

# 1 Samuel 14 - Jonathan's Success at Michmash; Saul's Foolish Oath; Saul's Blindness to His Guilt

III. Samuel and Saul narrative (8:1—15:35)

(7) Saul's rash vow (14:1-52)

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1 One day Jonathan told his armor bearer, "Come, let's go over to the Philistine garrison which is on the other side," but he did not tell his father.

1 Now it came to pass upon a day, that Jonathan the son of Saul said unto the young man that bare his armour, Come, and let us go over to the Philistines' garrison, that is on the other side. But he told not his father.

- Armed with trust in God and courage, Jonathan ventured out to destroy Israel's enemy in obedience to God's command to drive out the inhabitants of Canaan (9:16)

2 Saul was staying on the outskirts of Gibeah under the pomegranate tree that is in Migron. And the people who *were* with him *numbered* about six hundred men;

2 Saul was staying in the outskirts of Gibeah under the pomegranate tree which is in Migron. And the people who *were* with him *were* about six hundred men,

2 Saul was sitting on the outskirts of Geba under the pomegranate tree which was at Migron, and with him were about 600 men.

2 And Saul tarried in the uttermost part of Gibeah under a pomegranate tree which is in Migron: and the people that were with him were about six hundred men;

- Saul remained in Gibeah, evidently on the defensive

— His comfortable position under a fruit tree (Cf. 22:6; Judges 4:5) in secure Gibeah, surrounded by his soldiers, contrasts with Jonathan's vulnerable and difficult position with

only the support of his armor bearer

— Jonathan was launching out in faith to obey God, but Saul was resting comfortably and failing to do God's will

3 and Ahijah, the son of Ahitub, Ichabod's brother, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eli, the priest of the LORD at Shiloh, was wearing an ephod. And the people did not know that Jonathan had gone.

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3 Along with him were Ahitub's son Ahijah, Ichabod's brother, who was Phineas' son and a grandson of Eli the priest of the LORD at Shiloh, who was carrying the ephod. The people did not know that Jonathan had gone.

3 And Ahiah, the son of Ahitub, Ichabod's brother, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eli, the LORD'S priest in Shiloh, wearing an ephod. And the people knew not that Jonathan was gone.

- Saul is accompanied by Ahijah ("My Brother is the Lord"), a member of the rejected priestly house of Eli

— The needless genealogical reference to Ichabod ("the Glory has departed") shows us that, with his own royal glory gone, where else would we expect to see Saul than with a relative of "Glory gone"?

4 Now between the gorges by which Jonathan sought to cross over to the Philistines' garrison there was a rocky crag on the one side, and a rocky crag on the other side; and the name of the one was Bozez, and the name of the other, Seneh.

4 Between the passes by which Jonathan sought to cross over to the Philistines' garrison, there was a sharp crag on the one side and a sharp crag on the other side, and the name of the one was Bozez, and the name of the other Seneh.

4 Now in the pass through which Jonathan planned to get across to the Philistine garrison, there was a sharp crag on one side and a sharp crag on the other side. The name of the one was Bozez, and the name of the other was Seneh.

4 And between the passages, by which Jonathan sought to go over unto the Philistines' garrison, there was a sharp rock on the one side, and a sharp rock on the other side: and the name of the one was Bozez, and the name of the other Seneh.

5 The one crag rose on the north opposite Michmash, and the other on the south opposite Geba.



**6** And Jonathan said to the young man that bare his armour, Come, and let us go over unto the garrison of these uncircumcised: it may be that the LORD will work for us: for there is no restraint to the LORD to save by many or by few.

- In contrast to his father Saul, Jonathan fully understood God's role as the Leader and Deliverer of His people

— He viewed the Philistines as unbelievers, under divine judgment, whom God wanted exterminated

— He also believed that God would work for His people in response to faith, as He had done repeatedly in Israel's history

— He also knew that superior numbers were not necessary for God to give victory in battle (Cf. 17:47; Judges 7:4,7)

7 His armor bearer said to him, "Do everything that is in your heart; turn yourself *to it*, and here I am with you, as your heart *desires*."

7 His armor bearer said to him, "Do all that is in your heart; turn yourself, *and* here I am with you according to your desire."

7 His armor bearer told him, "Do whatever you want. Let's move out! I'm right here with you, as you wish."

**7** And his armourbearer said unto him, Do all that is in thine heart: turn thee; behold, I am with thee according to thy heart.

