

MAY 13

1 Samuel 13:23-14:52

1 Samuel 14

Vs. 1-5 From the introduction you can see that the tabernacle had been rebuilt in some measure and was still at Shiloh. The priest was there, wearing the ephod with the Urim and Thummim (U&T). It doesn't appear that Saul was seeking direction from the Lord, but apparently he was ready for battle.

Notice that Ichabod is mentioned, not as being there, but as a relative of the priest. This gives us a sense for the passage of time and locating the time historically. Ichabod was named the day the ark was taken in battle and Eli and his sons died.

Vs. 6-15 Jonathan was apparently "ready" too, but because of his faith. Jonathan has already been introduced in 13:3. Now we see him for the great, unsung hero of faith and man of God that he was. He is sort of like a "Barnabas" to David. Here we see his faith and courage and how God provided a victory for Israel through him.

V. 15 God even provided some "music" to go with Jonathan's victory.

Vs. 16-23 There is a problem in the text as to whether or not this was the ark, or the priest's ephod which held the U&T. In the Greek translation of the OT and in the Luther translation, it says "ephod," instead of "ark." I'm not sure what Hebrew manuscript the Greek translators had, but they apparently were using a manuscript that said "ephod," and ephod is very different than ark. In the context, Saul asks for the "ark" to be brought to him so he can ask a question and receive an answer. Normally he would have asked for the ephod with the U&T. In v. 19 when Saul tells the priest to withdraw his hand, it sounds like Saul is saying not to use the U&T, in light of the fact that there is enough action going on and everyone knows what to do. It makes sense to me that it was the ephod, not the ark, which was always being brought with Saul. It would have made sense to always have a priest with the ephod on hand who could ask questions of the Lord. My feeling, however, is that they didn't want to lose the ark again. They regarded the ark as valuable and holy and dangerous. I think that the Septuagint has it right and this was the ephod, not the ark. If the ark was there, it had been brought from Kiriath-jearim and was returned there.

It is interesting that until this point, Saul didn't seek guidance from the Lord. The result of this victory is that everybody became highly motivated and courageous.

Vs. 24-30 Why do you think the writer included this story? What does it tell you about the difference between Saul and Jonathan? Jonathan motivated the people by trusting the Lord and leading the battle. Saul motivated them by invoking a curse and personalizing this battle as having to do with his enemies, not the Lord's. Saul didn't seek the Lord first or even have the courage to lead the first attack.

Vs. 31-35 A picture of Saul's leadership? Good intentions, emotion, ego and "god words" lead people to dishonor the Lord. Since the priests were there I understand that they did the sacrificing.

Vs. 36-46 They were using the U&T. What is interesting to me is that either we're missing some of the input by the priests, or Saul did have some perception into the Lord and the Lord's silence. He knew enough to know that if the Lord wasn't answering, it was because someone had violated the vow.

What I don't understand is how Jonathan violated the vow when he hadn't heard it being made.

The people saved Jonathan simply by overpowering Saul's resolve, which wasn't hard. The word used is that the people *ransomed* Jonathan. This means they delivered or rescued him, not that they paid something for him or someone took his place like Christ took our place and was Himself our ransom and ransom price.

In the Greek translation of the OT, it says they prayed for Jonathan that he might not die.

Vs. 47-52 This summary describes Saul as a successful king over many years. He wasn't a failure as a king, but his failure at Gilgal showed that his heart didn't belong to the Lord. The Lord would seek a man after his own heart. We'll meet him tomorrow.

John 7:30-52

V. 30 Jerusalem was not a large city. There were a lot of people there for this feast, but it wasn't impossible to find Jesus. The only explanation to them not arresting Jesus was that His time *had not yet come*. In a way, as disciples, that should give us a perspective of God's presence and sovereignty in our lives too. We don't have to be silly and run with the bulls, but if God calls us to do something, including running with the bulls, we know nothing can happen to us that isn't in God's plan and timing.

Interestingly, when Jesus' hour does come on the Tuesday before His death, the Father brings it to His awareness by a visit from some Greeks. When Jesus realizes this official notice from the Father, He is emotionally taken aback. If you're interested, it's in John 12.

V. 31 It is hard to understand what this "belief" meant. I'm sure some of it was saving faith, but the crowds turned pretty quickly. We'll see some of this in chapter 8, in a couple of days. It is interesting to see how one group would say Jesus couldn't be the Messiah, using some "biblical" knowledge, while the other group used the logic the Father wanted them to see. Jesus was doing the works of the Father.

