

Saul's Foolish Vow (c. 1050 – c. 1022 BC)

1 Samuel 13:15b–14:46

The Philistines Mobilize Their Forces

13:15b And Saul mustered the people who were found with him, about six hundred men.

16 Saul and Jonathan his son and the army that remained with them *were* staying in Geba of Benjamin, and *the* Philistines encamped at Micmash.

17 The raiders went out from the camp of *the* Philistines *in* three divisions. One division turned on the road to Ophrah toward the land of Shual.

18 One division turned on the road to Beth Horon, and one turned on the road toward the border overlooking the valley of Zeboim toward the wilderness.

Explanation of Disparity in Armaments Between Israel and Philistia

19 Now no skilled craftsman could be found in all the land of Israel, for *the* Philistines had said, "So that the Hebrews cannot make swords or spears for themselves."

20 So all Israel *went* down to *the* Philistines, each to have his plowshare, his mattock, his axe, and his iron plowshare sharpened.

21 The charge was two-thirds of a shekel for the plowshare and for the mattock, and a third of a shekel for the pick and for the axe, and to set the goading sticks.

22 So on *the* day of battle, there was not a sword or a spear found in the hands of all the army that was with Saul and Jonathan, but Saul and his son Jonathan had them.

Jonathan and His Armor Bearer Attack a Philistine Garrison

23 Now the garrison of *the* Philistines went out to the pass of Micmash.

14:1 One day Jonathan the son of Saul said to his armor bearer, "Come and let us go over to the garrison of *the* Philistines which *is* over there." But he did not tell his father.

2 Now Saul *was* staying at the outskirts of Gibeah under the pomegranate tree that *was* in Migron, and the troops that *were* with him *were* about six hundred men.

3 Now Ahijah, the son of Ahitub (the brother of Ichabod), the son of Phinehas, the son of Eli the priest of Yahweh at Shiloh, was carrying an ephod. The troops did not know that Jonathan had gone.

4 Now between the passes where Jonathan sought to go over to the garrison of *the* Philistines *there was* a crag of rock on one side and a crag of rock on the other. The name of the one *was* Bozez and the name of the other *was* Seneh.

5 The one crag on the north *was* opposite Micmash and the other on the south *was* opposite Geba.

6 So Jonathan said to his armor bearer, "Come, let us go over to the garrisons of these uncircumcised; perhaps Yahweh will act for us, for there is no hindrance for Yahweh to save by many or by few."

7 And his armor bearer said, "Do all that *is* in your heart that you are inclined to do. I am with you all of the way!"

8 Then Jonathan said, "Look, we *are about to* go over to the men; and we will show ourselves to them.

9 If they say to us: 'Wait until we reach you,' then we will stand as we are and not go up to them.

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

11 So the two of them showed themselves to the garrison of *the* Philistines, and *the* Philistines said, "The Hebrews *are* coming out from the holes in which they have hidden themselves."

12 Then the men of the garrison answered Jonathan and his armor bearer, "Come up to us and we will show you something!" Then Jonathan said to his armor bearer, "Come up after me, for Yahweh has given them into the hand of Israel!"

13 So Jonathan went up on his hands and his feet, with his armor bearer after him. They fell before Jonathan and then his armor bearer would kill them after him.

14 So *was* the first attack *in* which Jonathan and his armor bearer killed about twenty men within about half of a furrow in an acre of *an* open field.

God Strikes the Philistines / Saul, After Much Hesitation, Attacks

15 Then there was terror in the camp, in the open field, and among all the army of the garrison. Even the raiders trembled. The earth shook, and it became a very great panic.

16 And the lookouts of Saul in Gibeah of Benjamin saw that the multitude surged back and forth.

17 Saul said to the troops that *were* with him, "Please call the roll and see who has gone from us." So they called the roll and found that Jonathan and his armor bearer were not *present*.

18 Then Saul said to Ahijah, "Bring near the ark of God" (for the ark of God was at that time with the Israelites).

19 While Saul was still speaking to the priest, the tumult in the camp of *the* Philistines increased more and more, so Saul said to the priest, "Withdraw your hand!"

20 Then Saul and all the troops who were with him were assembled on command and came up to the battle, and look! Each *Philistine's* sword *was* against his friend; *and there was* a very great confusion.

21 The Hebrews who had been for *the* Philistines previously, who had gone up with them into the camp all around, even they joined

the Israelites who were with Saul and Jonathan.

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

23 So on that day Yahweh delivered Israel, and the battle shifted to Beth Aven.

Saul's Rash Oath

24 Now the men of Israel were hard pressed on that day, because Saul had made the army take an oath, saying, "Cursed be the man who eats *any* food until evening, when I will have avenged myself on my enemies!" So none of the army tasted *any* food.

25 (Now all *the people of* the land used to go into the forest, for there was honey on the surface of the ground.)

26 When the army came to the forest, look! *There was* honey flowing, but no one put his hand to his mouth, for the army was afraid of the solemn oath.

27 However, Jonathan had not heard about the oath of his father with the army, so he extended the end of the staff which was in his hand, and he dipped it into the honeycomb. Then he put his hand to his mouth and his eyes gleamed.