8 Then Jonathan said, "Behold, we are going to cross over to the men and reveal ourselves to them.

8 Then Jonathan said, "Behold, we will cross over to the men and reveal ourselves to them.

8 Jonathan said, "Look, we're going over to the men, and we will show ourselves to them.

**8** Then said Jonathan, Behold, we will pass over unto these men, and we will discover ourselves unto them.

9 If they say to us, 'Wait until we come to you'; then we will stand in our place and not go up to them.

9 If they say to us, 'Wait until we come to you'; then we will stand in our place and not go up to them.

9 If they say to us, 'Stay there until we come to you,' then we will stay where we are and not go up to them.

9 If they say thus unto us, Tarry until we come to you; then we will stand still in our place, and will not go up unto them.

10 But if they say, 'Come up to us,' then we will go up, for the LORD has handed them over to us; and this *shall* be the sign to us."

10 But if they say, 'Come up to us,' then we will go up, for the LORD has given them into our hands; and this shall be the sign to us."

10 But if they say, 'Come up and fight us,' then we will go up, for the LORD has given them into our hands, and this will be the sign for us."

10 But if they say thus, Come up unto us; then we will go up: for the LORD hath delivered them into our hand: and this shall be a sign unto us.

- Jonathan means "The Lord Has Given"

11 When the two of them revealed themselves to the garrison of the Philistines, the Philistines said, "Behold, Hebrews are coming out of the holes where they have kept themselves hidden."

11 When both of them revealed themselves to the garrison of the Philistines, the Philistines said, "Behold, Hebrews are coming out of the holes where they have hidden themselves."

11 When the two of them showed themselves to the Philistine garrison, the Philistines said, "Look, the Hebrews are coming out of the holes where they have been hiding."

**11** And both of them discovered themselves unto the garrison of the Philistines: and the Philistines said, Behold, the Hebrews come forth out of the holes where they had hid themselves.

12 So the men of the garrison responded to Jonathan and his armor bearer and said, "Come up to us and we will inform you of something." And Jonathan said to his armor bearer, "Come up after me, for the LORD has handed them over to Israel."

12 So the men of the garrison hailed Jonathan and his armor bearer and said, "Come up to us and we will tell you something." And Jonathan said to his armor bearer, "Come up after me, for the LORD has given them into the hands of Israel."

12 The men of the garrison responded to Jonathan and his armor bearer: "Come up and fight us, and we will show you something."

Jonathan then told his armor bearer, "Follow me, for the LORD has given them into Israel's control."

12 And the men of the garrison answered Jonathan and his armourbearer, and said, Come up to us, and we will shew you a thing. And Jonathan said unto his armourbearer, Come up after me: for the LORD hath delivered them into the hand of Israel.

13 Then Jonathan climbed up on his hands and feet, with his armor bearer behind him; and *the men* fell before Jonathan, and his armor bearer put some to death after him.

13 Then Jonathan climbed up on his hands and feet, with his armor bearer behind him; and they fell before Jonathan, and his armor bearer put some to death after him.

13 Jonathan crawled up on his hands and feet, with his armor bearer following him. The Philistines fell before Jonathan, and his armor bearer who was behind him also killed some.

13 And Jonathan climbed up upon his hands and upon his feet, and his armourbearer after him: and they fell before Jonathan; and his armourbearer slew after him.

14 Now that first slaughter which Jonathan and his armor bearer inflicted was about twenty men within about half a furrow in an acre of land.

14 That first slaughter which Jonathan and his armor bearer made was about twenty men within about half a furrow in an acre of land.

14 In the initial attack, Jonathan and his armor bearer struck down about twenty men in an area of about half an acre of land.

14 And that first slaughter, which Jonathan and his armourbearer made, was about twenty men, within as it were an half acre of land, which a yoke of oxen might plow.

15 And there was a trembling in the camp, in the field, and among all the people. Even the garrison and the raiders trembled, and the earth quaked so that it became a great trembling.

15 And there was a trembling in the camp, in the field, and among all the people. Even the garrison and the raiders trembled, and the earth quaked so that it became a great trembling.

15 There was terror in the camp, in the field, and among all the people. Even the garrison and the raiders were terrified. The earth shook, and there was even greater terror.

**15** And there was trembling in the host, in the field, and among all the people: the garrison, and the spoilers, they also trembled, and the earth quaked: so it was a very great trembling.