Vs. 32-36 Jesus will use this warning on the leaders again; and then, the night before Jesus dies, He will say this same thing to the disciples and they won't understand it either. The difference was that the disciples believed in Him, and they eventually all did join Him, except for Judas, who wasn't there when Jesus said it later, but had left, selling Him out to these guys. (And you thought only the apostle Paul could write convoluted sentences.)

Vs. 37-39 It is interesting that what Jesus did here seems so small as you read it. This seems like it was just a little event. Jesus chose the most vital moment of the feast, and, **SUDDENLY**, did the equivalent of running on the football field with a loud speaker and stopping the entire game to get everyone to hear Him. Jesus completely disrupted this sacred day of the feast at the most crucial moment. Possibly more so than His entrance into Jerusalem on the donkey (which was a fulfillment of Scripture), this was His verbal presentation of Himself to Israel. Imagine being at a ballgame and suddenly having some guy stop everything and say something like this about Himself.

Vs. 40-44 Jesus risked a lot by doing this, but He was the Son of God and He really wanted these people to be saved if possible. Some people did respond positively, but notice again the "Bible study" group with the incomplete knowledge of the Scripture. The messianic prophecy of Isaiah 9:1-3 was that a "light" would appear to those who sat in darkness in Zebulun and Naphtali. This showed that the Messiah would be in Galilee and it should have spoken to them. Also, according to the messianic prophecy of Isaiah 11:1, the Messiah would be called "Branch," which is what "Nazareth" means.

Vs. 45-49 I like the officers. They were the mall cops of the temple. The Pharisees are just arrogant. The Pharisees referred to the common people as sinners since, in their minds, common people were born in sin and were too ignorant to really know the law. I think the Pharisees were now putting the officers into that category.

Vs. 50-52 Nick tries to go to bat for Jesus but they aim for his knee caps. This will continue tomorrow.

What speaks to me here is the effort on Jesus' part to keep giving people one more chance. I'll bet the disciples were shocked and humiliated when Jesus interrupted the ceremony and procession by His outburst. Later, after the Spirit was given, they would have the boldness of their Master. We can have that too, but we need to be walking close to Jesus in the harvest and abiding in Him.

Psalm 109

This psalm might have been written while David was running from Saul and realized that some close friend of his had betrayed him. The Lord used that betrayal to inspire David to write these thoughts. What is interesting is that this psalm is quoted regarding Judas' betrayal of Jesus. David is prophetically expressing some of the emotions that Jesus would feel, knowing that Judas would be one of the Twelve, yet would still betray Him.

Knowing what David did to Uriah, if it were not for the prophetic nature of this psalm, this would be hard to accept from him. Still, it is the Spirit using David to show us that God understands our experiences of betrayal.

Notice that what saved David was his confidence in God's *steadfast love*. I find that very true and important for myself these days. I think it's always important, but we don't always value it as we should.

Vs. 1-5 This is the initial cry for help, the charge against this person and David's resolve to give himself to prayer. Great advice.

Vs. 6-15 This all seems hard, but notice the reference to Judas in v. 8. Jesus told the disciples, referring to Judas, that it would have been better for him to have never been born. That pretty well sums up what David says here. The expression here is from God's Spirit giving us an idea of what God Himself thinks about betrayal.

Vs. 16-20 This shows that this person also mistreated others. The way he treated others should be how he is treated. That's the golden rule of judgment, I guess. Verse 20 sounds like what Jesus endured on the cross.

Vs. 21-25 David resolved to rest in God's *steadfast love* and leave vengeance to the Lord. Verse 25 sounds very much like Jesus being railed at by the chief priests, scribes and Pharisees.

Vs. 26-29 According to what we read in Samuel, David was honored. Jesus was also honored.

Vs. 30-31 God leads us through dark nights, so that we learn to rest only in Him and then give testimony to everyone of His amazing salvation.

It is interesting what the Lord uses to give us strength and hope in certain seasons of life. As disciples following Christ in the harvest, it is good to look at how the Lord has "wired" you and what He's given you that gives you strength and courage and inspires you to come back to His feet and dare again to do great things.

Proverbs 15:5-7

So, I'm wondering if a wise man, who is spreading the knowledge of God, gets rich in the treasures of the knowledge of God as a result of heeding the instruction of his father, who loved the Lord?