

Introduction

We have been looking the last couple of our Bible studies at this time of testing for King Saul.

With the first test we saw the beginning of trouble for Saul was the matter of PRIDE as he claimed for himself a victory that his son Jonathan had won! Rather than being honest and truthful, Saul sought for the praise of men!

Proverbs 16:18 Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.

We saw also how that Israel also took a step down by their reliance on Saul rather than relying on God—it brought forth FEAR! (13:5-7)

The result being that it culminated in a SPIRITUAL DEFEAT for both Saul and Israel. As Saul showed a lack of faith to wait in patient obedience and do things God's way instead of his own way!

Then when he was confronted with his sin, **he was quick to shift blame to others rather than to accept responsibility.** This tendency of Saul's can be seen through Saul's entire career as king; **he never learned to accept responsibility for his own behavior.**

Saul had **known God's will and had chosen to defy it and** for this he was pronounced unfit to found a dynasty that would rule the chosen people of God.

Things could have been so much different. Had Saul only **shown the humility to confess his sin and accept responsibility on that early occasion, he might have developed into a king after God's own heart.**

Next we saw that **after failing the test of waiting on the LORD**, Israel's **small army got even smaller** because of all the desertions. (Israel's 3000 man army dwindled to 600 men! 20% of what he started with!) And the army had no weapons of war with the exception of Saul and Jonathan!

Because of this, Israel and Saul's **only hope was to rest in the LORD's help! The LORD wanted to give Israel victory! Then to Him would be all the glory of the victory!**

But we saw that as Saul and Israel were sitting still doing nothing. Jonathan and his armorbearer snuck out and began to attack a Philistine garrison on their own.

The Scripture shows us that his confidence was not in his own ability or his own weapons, but rather his confidence was in the LORD!

Against great odds, Jonathan and his armorbearer prevailed by the LORD's help and by their trust in the LORD!

Saul's watchmen caught sight of what was going on! They saw how the big Philistine army was melting away and how they were beating themselves up in all the chaos caused by Jonathan's attack and the LORD's causing a great trembling!

Saul and his army finally joined in the battle and the garrison was defeated, but it was mostly accomplished by the LORD's working through Jonathan, not Saul. **(Vs 23)**

Tonight we see another error in Saul's leadership. **(14:24-52)**
In these verses we see these things:

I. SAUL UTTERED AN UNWISE AND SELFISH OATH. (Vs 24)
It was unwise because it worked against what he was trying to accomplish!

It was selfish because he was thinking only of himself and his desires!

A. Saul Weakened His Army With This Oath. (Vs 25-26, 28c)
The army, more than likely, could have accomplished more had they been allowed to refresh themselves by eating! We'll see Jonathan points this out later. **(Vs 29-31)**

- B. Saul Caused Jonathan To Trespass This Oath. (Vs 27-28)**
Jonathan didn't hear his father give this charge.
As soon as he ate the honey, it caused him to perk up!
You could say it gave him his second wind!

But then someone close by filled him in on the bad news!

- C. Saul Caused The People To Transgress God's Law In Another Way. (Vs 31-35)**
They finished the battle but by the time they did, they were famished from not having ate so they begin to eat meat with the blood still in it.

II. SAUL AGAIN SHOWED POOR JUDGMENT. (Vs 36)

He was ready to send his army out without any rest!
The people said, "*Do whatsoever seemeth good to thee.*"
The priest said, "*Let's see what God has to say about this.*"

(The *Urim and the Thummim*... "*lights and perfections*" were objects in the breastplate of the high priest that were apparently used in some manner as a means of obtaining revelation from God. They are a type of Christ Who is the Perfect Light! How exactly they were used, we do not know for certain. See Exodus 28:30; Numbers 27:21; Deuteronomy 33:8; 1 Samuel 28:6; Ezra 2:63)

III. AT THE PRIEST'S RECOMMENDATION, SAUL SOUGHT THE LORD'S COUNSEL ON WHAT HE WAS ABOUT TO DO, BUT THE LORD DIDN'T ANSWER HIM THAT DAY. (Vs 37)

IV. SAUL OBVIOUSLY THOUGHT THE LACK OF AN ANSWER FROM THE LORD IS BECAUSE SOMEONE HAD VIOLATED HIS OATH. (Vs 38-39)

V. SAUL DISCERNED THE VIOLATION BY CASTING LOTS. (Vs 40-42)

VI. JONATHAN IS SAVED FROM HIS FATHER'S FOLLY BY THE PEOPLE! (Vs 43-45)

VII. A SUMMARY OF SAUL'S QUESTS AND FAMILY! (Vs 46-52)