- God struck the Philistines with panic; the ground shook and men scattered in every direction

— Evidently, God sent an earthquake to unnerve the Philistines (Cf. Deut 7:23)

**16** Now Saul's watchmen in Gibeah of Benjamin looked, and behold, the multitude dissolved; they went here *and there*.

**16** Now Saul's watchmen in Gibeah of Benjamin looked, and behold, the multitude melted away; and they went here *and there*.

16 Saul's sentries in Gibeah of Benjamin watched as the camp was in disarray, going this way and that.

16 And the watchmen of Saul in Gibeah of Benjamin looked; and, behold, the multitude melted away, and they went on beating down one another.

- Saul's scouts reported back to Saul what they saw

17 So Saul said to the people who *were* with him, "Look carefully now and see who has left us." And when they had looked, behold, Jonathan and his armor bearer were not *there*.

17 Saul said to the people who *were* with him, "Number now and see who has gone from us." And when they had numbered, behold, Jonathan and his armor bearer were not *there*.

17 Saul told the people who were with him, "Do a roll call and see who has left us." They did a roll call, and Jonathan and his armor bearer were not there.

17 Then said Saul unto the people that were with him, Number now, and see who is gone from us. And when they had numbered, behold, Jonathan and his armour bearer were not there.

18 Then Saul said to Ahijah, "Bring the ark of God here." For at that time the ark of God was with the sons of Israel.

18 Then Saul said to Ahijah, "Bring the ark of God here." For the ark of God was at that time with the sons of Israel.

18 Saul told Ahijah, "Bring the Ark of God here." For at that time the Ark of God was with the Israelis.

18 And Saul said unto Ahiah, Bring hither the ark of God. For the ark of God was at that time with the children of Israel.

- Saul was a person who prays when he should act, and acts when he should pray

— When he should have been acting, he was waiting; when he should have been waiting, he was acting

- Meanwhile Ahijah the priest (Cf. v3) came bearing the Ark of the Lord. It was still housed at Kiriath Jearim (7:1) but as a symbol of the presence of the Lord, it was summoned by Saul to the battle.

19 While Saul talked to the priest, the commotion in the camp of the Philistines continued and increased; so Saul said to the priest, "Withdraw your hand."

19 While Saul talked to the priest, the commotion in the camp of the Philistines continued and increased; so Saul said to the priest, "Withdraw your hand."

19 While Saul was still speaking to the priest, the commotion in the Philistine camp increased more and more, and Saul told the priest, "Remove your hand."

19 And it came to pass, while Saul talked unto the priest, that the noise that was in the host of the Philistines went on and increased: and Saul said unto the priest, Withdraw thine hand.

- When Saul saw that the Philistines were in total disarray, he ordered Ahijah to withdraw his hand (i.e. from the sacred lots, the Urim and Thummim, 14:19; Cf. Ex 28:29-30; 1 Sam 14:40-42)

— The will of God was now clear so Saul, with Israelite defectors and refugees, achieved a great triumph

20 Then Saul and all the people who *were* with him rallied and came to the battle; and behold, every man's sword was against his fellow *Philistine*, and there was very great confusion.

20 Then Saul and all the people who *were* with him rallied and came to the battle; and behold, every man's sword was against his fellow, and there was very great confusion.

20 Then Saul and all the people who were with him assembled and went into battle. Now the swords of all the Philistines were against each other, and there was very great confusion.

20 And Saul and all the people that were with him assembled themselves, and they came to the battle: and, behold, every man's sword was against his fellow, and there was a very great discomfiture.

- The Philistine panic was so great that when Saul and his army joined the battle, they found Philistines striking one another (Cf. Judges 7:22; 2 Chr 20:23)

21 Now the Hebrews *who* were with the Philistines previously, who went up with them all around in the camp, even they also *returned* to be with the Israelites who *were* with Saul and Jonathan.

21 Now the Hebrews *who* were with the Philistines previously, who went up with them all around in the camp, even they also *turned* to be with the Israelites who *were* with Saul and Jonathan.

21 The Hebrews who had previously been with the Philistines, who had gone up with them from the surrounding areas to the camp, even they joined Israel and those who were with Saul and Jonathan.

21 Moreover the Hebrews that were with the Philistines before that time, which went up with them into the camp from the country round about, even they also turned to be with the Israelites that were with Saul and Jonathan.

- Some Israelite deserters, or mercenaries, who were fighting for the Philistines changed their allegiance and took sides with Jonathan

22 When all the men of Israel who had kept themselves hidden in the hill country of Ephraim heard that the Philistines had fled, they also closely pursued them in the battle.

