

- Recap of the last two weeks: Israel has asked for a King “like all the other nations” (I Samuel 8:20). God had planned to give them a King anyway. God had told them He would eventually create a King for them and outlined how that King would conduct themselves (Deuteronomy 7:14-20) But Samuel has made clear what the consequences of selecting a King “like other nations” around them would be instead of following God’s plan for a King. (I Samuel 8:10-18) The problem is that the Kings of other nations around them are not ones to imitate and so asking for a king “like other nations” is an obvious problem. Nevertheless, God eventually tells Samuel to give in because He says the people are rejecting God and Samuel should not take it personally. (I Samuel 8:7) The moral is to be careful about not just what we ask for, but why we are asking for it. God has Samuel choose Saul as a King anyway because of his outward characteristics (in contrast to the next King, David, whom God choose because of his inward characteristics. (Acts 13:21-22) Although Saul does lead the Israelite army to a lot of mighty victories, he angers God and Samuel by starting celebratory sacrifices without him, prompting God to promise that he would appoint someone “after His own heart” implying that Saul was not! (I Samuel 13:8-14)
- Saul’s son Jonathon plots a raid on the Philistine camp but doesn’t tell his father what he is doing, his father (who likes to hide) is hiding. 600 men go with him. (I Samuel 14:1-2)
- A man named Ajihah (who is the brother of Ichabod) is wearing an ephod or vest and is one of the 600. No one even knows Jonathan is doing this. (I Samuel 14:3)
- You may remember that Ichabod was the son of Phineas, that man whose name means “the Glory of the Lord has departed” because the Philistines had stolen the Ark of the Covenant and whose mother named him that after she heard (I Samuel 4:18-22)
- The Philistines certainly would have recognized the golden ephod because they made it originally when they sent back the Ark of the Covenant back to Israel. (I Samuel 6:1-6)
- Jonathan sneaks up on them in by using a narrow pass in between two very rocky hills. (I Samuel 14:4-5)
- Jonathan tells his armor bearer that God will be with them, and the armor bearer promises his allegiance to the mission. (I Samuel 14:6-7)
- Note here that Jonathan is confident they will be victorious with a very small force because God is with them, whereas Saul always wanted to have superior numbers and there is no evidence that he trusts God (in fact there is evidence to the contrary).
- Jonathan says to his men that once they announce themselves to the Philistines that they will either come to Jonathan’s men or invite Jonathan’s to come to them. Jonathan tells his men that if the men invite then in, it will be a sign from God that he has given them over to them. (I Samuel 14:8-10)
- They show themselves to the Philistines. The Philistines apparently don’t feel threatened (maybe because it is only 600 men) and they even comment that the Hebrews are coming out of hiding. They invite them in by saying “hey come here we want to show you something.” Jonathan tells his men to follow him over there because invitation is the sign from God he has been wanting. (I Samuel 14:11-12)
- Instead of going over to look at whatever they want them to see, Jonathan and his men go over and start killing Philistines. Immediately Jonathan and his armor bearer kill 20 of them and it causes chaos in the camp. At the same time, there is an earthquake and it compounds the chaos. (I Samuel 14:13-15)

