

1 Samuel 10:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And thou shalt go down before me to Gilgal; and, behold, I will come down unto thee, to offer burnt offerings, and to sacrifice sacrifices of peace offerings: seven days shalt thou tarry, till I come to thee, and shew thee what thou shalt do.

Analysis

And thou shalt go down before me to Gilgal; and, behold, I will come down unto thee, to offer burnt offerings, and to sacrifice sacrifices of peace offerings: seven days shalt thou tarry, till I come to thee, and shew thee what thou shalt do.

This verse establishes the critical test that Saul would later fail catastrophically (1 Samuel 13). The command is precise: go to Gilgal, wait seven days for Samuel to arrive, and then receive further instruction. Gilgal, near Jericho, held profound significance as Israel's first camp after crossing the Jordan and the site of circumcision renewal (Joshua 5). The burnt offerings (olot) represented complete consecration, while peace offerings (zevachim shelamim) signified fellowship with God. Crucially, Samuel - not Saul - would offer these sacrifices. The distinction between royal and priestly functions was absolute in Israel, unlike surrounding nations where kings served as priest-kings. This command tested whether Saul would submit to theocratic order, honoring the boundary between political and spiritual authority. His later impatience revealed a heart that valued expedience over obedience.

Historical Context

Gilgal served as Israel's base of operations during the conquest and remained a significant worship site. The seven-day waiting period would later coincide with a Philistine military threat, testing whether Saul trusted God's timing or succumbed to human pressure. Ancient Near Eastern kings typically combined royal and priestly functions, making Israel's separation of powers distinctive.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How do you respond when God's timing seems incompatible with urgent circumstances?
2. Why is respecting proper boundaries of authority essential even when we feel capable of acting ourselves?

Interlinear Text

וְרָדָה	לִפְנֵי	גִּלְגָּל	הַגִּלְגָּל	וְהַבָּא	אָנֹכִי
And thou shalt go down	before	me to Gilgal	H2009	H595	
H3381	H6440	H1537			
וְרָדָה	אֶלְךָ	וְתַעֲלֵה	וְתַעֲלֵה	עַל	לִזְבַּח
And thou shalt go down	H413	unto thee to offer	burnt offerings	and to sacrifice	
H3381		H5927	H5930	H2076	
זִבְחָה	שְׁלָמִים	שְׁבֻעָה	יְמִים	תַּוְצַל	בָּאָה
sacrifices	of peace offerings	seven	days	shalt thou tarry	till I come
H2077	H8002	H7651	H3117	H3176	H935
אֶלְךָ	וְהִזְדַּעַת	לְבָבֶךָ	אָשָׁר	תְּמִשְׁחָה	
H413	to thee and shew	H0	H834	thee what thou shalt do	
H3045				H6213	

Additional Cross-References

1 Samuel 13:4 (Parallel theme): And all Israel heard say that Saul had smitten a garrison of the Philistines, and that Israel also was had in abomination with the Philistines. And the people were called together after Saul to Gilgal.

1 Samuel 15:33 (Parallel theme): And Samuel said, As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women. And Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the LORD in Gilgal.