

1 Samuel Lesson 21 Saul's Vow and the Philistine Battle

Key Themes in 1 Samuel :

- The connection between our obedience and our relationship to God
- God opposes the proud and exalts the humble
- Despite human evil, God is working out His purposes in history
- Kingship in Israel and God's plan to one day raise up an anointed divine king

Background:

Fasting for Battle: Fasting in the old testament was usually associated with either mourning or making a request of Yahweh. It was incomprehensible to send men into battle fasting.

Eating Without Draining the Blood: In Israel the blood was seen as a life giving force of any animal and as such it belonged to the life giver. Before an animal was eaten, the blood was poured out on an altar. Only after that could the animal be eaten. (Lev.17:10-14)

Key Words:

hard pressed: Strong's H5065 "nagas" from the verb meaning to exact or exert demanding pressure. (TWOT) Various translations give this word as "pressed to exhaustion", "in distress", "worn out". It is used in Exodus 3:7 in association with the Egyptian taskmasters and slave drivers who oppressed the Israelites.

put under oath: Strong's H422 "ala": to put under an oath or solemn statement before God. The word is translated "had adjured" in the KJV. "Adjure" means to compel one to swear.

Read 1 Samuel 14:24-52

1. In 14:23 we read that the battle continued that day. According to 14:24 how did Saul prepare his men for battle and what was his motive in fighting the Philistines? What does both his order to the men and his motive reveal about his character and relationship with God?

2. What does God have to say about an oath or a vow in Deut. 23:21-23? What were some of the consequences of Saul's order to fast?

Application: Saul's unwise order almost cost him the life of his son. As Christians how do we gain the wisdom we need to make good decisions? See Proverbs 1:7, James 1:5-8.

3. According to 14:32 what sin did the people commit and what was the probable reason for it? Saul accused the people of acting treacherously. He was right to confront people's sin, but in what way did he act in a hypocritical way? See Matthew 7:3-5 What lesson can we learn from this regarding our own sin?

4. In 14:36 -37 Saul inquires of the Lord at the priests suggestion. What was God's response to Saul? Read Proverbs 1:28-33. How might this apply to Saul and his lack of response from the Lord? What lesson can we learn from this concerning God's word and our own obedience?

5. Review 1 Samuel chapter 14. and then compare the godly traits you see in Jonathan with the ungodly traits you see in Saul.

Application: Based on your list from question 5, what godly traits should you allow the Holy Spirit to develop in your life? As you made your list were there any sins that you were convicted of?