- Saul sees what is happening (remember he didn't know this would happen). He first commissions a count to find out how many people had gone and discovers Jonathan is among them. At first Saul sends for the Ark but realizes there is no time for that and rallies all his troops to continue in their rout of the Philistine army. When the Israelites hear what is happening, they all come and join in the fun and chase the Philistine army away. (I Samuel 14:16-23)
- Saul makes an oath. He tells everyone that no one shall eat until they have completely conquered the Philistines that day. Because of that the people are getting weak with hunger. Jonathan doesn't know about the oath and so he eats. Then when he finds out about the oath, he says that was a bad idea because the victory would have been even greater if the people hadn't been weak with hunger. (I Samuel 14:24-30)
- The people are so weak with hunger that when they finally get to the livestock of the Philistines they slaughter it and eat it raw without cleaning it (known as eating it with the blood). (I Samuel 14:31-33)
- This is sin because God commanded them not to do that. (Deuteronomy 12:23)
- When Saul hears what has happened he tries to make things better by building an altar and having the people make sacrifices and eat properly. It is the first altar that Saul built to God. (I Samuel 14:34-35)
- It is easy to turn to God when we are in times of trouble like Saul did. As we saw with Moses and we will see with David, it is much better and more effective to ask for God's forgiveness when we sin if we already have a relationship with Him. God is not like a vending machine that we only go to when we need Him. This is why it is important to establish the relationship with God at all times. (Ecclesiastes 12:1-8)
- When Saul finds out what Jonathan did, he asks for sign from God as to whether he and Jonathan or the people should be punished. But he wants God to send him a sign through something called divination using something called Urim and Thummim. (which is basically like witchcraft/idolatry). Not surprisingly, God doesn't answer. Saul takes matters into his own hand and tells Jonathan his son "sorry but you have to die." The people are incensed with this and don't allow that to happen. (I Samuel 14:36-45)
- There is some controversy over what the Urim and Thummim actually are but they are probably stones, jewels, or rocks of some kind. Some believe they were built into or attached to high priest's breastplate or possibly on a sort of necklace which included the golden ephod (tumor). Our Mormon friends base their whole Book of Mormon on the belief that the book was translated by a man using these emblems which he found buried here in America, used them to translate the Book, and then lost them before anyone ever saw them. (some sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Urim_and_Thummim ; <http://jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/14609-urim-and-thummim> ; <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/15224a.htm> ; http://kukis.org/Doctrines/Urim_and_Thummim.pdf; <http://www.cgg.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Library.sr/CT/BQA/k/74/What-Are-Urim-Thummim-Exodus-2830.htm> http://www.mormonwiki.com/Urim_and_Thummim
- Saul continues to fight with the Philistines and other enemies all his life. He is always victorious. Saul's military commander's name was Abner. Whenever someone distinguished himself in

battle as being strong or courageous, Saul was quick to associate himself with that person. (I Samuel 14:47-52)

- God tells Saul to drive out a group called the Amalekites and to kill them all and all their animals too. Saul takes 220,00 men. Instead of killing everything they take the King hostage and take all the best cows and sheep. (I Samuel 15:1-9)
- God comes to Samuel and tells him what happened and how sorry he was that he made Saul king. Samuel confronts Saul and Saul tries to tell him that he did what God commanded. Samuel says “oh, yeah, well why do I hear animals?” Saul insists that he was trying to honor God and he took the King and the people took the best animals to come sacrifice to God. (I Samuel 15:10-21)
- Samuel answers him very directly by saying that obedience is better than sacrifice and that because he rejected the word of the Lord, the Lord has rejected him as king. Note that this passage also mentions “divination” (witchcraft) as a sin which incidentally is what Saul was doing with the Urim and Thummim. (I Samuel 15:22-23)
- This concept of God desiring obedience and mercy above sacrifice is found throughout the Bible. It is most famously quoted in Hosea 6:6. Christ also frequently tells the Pharisees to go and figure out what that passage means (Matthew 9:13) This concept is very important for us today because not everyone who is baptized or acknowledges Christ will get to heaven (Matthew 7:21) It is important that we realize that we must also live in a way that shows mercy and obedience.
- Saul tries to repent but finds out that is too late to save his kingdom. Samuel, even though he is old, hacks the king of the Amalekites to pieces in front of everyone. Saul never sees Samuel again and again God regrets that he ever made Saul King. (I Samuel 15:24-35)
- God can have regrets. When he destroyed the world with a flood saving on Noah and his family in the Ark, we read that God was sorry he even made man in the first place. (Genesis 6:6)
- God tells Samuel to go to the house of a man named Jesse and designate a new King to follow Saul from among Jesse’s sons. At first Samuel thinks it must be his son Eliab God chose because he was the most physically attractive, but God makes it clear he is looking on the inside not the outside. With each son that passes by, God keeps telling Samuel “not this one.” Finally, they have all gone by and Samuel asks Jesse if this is all his sons and Jesse says that there is one more (the youngest) out in the field. David turns out to be the right one. So God starts pouring His spirit into David. (I Samuel 16:1-13)
- God took away his spirit from Saul and sent an evil spirit to him. His court sees he is troubled and suggests they get a harp player to try to sooth him. They say they know a good candidate, probably because the events in next chapter have already taken place. They call David to play the harp (no one except Jesse’s house and Samuel know that David is set to become King) and it does sooth Saul. (I Samuel 16:14-22)
- Once again the Philistines and the Israelites square off. This time they are camped on hills facing each other. A very large and well armored man named Goliath from the Philistines challenges them to send an individual to fight him so instead of their armies fighting to see who will enslave the other they can just agree to an individual duel. He is so intimidating that he frightens everyone in the Israelite army. (I Samuel 17:1-11)
- There is some controversy over how big Goliath actually was. Estimates range from 6’6” to 9’6” Even if you take the smallest estimate, he would still be a lot bigger than the average height at

