

1 Samuel 14

King James Version (KJV)

14 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. (Jonathan and his armor bearer were taking on a garrison by themselves)

²And 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; (North of Gilgal) (Saul is outnumbered and unarmed. His men are using farm tools as weapons)

³And 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. (Ahiah was a high priest, brother to Ahimelech, who will later help David escape from Saul. Ahiah probably had no sons, so his brother took over the priesthood when he died)

⁴And 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. (Bozez = shining; Seneh = a thorn)

⁵The forefront of the one was situate northward over against Michmash, and the other southward over against Gibeah. (Jonathan realizes that this narrow pass will have to be crossed by Saul's army in order to fight the Philistines. This is a strategic location)

⁶And 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. (Jonathan has faith in God. If God is with you, no one can defeat you)

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

⁸Then said Jonathan, Behold, we will pass over unto these men, and we will discover ourselves unto them. (They are going to meet the enemy in the open; not hiding)

⁹If 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. (That would show courage in the Philistines, and send a message to Jonathan to retreat)

¹⁰But 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. (That would make the Philistines cowards; staying in their fortress, against two men)

(This is a fleece, of sorts, to God to help them decide if they should try to take this garrison)

¹¹And 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. (Hebrews= those who crossed the river <Euphrates>. This is what foreigners called the Israelites)

¹²And 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. (This was an answer from God to Jonathan to go take the Philistine garrison)

¹³And 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. (God gave Jonathan the victory over the whole garrison)

¹⁴And 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.

¹⁵And 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. (This was the main army of the Philistines. The defeat of the garrison by two men and the earth quake put the fear of God in them) (The earth quaked – caused by God to further put fear in the hearts of the Philistines)

¹⁶And the watchmen of Saul in Gibeah of Benjamin looked; and, behold, the multitude melted away, and they went on beating down one another. (In the chaos, the Philistines started fighting each other)

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 armourbearer were not there.

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. (This word "bring" is an appropriate verb to bring the ephod, not the ark) (Ark should have been translated ephod. The Ark of God was at Kirjathjirim, not there)

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. (There was no need to use the Ephod to enquire of God. Saul realized that it was time for action)

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. (discomfiture = confusion) (The Philistines were killing each other in the confusion. The dead Philistines provided the Israelites all the weapons they needed to finish the rest of them off)

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. (These Hebrews were collaborators and were conspiring with the Philistines. When they saw Israel fighting and winning, they re-joined Saul's army and fought the Philistines. Traitors have no loyalty to anyone)

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. (They finally found the courage to come out to fight the Philistines)

²³ So the LORD saved Israel that day: and the battle passed over unto Bethaven. (Bethaven = house of emptiness or nothing)

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. (Too much ego – on Saul's part; a stupid command by an egomaniac – to tell tired, hungry men not to eat all the day, in a battle, so the HE can avenge himself on HIS enemies)

(This is a good look into Saul's character. He is an egomaniac, taking credit for Jonathan's victory. God gave Jonathan the victory, not Saul. Saul only moved in when the battle was already being won. Saul will go on to be a bad leader)

²⁵ And all they of the land came to a wood; and there was honey upon the ground. (These men are tired and hungry after fighting a battle all day)

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. (Tired and hungry, they dared not eat because of the stupid oath that Saul made them take.)

(EGO – we already see what a man king will bring to Israel. Man cannot deal with absolute power without becoming an ego maniac. They should have remained loyal to God and let Him lead the country)

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 wasn't there to hear the oath of Saul)

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 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. (He is telling them that he already has more energy because he ate some of the honey)

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? (All Saul did was weaken his army with this stupid oath)

³¹ And they smote the Philistines that day from Michmash to Aijalon: and the people were very faint. (They are very tired and hungry. It is now sundown, so they can finally eat)

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. (Eating meat in the blood was against God's food laws. Saul was mostly responsible for this because he denied the army food all day)

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.

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. (Saul made them slaughter the animals according to God's blood ordinances. This was for the health and safety of the people; because there was no refrigeration in those days and they lived in a hot country)

³⁵ And Saul built an altar unto the LORD: the same was the first altar that he built unto the LORD. (The altar he began to build unto the Lord- better translation. This altar was a memorial unto what had happened there. It wasn't to be used for sacrifice. Saul has apparently learned his lesson after the first time)

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 is still on his ego trip. He sees this as his vengeance on the Philistines. The priest is trying to take Saul's rhetoric down a bit)

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. (Because of the sin of the people - eating the animals in the blood; because of Saul's ego trip with his ridiculous oath)

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 is looking for a scapegoat; someone to blame for God not answering his inquiry. So he's going to blame his men for eating meat not properly butchered or he will blame Jonathan for having eaten honey in his pursuit of the Philistines)

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. (Whoever it is that sinned and cause God not to answer ME, he will die; even if he turns out to be Jonathan my son. It was Saul's oath that caused the people to sin in the first place)

(Saul is already turning out to be a bad leader. It didn't take long for the new man king to corrupt himself, as God had warned them. Absolute power corrupts absolutely. He's ready to kill Jonathan for having eaten honey. Jonathan didn't know about the ridiculous oath that Saul forced the men to take)

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. (They're starting to realize that they have no power anymore. They are subject to this king)

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 a perfect lot = Show truth; lots drawn by the urum and thumum of the priest. God only shows truth. Saul's ego is out of control; now he's warning God to tell only the truth)

⁴² And Saul said, Cast lots between me and Jonathan my son. And Jonathan was taken. (He had eaten the honey after Saul made a vow for the people. Jonathan didn't even know about Saul's vow)

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 answered, God do so and more also: for thou shalt surely die, Jonathan. (Saul is a totally pathetic king; willing to kill his son over an oath that shouldn't have been taken in the first place)

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 people stood up for Jonathan when his own father wouldn't; over a ridiculous oath. God was obviously with Jonathan when he took the garrison. Maybe Saul was beginning to realize that he had caused all of this with his stupid oath)

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

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. (Zobah is a district inside Syria. Israel's enemies had been victimizing them for years on all their borders. God stopped defending Israel when they turned back to idolatry, and abandoned Him)

⁴⁸ And he gathered an host, and smote the Amalekites, and delivered Israel out of the hands of them that spoiled them. (See chapter 15)

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: (Ishui- also called Abenidab) (Michal would become one of David's wives) (Saul also had another son – Ishbosheth) See 2Samuel-2

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. (Abner was Saul's cousin)

⁵¹ And Kish was the father of Saul; and Ner the father of Abner was the son of Abiel. (There is no word in Hebrew for grandfather or grandson. Chapter-9:1 Kish is listed as the son of Abiel. He was a grandson of Abiel, not his son)

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. (As God had prophesied; a king will take your sons and daughters for his own service)