

Nervous About God's Timing

Scripture Reading — 1 Samuel 13:5-15

Saul replied, “. . . I felt compelled to offer the burnt offering.”
—1 Samuel 13:11-12 —

A good story can make us nervous—even anxious. The characters find themselves in trouble, and we fear for them.

But when the story is our story, we don't like to see trouble coming. That's what Saul, the first king of Israel, discovered. God had chosen him as king and was prepared to bless him. But the vast Philistine army was headed straight toward the Israelite forces. Everyone was nervous, especially the young King Saul. The prophet Samuel had given him God's instructions: wait for seven days and then Samuel would lead in a sacrifice to pray for success in battle. But as tensions rose, the king took matters into his own hands: he offered up the sacrifice himself, despite God's clear instructions.

Samuel's voice rang out just as Saul finished making the offering: “What have you done?” Saul tried to explain that he felt compelled to offer the sacrifice because the enemy was near and his men were scattering.

“You have done a foolish thing,” Samuel said. It turns out that this had been a test, a chance for Saul to decide in whom he would trust for his security. Saul's nervousness showed that when it came right down to it, he trusted in his own efforts more than in God. That day proved to be the beginning of the end for Saul.

When God is “slow to show up” in your life, do you get nervous? What does that show? Are you willing to wait for him?

Prayer

Lord, forgive us when we trust in our resources more than we trust in you. Help us to obey and have faith in you. Amen.

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