22 When all the men of Israel who had hidden themselves in the hill country of Ephraim heard that the Philistines had fled, even they also pursued them closely in the battle.

22 All the Israelis who had been hiding in the hill country of Ephraim heard that the Philistines were fleeing, and even they pursued the Philistines in the battle.

22 Likewise all the men of Israel which had hid themselves in mount Ephraim, when they heard that the Philistines fled, even they also followed hard after them in the battle.

23 So the LORD saved Israel that day, and the battle spread beyond Beth-aven.

23 So the LORD delivered Israel that day, and the battle spread beyond Beth-aven.

23 On that day the LORD delivered Israel, and the battle moved past Beth-aven.

23 So the LORD saved Israel that day: and the battle passed over unto Bethaven.

- Jonathan, Saul's son, was evidently a godly man; for the Lord gave him and his armor bearer a victory over the Philistines. Saul was only a spectator, but he then mustered his troops and shared in the victory.

**24** Now the men of Israel were hard-pressed on that day, for Saul had put the people under oath, saying, "Cursed be the man who eats food before evening, and *before* I have avenged myself on my enemies." So none of the people tasted food.

**24** Now the men of Israel were hard-pressed on that day, for Saul had put the people under oath, saying, "Cursed be the man who eats food before evening, and until I have avenged myself on my enemies." So none of the people tasted food.

**24** The men of Israel were hard pressed on that day, and Saul required the army to take an oath: "Cursed is the person who eats food before evening and before I've been avenged of my enemies." So no one tasted food.

**24** And the men of Israel were distressed that day: for Saul had adjured the people, saying, Cursed be the man that eateth any food until evening, that I may be avenged on mine enemies. So none of the people tasted any food.

- Earlier that day, Saul gave a foolish edict forbidding his soldiers from eating any food

— The foolishness came when Saul thought a sacrificial vow would give him victory when his heart was not right with God

— Saul's motives are unknown, but such an oath attempts to impress God with devotion in order to get the help needed for victory

- It was also obvious that Saul misunderstood his role as Israel's king, and God's current program: the Philistines were not Saul's enemies, they were God's enemies

— This was holy war (Cf. Judges 16:28), but Saul viewed the battle personally, as *his* war; he lost all perspective

Many people offer similar oaths that sound like, "God if you..., then I will never..." or God, I will...every day until you..." These types of prayers reveal greater devotion to our own

wants than to God and His desires.

25 All *the people of* the land entered the forest, and there was honey on the ground.

25 All *the people of* the land entered the forest, and there was honey on the ground.

25 Later on, all the soldiers entered the woods, and there was honey on the ground.

25 And all they of the land came to a wood; and there was honey upon the ground.

26 When the people entered the forest, behold, *there was* honey dripping; but no man put his hand to his mouth, because the people feared the oath.

26 When the people entered the forest, behold, *there was* a flow of honey; but no man put his hand to his mouth, for the people feared the oath.

26 The people came into the woods and there was flowing honey, but no one put his hand to his mouth to eat it because the people were afraid due to the oath.

26 And when the people were come into the wood, behold, the honey dropped; but no man put his hand to his mouth: for the people feared the oath.

- An oath was a serious matter at the time; one did not violate a king's oath without suffering severe consequences

27 However, Jonathan had not heard *it* when his father put the people under oath; so he put out the end of the staff that *was* in his hand and dipped it in the honeycomb, and put his hand to his mouth, and his eyes brightened.

27 But Jonathan had not heard when his father put the people under oath; therefore, he put out the end of the staff that *was* in his hand and dipped it in the honeycomb, and put his hand to his mouth, and his eyes brightened.

27 But Jonathan had not heard that his father had required the army to swear an oath, so he stretched out the end of the staff that was in his hand and dipped it in the honeycomb. He brought it back to his mouth and his eyes brightened.

27 But Jonathan heard not when his father charged the people with the oath: wherefore he put forth the end of the rod that was in his hand, and dipped it in an honeycomb, and put his hand to his mouth; and his eyes were enlightened.

- Jonathan knew nothing about this oath, so he went ahead and ate some honey and was strengthened

— His example of practical wisdom encouraged the army to go ahead and eat after their victory (v31-32)

28 Then one of the people responded and said, "Your father strictly put the people under oath, saying, 'Cursed be the man who eats food today.'" And the people were weary.

28 Then one of the people said, "Your father strictly put the people under oath, saying, 'Cursed be the man who eats food today.'" And the people were weary.