the time, which was about 5'6". Source: <http://www.gotquestions.org/how-tall-was-Goliath.html>

- This goes on for forty days. There was some fighting going on, but apparently not much territory was changing hands and no one was really making much headway. Every day when there wasn't fighting going on, Goliath would come challenge them. Three of David's older brothers are with the army there, so David is making runs back and forth to bring them food and take care of the sheep. (I Samuel 17:12-19)
- One morning as David nears the camp he hears what is going on. He asks how this person can be allowed to get away with this and the army tells him that if someone will just kill him the King will reward him and his family. (I Samuel 17:20-27)
- David's oldest brother Eliab admonishes David for even being there and accuses him of just wanting to see the battle. David tell him he didn't do anything wrong. (I Samuel 17:28-30)
- Word gets back to Saul that David doesn't believe this guy should be able to get away with that. Saul asks why David thinks he can win when he is so young and small and Goliath has been a soldier all his life. David explains that Goliath will suffer the same fate as the bears and lions he killed who were trying to go after his sheep. So Saul agrees to let him go. (I Samuel 17:31-37)
- David tries to put on some armor that Saul gives him but David decides not use it. He takes only a slingshot and five smooth stones he finds. Goliath sees him, feels disrespected and calls him a kid with sticks and says he will leave his dead body to be eaten by animals. David tells him basically "no your fight is actually with our God and He will deliver you to me so that you will be the one eaten by animals." (I Samuel 17:38-47)
- David used his slingshot and hits him in the forehead with a stone. It sinks into his forehead, knocking Goliath over face first. David runs over, pulls his sword out, and uses it to cut off his head. The Philistine see this and run away. The Israelites pursue them and plunder their camp. David takes Goliath's head so he can show it off in Jerusalem. Saul asks David whose son he is so he tells him. (I Samuel 17:48-57)

Questions

1. What is Jonathan's relationship to Saul?
2. How many people go on Saul's raid on the Philistines?
3. How did Jonathan and his men sneak up on the Philistines undetected?
4. Before Jonathan's raid, what does he tell his armor-bearer? What does his armor bearer say in return?
5. How does Jonathan know that God will be with them in the raid?
6. What two things cause chaos in the camp of the Philistines?
7. Who joins in the battle caused by Jonathan's raid against the Philistines?
8. What oath does Saul make in the battle with the Philistines?
9. Why does Jonathan violate the oath that Saul made?
10. Why does Jonathan say the oath was a bad idea in the first place?
11. Why did the oath that Saul made cause people to sin?
12. How did Saul attempt to rectify the problem he caused with his oath?

13. What was the significance of the fact that Saul had never built an altar before now?
14. How does Saul try to get a sign from God about what to do with Jonathan?
15. What was the name of Saul's military commander?
16. What did Saul do when he saw anyone with courage or strength?
17. What does God tell Saul to do to the Amalekites?
18. How big is the army Saul leads against the Amalekites?
19. What does the Israelite army do with the Amalekites?
20. Why does Samuel confront Saul after his battle with the Amalekites?
21. What excuse does Saul make to Samuel about why he brought back animals?
22. What does Samuel tell Saul about obedience and sacrifice?
23. Why does Samuel go to Jesse's house?
24. How does Samuel determine which of Jesse's sons to make King?
25. How does God's spirit work in David and Saul?
26. Who knows David has been chosen to be king after Saul while Saul is still alive?
27. What instrument does David play to sooth Saul?
28. What is the name of giant from the Philistines who challenges Israel to send someone to fight him?
29. How does David come to know about what is going on with the Philistine giant?
30. Why does David say he will prevail (both to Saul and to the Philistine giant)?
31. How does the Philistine giant die?