does this reveal about their fear?

They were seriously outnumbered by the Philistines. It reveals that they were looking at their circumstances and the problem instead of the possible solution or that God could rescue them.

- 5) How does hiding from conflict sometimes feel like the safest solution? Have you ever experienced it? Have you ever overcome it?

(Justin) I'll be honest, I really don't like conflict. I like things peaceful and simple, and I like it when people get along well. Unfortunately, I have spent more time in my life hiding from conflict than addressing it. It feels like the easiest solution because if you just ignore the problem eventually it will go away. This has never been my experience. Problems always just get worse or are still there. I overcame it by simply taking it to Jesus first, and then having a hard conversation. But I always pray before I have the conversation. I humble my heart, and if I'm in the wrong I will take ownership. If I need to address something I will still humble my heart, and I'll ask God for the words to present it well.

- 6) In verse seven it says that some "crossed the Jordan". Why do you think they left? How is leaving different than hiding?

I think they left out of fear, but what other possible reasons are there? I think hiding is different than leaving because with hiding you're still basically available. If circumstances changed, you could pop out and be a participant. Leaving is running away and completely removing yourself from the situation entirely.

- 7) What are some modern-day ways in which we leave the battle when things are hard emotionally or spiritually?

I think one of the ways is that we cancel friendships and friends. We leave jobs. We move to different state and cities. What else?

- 8) In verse eight we see that Saul was instructed to wait seven days for Samuel. Did he wait long enough? Was Samuel late? What could Saul have done differently?

Samuel was in fact not late. He arrived on the seventh day, but Saul was impatient and fearful because he saw his troops leaving. He could've waited to offer sacrifices. Samuel was not late—he was on time, just later than Saul wanted him to be.

- 9) Have you ever been too impatient on God's timing so you forced something to happen and then it turned out badly?

(Justin) Years ago, when I was a young man, I took a position as a student ministries pastor that I forced open. I was clearly not ready nor was I called at the time to do that particular line of work, and it really didn't go well. I was in the position for all of three months as an intern, and in retrospect this was me, forcing open my calling instead of waiting on God's timing.

- 10) In verse nine Saul offers burnt offerings on behalf of the Israelites. We see him being very impatient and not waiting for Samuel. What is Samuel's response to him for these actions?

It was Saul's impatience that caused him to offer the burnt offerings and sacrifices. Samuel was upset with him because he wasn't late. He tells him what would've happened had he been patient. God would have established his family line and kingdom, but instead, because of his impatience and lack of faith, God had chosen someone else as king.

Reflection Questions for Chair Time: think about the following questions and pray through them with Jesus.

Read for Samuel 13:1-18.

- 1) What lessons can you avoid from Saul's actions?
- 2) What can you learn about waiting on the Lord?
- 3) What else do you see in this passage?