28 Then one of the people responded: "Your father strictly ordered the army to take an oath. That's why he said, 'Cursed is the person who eats food today,' and so the army is exhausted."

28 Then answered one of the people, and said, Thy father straitly charged the people with an oath, saying, Cursed be the man that eateth any food this day. And the people were faint.

29 Then Jonathan said, "My father has **troubled** the land. See now that my eyes have brightened because I tasted a little of this honey.

29 Then Jonathan said, "My father has troubled the land. See now, how my eyes have brightened because I tasted a little of this honey.

29 Jonathan said, "My father has troubled the land. See how my eyes have brightened because I tasted a little of this honey.

**29** Then said Jonathan, My father hath troubled the land: see, I pray you, how mine eyes have been enlightened, because I tasted a little of this honey.

- "...troubled" - *ákar*, the same Hebrew word from which "Achan" and "Achor" come (Joshua 7:25-26)

— Saul, not Jonathan, had "troubled" Israel, as Achan had, by his foolish command

30 How much more, if only the people had freely eaten today of the spoils of their enemies which they found! For now the defeat among the Philistines has not been great."

30 How much more, if only the people had eaten freely today of the spoil of their enemies which they found! For now the slaughter among the Philistines has not been great."

30 How much better if the army had eaten freely today of their enemy's spoil that they found, because the slaughter among the Philistines has not been great."

30 How much more, if haply the people had eaten freely to day of the spoil of their enemies which they found? for had there not been now a much greater slaughter among the Philistines?

**31** They attacked the Philistines that day from Michmash to Aijalon. But the people were very tired.

**31** They struck among the Philistines that day from Michmash to Aijalon. And the people were very weary.

**31** That day they struck down the Philistines from Michmash to Aijalon, and the army was very weary.

31 And they smote the Philistines that day from Michmash to Aijalon: and the people were very faint.

- Aijalon was about 17 miles west of Michmash

32 So the people loudly rushed upon the spoils, and took sheep, oxen, and calves, and slaughtered *them* on the ground; and the people ate *them* with the blood.

32 The people rushed greedily upon the spoil, and took sheep and oxen and calves, and slew *them* on the ground; and the people ate *them* with the blood.

32 The army grabbed the spoil, took sheep, oxen, and calves, and slaughtered them on the ground, and then the army ate them with the blood.

32 And the people flew upon the spoil, and took sheep, and oxen, and calves, and slew them on the ground: and the people did eat them with the blood.

- Saul's army was so hungry they ate the meat without draining the blood, contrary to Mosaic Law (Lev 17:10-14)

— This violation was worse than breaking Saul's vow

33 Then *observers* informed Saul, saying, "Look, the people are sinning against the LORD by eating *meat* with the blood." And he said, "You have acted treacherously; roll a **largerock** to me today."

33 Then they told Saul, saying, "Behold, the people are sinning against the LORD by eating with the blood." And he said, "You have acted treacherously; roll a great stone to me today."

33 Someone reported this to Saul: "Right now the army is sinning against the LORD by eating meat with the blood." He said, "You have acted treacherously. Roll a large stone to me today."

33 Then they told Saul, saying, Behold, the people sin against the LORD, in that they eat with the blood. And he said, Ye have transgressed: roll a great stone unto me this day.

- "...large rock" - served as a slaughtering table where priests prepared the meat for eating

— This so alarmed Saul that he hastily built an altar on which to offer a propitiatory sacrifice to the Lord

34 Then Saul said, "Disperse yourselves among the people and say to them, 'Each one of you bring me his ox or his sheep, and slaughter *it* here and eat; and do not sin against the LORD by eating *it* with the blood.'" So all the people brought *them* that night, each one his ox with him, and they slaughtered *them* there.

34 Saul said, "Disperse yourselves among the people and say to them, 'Each one of you bring me his ox or his sheep, and slaughter *it* here and eat; and do not sin against the

LORD by eating with the blood.'" So all the people that night brought each one his ox with him and slaughtered *it* there.

34 Then Saul said, "Disperse yourselves among the soldiers and say to them, 'Let each man bring his ox and his sheep to me, and you are to slaughter them here and eat. But don't sin against the LORD by eating meat with the blood.'" So every soldier brought his ox with him that night, and they slaughtered them there.

34 And Saul said, Disperse yourselves among the people, and say unto them, Bring me hither every man his ox, and every man his sheep, and slay them here, and eat; and sin not against the LORD in eating with the blood. And all the people brought every man his ox with him that night, and slew them there.