28 Then a man from the army informed *him* and said, "Your father made the army swear a solemn *oath*, saying, 'Cursed be the man who eats food today,'" so the army *is* exhausted.

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

30 How much more could have been done if the troops had eaten freely today from the plunder of their enemies that they had found! For now the loss among *the* Philistines *is* not great."

The Sin of the Troops

31 They defeated *the* Philistines that day from Micmash to Aijalon, and the troops were very weary.

32 Then the troops took the plunder: they took sheep and cattle and calves and slaughtered *them* on the ground and the troops ate *them all* with the blood.

33 So they reported *it* to Saul, saying, "Look! The troops *are* sinning against Yahweh by eating *the animals* with the blood!" And he said, "You have dealt treacherously! Roll to me a large stone today!"

34 Then Saul said, "Disperse *yourselves* among the troops and say to them, 'Bring to me each *one* his ox and each his sheep and slaughter them in this *place* and eat, but do not sin against Yahweh by eating *the animals* with the blood.'" So all the troops brought *them*, each *leading* his ox in his hand that night, and slaughtered *it* there.

35 Then Saul built an altar to Yahweh; it was the first altar he built to Yahweh.

Saul Inquires of the Lord

36 Saul said, "Let us go down after *the* Philistines *by* night, and let us plunder them until the morning light, and let us not leave *alive* a man among them." So they said, "Do all that *is* good in your eyes." But the priest said, "Let us draw near to God here."

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

38 Then Saul said, "Come here, all *you* leaders of the people, so that we find out what the sin was this day.

39 For as Yahweh lives, who delivers Israel, *I swear* that even if it *is* in Jonathan my son, he will certainly die!" But nobody from all the army answered him.

40 Then he said to all Israel, "You will be on one side, and I and my son Jonathan will be on the other." And the army said to Saul, "Do *what is* good in your eyes."

41 Then Saul said to Yahweh the God of Israel, "Render a decision perfectly." Jonathan and Saul were chosen *by lot* and the people went out.

42 Then Saul said, "Let them cast *the lot* between me and my son Jonathan," and Jonathan was chosen.

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

44 Then Saul said, "So may God do *to me* and more, you will certainly die today, Jonathan!"

45 But the army said to Saul, "Must Jonathan die, who accomplished this great victory in Israel? Far from it! As Yahweh lives, not a hair from his head will fall to the ground, for he has worked with God this day." So the army ransomed Jonathan and he did not die.

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

Saul's Wars (c. 1050 – c. 1022 BC)

1 Samuel 14:47–48, 52; 1 Chronicles 5:10, 18–22

Saul Has Victory Over Israel's Enemies

1 Sam 14:47 So Saul took the kingship over Israel, and he fought all around against his enemies, against Moab, against the Ammonites, against Edom, against the kings of Zobah, and against the Philistines. He inflicted punishment against all who rebelled.

48 He acted bravely and defeated *the* Amalekites and rescued Israel from the hand of those who plundered it.

52 Warfare was severe against *the* Philistines all the days of Saul. Whenever Saul saw anyone who was a mighty warrior or any brave man, he conscripted him into his service.

War With the Hagrites

1 Chr 5:10 In the days of Saul they [the Transjordan tribes] made war with the Hagrites, who fell by their hand, so that they occupied their tents throughout all the land east of Gilead.

18 The sons of Reuben and the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh, *consisting* of valiant men, men who bore shield and sword and shot with bow and *were* skillful in battle, *were* 44,760, who went to war.

19 They made war against the Hagrites, Jetur, Naphish and Nodab.

20 They were helped against them, and the Hagrites and all who *were* with them were given into their hand; for they cried out to God in the battle, and He answered their prayers because they trusted in Him.

21 They took away their cattle: their 50,000 camels, 250,000 sheep, 2,000 donkeys; and 100,000 men.

22 For many fell slain, because the war *was* of God. And they settled in their place until the exile.

Saul's Family (c. 1050 – c. 1022 BC)

1 Samuel 14:49–51	2 Samuel 21:8a	1 Chronicles 9:39
<p>49 Now the sons of Saul were Jonathan, Ishvi, and Malki-Shua; the names of his two daughters <i>were as follows</i>: the name of the firstborn <i>was</i> Merab and the younger <i>was</i> Michal.</p> <p>50 The name of Saul's wife <i>was</i> Ahinoam the daughter of Ahimaaz, and the name of the commander of his army <i>was</i> Abner, the son of Ner, Saul's uncle.</p> <p>51 Now Kish <i>was</i> the father of Saul, but Ner, the father of Abner, <i>was</i> the son of Abiel.</p>	<p>8 So the king took the two sons of Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, Armoni and Mephibosheth whom she had borne to Saul,</p>	<p>39 Ner became the father of Kish, and Kish became the father of Saul, and Saul became the father of Jonathan, Malchishua, Abinadab and Eshbaal.</p>

God Rejects Saul (c. 1022 BC)

1 Samuel 15

God Commissions Saul to Destroy Amalek

1 Then Samuel said to Saul, "Yahweh sent me to anoint you as king over his people Israel. So then, listen to the words of Yahweh!

