

A Foolish Leader

1 Samuel 14:24-52

Introduction:

1 Samuel 14:24-35

Precept: It is always wrong to disobey the Lord; but what about the decision that Saul made in 1 Samuel 14:24 - it was foolish.

The events of verses 31-32 result in Saul's men violating Genesis 9:6; Leviticus 17:11-12.

Precept: When I make a decision it is either good or poor. If it is poor I have a follow-up decision and that decision is either good or poor. If this decision is poor I am creating a greater problem.

"Ransoming Jonathan" - 1 Samuel 14:45 - This word and the context provide us with a beautiful picture of God's gift of salvation.

1 Samuel 14:36-52 - Saul seeks to finish off the Philistines but finds himself "alone" in that decision. He receives no confirmation of that decision from the Lord (14:36-37) and the people are silent when he inquires of them (38-42). Urim and Thummim were used to discern truth and Jonathan is found guilty of violating the King's oath. He confesses and Saul seems okay with his son dying (44). But the army stepped in and stopped the nonsense.

Saul was an excellent warrior (1 Samuel 14:47-48); and Saul had a good family as verses 49-51 indicate but good skills and a good family do not make a man of God. Saul had a heart problem and he alone had to deal with it.

Concept: When people walk away from us we may think that we are cursed, but when God walks away from us we are truly in trouble; we are left to our own evil heart and nothing good comes from it. (Romans 1:24-31)

Conclusion: Saul is a sad person. He begins by alienating himself from Samuel; then he alienates himself from his army and finally he alienates himself from Jonathan. A day that began with the possibility of totally destroying the Philistines ends in a kind of standoff-draw and gives the Philistines another day to fight.

Saul had a spirit of rebellion, he would not just do what God told him to do and when he didn't he had a plethora of excuses. This is spiritual foolishness and warranted his removal.

God's people are not able to rule themselves and Saul is evidence that that truth will not go away. This is true of Israel, it is true of the New Testament Church and it is true of individual believers; we need the Lord to rule us, to be our King; and we need to be his obedient servants. (Psalm 119:63, 105)

Trusting God is at least two steps; First, we must believe that God is trustworthy. Second, we must act on that truth and be willing to make immediate adjustments or changes to sinful habits and attitudes in our lives.