35 And Saul built an altar to the LORD; it was the first altar that he built to the LORD.

35 And Saul built an altar to the LORD; it was the first altar that he built to the LORD.

35 Saul built an altar to the LORD; it was the first altar that he built to the LORD.

35 And Saul built an altar unto the LORD: the same was the first altar that he built unto the LORD.

- Saul was not entirely insensitive to God's will: he was concerned about observing ritual dietary law (v33), and desired to honor God for the victory (Cf. Ex 17:14-16)

— However, Saul may have built the altar simply to make amends for his legal infringement, not to express gratitude for the victory

— There are many examples of spiritually insensitive Israelites building altars to God (7:17; Gen 12:8; Judges 6:24; 2 Sam 24:25; 1 Chr 21:18)

— It's interesting that this is the first altar Saul built, showing his general lack of commitment to God

**36** Then Saul said, "Let's go down after the Philistines by night and take plunder among them until the morning light, and let's not leave a man among them alive." And they said, "Do whatever seems good to you." So the priest said, "Let's approach God here."

**36** Then Saul said, "Let us go down after the Philistines by night and take spoil among them until the morning light, and let us not leave a man of them." And they said, "Do whatever seems good to you." So the priest said, "Let us draw near to God here."

**36** Saul said, "Let's go down after the Philistines tonight and plunder them until dawn, and let's not leave a single one of them alive."

They said, "Do whatever seems good to you!"

But the priest said, "Let's draw near to God here."

**36** And Saul said, Let us go down after the Philistines by night, and spoil them until the morning light, and let us not leave a man of them. And they said, Do whatsoever seemeth good unto thee. Then said the priest, Let us draw near hither unto God.

- Saul would not have sought the Lord unless Ahijah (v3) had not suggested it

— Once again (Cf. v18), Saul prays when he should act, and acts when he should pray

37 So Saul inquired of God: "Shall I go down after the Philistines? Will You hand them over to Israel?" But He did not answer him on that day.

37 Saul inquired of God, "Shall I go down after the Philistines? Will You give them into the hand of Israel?" But He did not answer him on that day.

37 Saul inquired of God, "Shall I go down after the Philistines? Will you give them into the hand of Israel?" But God did not answer him that day.

**37** And Saul asked counsel of God, Shall I go down after the Philistines? wilt thou deliver them into the hand of Israel? But he answered him not that day.

- Saul determined to pursue and plunder the Philistines further but could not get an answer from the Lord

— God did not answer his prayer immediately because Saul wanted this information to vindicate himself, rather than earnestly seeking God's will

— To Saul, the lack of an answer to his prayer was because someone violated the fast, and by means of the lot (i.e. the Urim and Thummin, v41-42; Cf. v19) he discovered it was his own son Jonathan

— Only the interposition of Saul's men prevented Jonathan's execution (v45)

38 Then Saul said, "Come here, all you leaders of the people, and investigate and see how this sin has happened today.

38 Saul said, "Draw near here, all you chiefs of the people, and investigate and see how this sin has happened today.

38 Saul said, "All you army officers are to come here to find out what constitutes this sin today.

38 And Saul said, Draw ye near hither, all the chief of the people: and know and see wherein this sin hath been this day.

- Saul confused his oath with God's Law, calling the violation of his oath a "sin"

39 For as the LORD lives, who saves Israel, even if it is in my son Jonathan, he shall assuredly die!" But not one of all the people answered him.

39 For as the LORD lives, who delivers Israel, though it is in Jonathan my son, he shall surely die." But not one of all the people answered him.

39 Indeed, as the LORD who delivers Israel lives, even if the sin is with my son Jonathan, he will surely die!" Not a single one of the soldiers answered him.

39 For, as the LORD liveth, which saveth Israel, though it be in Jonathan my son, he shall surely die. But there was not a man among all the people that answered him.

- Saul was so confused about the difference between his edict and God's Law that he promised to execute anyone who violated his oath, even his own son

40 Then he said to all Israel, "You shall be on one side, and I and my son Jonathan will be on the other side." And the people said to Saul, "Do what seems good to you."

40 Then he said to all Israel, "You shall be on one side and I and Jonathan my son will be on the other side." And the people said to Saul, "Do what seems good to you."

40 Then he told all Israel, "You will be on one side, and I and my son Jonathan will be on the other side."

The people told Saul, "Do what seems good to you."