2 Thus says Yahweh of hosts: 'I have observed what Amalek did to Israel, how he opposed him when he went up from Egypt.

3 So then, go and attack Amalek and utterly destroy all that is his! You must not spare him, but kill both man and woman, both child and nursing infant, both ox and sheep, both camel and donkey.'"

Amalek Defeated

4 Saul summoned the army and mustered them at Telaim; two hundred thousand foot soldiers and ten thousand men of Judah.

5 Then Saul came up to the city of Amalek and set an ambush in the wadi.

6 Saul said to the Kenites, "Go, leave! Withdraw from among the Amalekites so that I do not destroy you with them. You have shown loyal love to all the Israelites when they came up from Egypt." So the Kenites left from among *the* Amalekites.

7 Then Saul defeated *the* Amalekites from Havilah as one goes to Shur which *is* east of Egypt.

Saul Disobeys

8 He captured Agag the king of Amalek alive, but all the people he utterly destroyed with the edge of the sword.

9 However, Saul and the army spared Agag and the best of the sheep and the cattle and the second *best* of the young fatlings and all that was valuable; they were not willing to utterly destroy them. But all the possessions that were despised or worthless, they utterly destroyed.

God Rejects Saul as King

10 Then the word of Yahweh came to Samuel, saying,

11 "I regret that I made Saul king, for he has turned back from following me and has not kept my word." Samuel became angry, and he cried out to Yahweh all night.

12 Then Samuel got up early in the morning to meet Saul. Samuel was told, "Saul has gone to Carmel, and look, he *is* setting up a monument for himself." Then he turned around and crossed over and went down to Gilgal.

- 13 When Samuel came to Saul, Saul said to him, “May you be blessed by Yahweh! I have kept the word of Yahweh.”
- 14 But Samuel said, “Then what *is* this bleating of the sheep *that I hear* in my ears and the lowing of the cattle that I am hearing?”
- 15 Saul said, “They have brought them from *the* Amalekites; the troops spared the best of the sheep and the cattle in order to sacrifice them to Yahweh your God. But the rest we have utterly destroyed.”
- 16 Then Samuel said to Saul, “Stop and let me tell you what Yahweh said to me last night.” So he said to him, “Speak.”
- 17 Samuel said, “Even though you *are* small in your *own* eyes, are you not the head of the tribes of Israel? Yahweh has anointed you as king over Israel.
- 18 When Yahweh sent you on your way, he said to you: ‘Go! You must utterly destroy the sinners, *the* Amalekites, and you must fight against them until you have destroyed them.’
- 19 Why did you not listen to the voice of Yahweh and fall with shouting on the plunder? You have done evil in the sight of Yahweh!”
- 20 Then Saul said to Samuel, “I have listened to the voice of Yahweh, and I have gone on the way that Yahweh sent me! I brought Agag the king of Amalek, and the Amalekites I have utterly destroyed.
- 21 The troops took from the plunder, sheep and cattle, the best of the things devoted to destruction, to sacrifice to Yahweh your God at Gilgal.”
- 22 Then Samuel said,
- “Is there *as much* delight for Yahweh in burnt offerings and sacrifices
as *there is* in obeying Yahweh?
Look! To obey *is* better than sacrifice;
to give heed than the fat of rams.
- 23 For rebellion *is like* the sin of divination;
arrogance *is like* iniquity and idolatry.
Because you have rejected the word of Yahweh,
he has rejected you from *being* king!”

Saul’s False Repentance

- 24 Then Saul said to Samuel, “I have sinned because I have transgressed the commandment of Yahweh and your words, for I feared the troops and I listened to their voice.
- 25 So then, please pardon my sin and return with me so that I can worship Yahweh.”
- 26 But Samuel said to Saul, “I will not return with you, for you have rejected the word of Yahweh, and he has rejected you from being king over Israel!”
- 27 As Samuel turned around to go, he caught hold of the hem of his robe, and it tore.
- 28 Then Samuel said to him, “Yahweh has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today and has given it to your neighbor who is better than you.
- 29 Moreover, the Glory of Israel will not break faith and will not regret, for he *is* not a human that he should regret.”
- 30 Then he said, “I have sinned! Now please honor me before the elders of my people and before Israel, and return with me so that I can worship Yahweh your God.”
- 31 So Samuel returned after Saul, and Saul worshiped Yahweh.

Samuel Kills Agag

- 32 Then Samuel said, “Bring Agag the king of Amalek out to me!” Agag came to him confidently, for Agag thought, “Surely the bitterness of death is over.”
- 33 Samuel said, “Just as your sword bereaved women, so will your mother be bereaved among women!” Then Samuel hacked Agag to pieces in the presence of Yahweh at Gilgal.
- 34 Then Samuel went to Ramah and Saul went up to his house in Gibeah of Saul.
- 35 Samuel did not see Saul again until the day of his death, but Samuel mourned over Saul, and Yahweh regretted that he made Saul king over Israel.