

April 12 Answers

- 1) Jonathan's victory, Saul's rash oath, and God's final rejection of Saul as king of Israel. Jonathan's daring attack on the Philistines was motivated by his **belief** that God's power was what mattered, not the **size** of Israel's army (1 Sam 14:6 NIV). This produced a great **expectation**: "Perhaps the LORD will act in our behalf." Jonathan was convinced that God could save "by many or by **few**," and so he placed himself at God's disposal. What an inspiring example of true faith—a faith that is founded on God's **character**! Jonathan chose a specific **sign** as a way to discern God's will, and then he acted **boldly** when God confirmed his plan. In this way, Jonathan's "**perhaps**" was *part of his faith* (1 Sam 14:6 NIV). He believed in God's ability, but he didn't presume to **dictate** to God. True faith recognizes its degree of **ignorance** and bows its knee to God's sovereignty. Yet faith also retains its **excitement** at the thought of what God can do on behalf of His people (D. R. Davis, "1 Samuel," *FOBC*, p. 147). God gave Jonathan a great victory that was sadly **marred** by his father's rash actions. Saul's penchant for making oaths and vows is telling, for those who harbor **sin** in their heart often compensate with displays of **zeal** and **piety**. Moreover, Saul's foolish and self-centered behavior foreshadowed his disobedience in the matter of the Amalekites. There it is clear that Saul placed his own **opinion** of what should be done above God's clear command. When confronted by Samuel, Saul **justified** his actions and **refused** to humble himself before God. Once again, he showed that he was more concerned about his **image** than he was about obeying God.