40 Then said he unto all Israel, Be ye on one side, and I and Jonathan my son will be on the other side. And the people said unto Saul, Do what seemeth good unto thee.

41 Therefore, Saul said to the LORD, the God of Israel, "**Give** a perfect *lot*." And Jonathan and Saul were selected by lot, but the people were exonerated.

41 Therefore, Saul said to the LORD, the God of Israel, "Give a perfect *lot*." And Jonathan and Saul were taken, but the people escaped.

41 Then Saul told the LORD God of Israel, "Judge us properly." Jonathan and Saul were selected, but the army was cleared.

**41** Therefore Saul said unto the LORD God of Israel, Give a perfect lot. And Saul and Jonathan were taken: but the people escaped.

- "...Give" - "Shew the innocent"

42 Then Saul said, "Cast *lots* between me and my son Jonathan." And Jonathan was selected by lot.

42 Saul said, "Cast *lots* between me and Jonathan my son." And Jonathan was taken.

42 Saul said, "Cast lots between me and my son Jonathan," and Jonathan was selected.

42 And Saul said, Cast lots between me and Jonathan my son. And Jonathan was taken.

- God identified Jonathan rather than Saul as the guilty party

— Jonathan had violated the king's command, but not God's command. In fact, Jonathan was carrying out God's will.

**43** So Saul said to Jonathan, "Tell me what you have done." And Jonathan told him, and said, "I did indeed taste a little honey with the end of the staff that was in my hand. Here I am, I must die!"

**43** Then Saul said to Jonathan, "Tell me what you have done." So Jonathan told him and said, "I indeed tasted a little honey with the end of the staff that was in my hand. Here I am, I must die!"

43 Saul told Jonathan, "Tell me what you've done."

So Jonathan spoke to him: "I did taste a little honey from the end of the staff that was in my hand. Here I am; I'm ready to die!"

43 Then Saul said to Jonathan, Tell me what thou hast done. And Jonathan told him, and said, I did but taste a little honey with the end of the rod that was in mine hand, and, lo, I must die.

44 And Saul said, "May God do the same *to me* and more also, for you shall certainly die, Jonathan!"

44 Saul said, "May God do this *to me* and more also, for you shall surely die, Jonathan."

44 Saul said, "May God do this to me and even more, if you don't surely die, Jonathan!"

**44** And Saul answered, God do so and more also: for thou shalt surely die, Jonathan.

- If Jonathan had broken God's command, he would have to die; however, he only broke Saul's edict, which is not on the same level of authority as God's, as Saul thought it was

45 But the people said to Saul, "Must Jonathan die, he who has brought about this great victory in Israel? Far from it! As the LORD lives, not *even* a hair of his head shall fall to the ground, because he has worked with God this day." So the people rescued Jonathan and he did not die.

45 But the people said to Saul, "Must Jonathan die, who has brought about this great deliverance in Israel? Far from it! As the LORD lives, not one hair of his head shall fall to the ground, for he has worked with God this day." So the people rescued Jonathan and he did not die.

45 Then the army told Saul, "Shall Jonathan die, who brought about this great deliverance in Israel? As the LORD lives, not one hair of his head will fall to the ground, because today he did this with God's help."

**45** And the people said unto Saul, Shall Jonathan die, who hath wrought this great salvation in Israel? God forbid: as the LORD liveth, there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground; for he hath wrought with God this day. So the people rescued Jonathan, that he died not.

- The soldiers, who had gone along with Saul's requests thus far (v36,40), refused to follow his orders when he called for Jonathan's execution

— They recognized that Saul's rule about abstaining from eating (v24) was not divine law

— They also saw that even though Jonathan had violated Saul's rule, he had obeyed God's order to drive Israel's enemies out of the Land

46 Then Saul went up from pursuing the Philistines, and the Philistines went to their own place.

46 Then Saul went up from pursuing the Philistines, and the Philistines went to their own place.

46 Then Saul stopped pursuing the Philistines, and the Philistines went back to their territory.

**46** Then Saul went up from following the Philistines: and the Philistines went to their own place.

Saul's failure to see his role under God and the difference between the Word of God and his own commands resulted in confusion and disunity. Saul's preoccupation with Jonathan's eating against his wishes cost him a great victory over the Philistines. Saul's choices focused on achieving his expectations by any means.

1 Sam 13-14 points to the reason for Saul's ultimate failure as Israel's king, and the reason for his own personal destruction. Essentially, Saul refused to put the will of God above his own personal desires. Careful attention to the text shows that Saul showed great concern about the observance of religious rituals, but he failed to appreciate the importance of submitting his will to God. He sought to use God rather than allow God to use him. He thought he was above the Mosaic Law rather than under it. He put himself in the position that God alone rightfully occupies. In addition, Saul never submitted to divine authority unless he felt it was to his advantage to do so. He always wanted to maintain control over his own life.

**47** Now when Saul had taken control of the kingdom over Israel, he fought against all his enemies on every side, against Moab, the sons of Ammon, Edom, the kings of Zobah, and the Philistines; and wherever he turned, he inflicted punishment.

**47** Now when Saul had taken the kingdom over Israel, he fought against all his enemies on every side, against Moab, the sons of Ammon, Edom, the kings of Zobah, and the Philistines; and wherever he turned, he inflicted punishment.

**47** When Saul became king over Israel, he fought against all his enemies on every side—against Moab, the Ammonites, Edom, the kings of Zobah, and the Philistines. Everywhere he turned he was victorious.

**47** So Saul took the kingdom over Israel, and fought against all his enemies on every side, against Moab, and against the children of Ammon, and against Edom, and against the kings of Zobah, and against the Philistines: and whithersoever he turned himself, he vexed them.

48 And he acted valiantly and defeated the Amalekites, and saved Israel from the hands of those who plundered them.

48 He acted valiantly and defeated the Amalekites, and delivered Israel from the hands of those who plundered them.

48 He acted valiantly, defeated Amalek, and delivered Israel from those who had been plundering them.

48 And he gathered an host, and smote the Amalekites, and delivered Israel out of the hands of them that spoiled them.

The major campaigns of Saul are listed in v47-48 and include victories over Moab, Ammon, Edom, Zobah (the Arameans), the Philistines, and even the Amalekites, though his success over the latter was tempered by his lack of complete obedience to God (Cf. 15:20-23).

Saul was an active warrior and was effective to an extent due to his native abilities and God's limited blessing. He punished the enemies of Israel, which was God's will, but he did not subdue and defeat them all as David did. He subdued the Philistines in the central, hilly part of Israel, but by the end of his reign they were as much of a threat as before.

**49** Now the sons of Saul were Jonathan, Ishvi, and Malchi-shua; and the names of his two daughters *were these*: the name of the firstborn *was* Merab, and the name of the younger, Michal.

**49** Now the sons of Saul were Jonathan and Ishvi and Malchi-shua; and the names of his two daughters *were these*: the name of the firstborn Merab and the name of the younger Michal.

**49** Saul's sons included Jonathan, Ishvi, and Malchi-shua. Of his two daughters, the firstborn was named Merab, and the younger one was named Michal.

**49** Now the sons of Saul were Jonathan, and Ishui, and Melchishua: and the names of his two daughters were these; the name of the firstborn Merab, and the name of the younger Michal:

50 And the name of Saul's wife was Ahinoam the daughter of Ahimaaz. And the name of the commander of his army was Abner the son of Ner, Saul's uncle.

50 The name of Saul's wife was Ahinoam the daughter of Ahimaaz. And the name of the captain of his army was Abner the son of Ner, Saul's uncle.

50 Saul's wife was Ahinoam, daughter of Ahimaaz, while the commander of his army was Saul's uncle Ner's son Abner.

50 And the name of Saul's wife was Ahinoam, the daughter of Ahimaaz: and the name of the captain of his host was Abner, the son of Ner, Saul's uncle.

51 Kish *was* the father of Saul, and Ner the father of Abner *was* the son of Abiel.

51 Kish *was* the father of Saul, and Ner the father of Abner *was* the son of Abiel.

51 Saul's father Kish and Abner's father Ner were sons of Abiel.

51 And Kish was the father of Saul; and Ner the father of Abner was the son of Abiel.

The information on a king's family members was common to include as part of a summary of a king's accomplishments (Cf. 2 Sam 8).

**52** Now the war against the Philistines was severe all the days of Saul; and when Saul saw any warrior or any valiant man, he attached him to his staff.

**52** Now the war against the Philistines was severe all the days of Saul; and when Saul saw any mighty man or any valiant man, he attached him to his staff.

**52** There was intense fighting against the Philistines during Saul's entire reign, and whenever Saul discovered a strong or valiant warrior, he would enlist him for service.

**52** And there was sore war against the Philistines all the days of Saul: and when Saul saw any strong man, or any valiant man, he took him unto him.