### 1 Samuel

## Chapter 14

1Then JoNathan (Saul’s son) said to the servant that was carrying his weapons:  
  
 ‘Come with me! Let’s go around to the other side of the Philistine camp.’  
  
And he didn’t tell his father what he was doing.  
  
2At the time, Saul was sitting under a pomegranate tree on top of the hill at MagaDan. And this is where some of his [remaining] 600 men came to meet with him.  
  
3Also, AhiJah (the son AhiTub, who was the brother of IchaBod, son of PhiNehas and the grandson of Eli) the Priest of Jehovah in ShiLoh, arrived carrying the sacred chest piece of the Priest.  
  
  
But meanwhile, no one noticed that JoNathan had left the camp... 4For JoNathan had forded the river on his way to the Philistine camp at a place where there were jagged rocks on both sides (on one side it was called BoZez, and on the other side it was called SeNeh), 5along the road that leads from MichMash in the north and to Geba in the south.  
  
6Then JoNathan said to the servant that was carrying his weapons:  
  
 ‘Come on, let’s go to the town of MesSab [and attack] the uncircumcised who are camped there... For perhaps Jehovah will give them [into our hands]!  
  
 ‘After all, doesn’t [Jehovah give victory] over many to just a few?’  
  
7And the man who was carrying his weapons replied:  
  
 ‘You do whatever your heart moves you to do… Look, I’m with you!  
  
 ‘Whatever’s in your heart is in my heart too.’  
  
8So JoNathan said:  
  
 ‘We’ll just go up there and confront them. 9And if they say to us, ‘Wait there,’ we’ll just stay away and we won’t get any closer.  
  
 10‘But if they tell us to come forward, that’ll be our sign… We’ll know that Jehovah has given them into our hands, and we’ll attack!’  
  
11Well, as they walked up to the Philistine camp at MesSab, a Philistine guard shouted out:  
  
 ‘Look! Here come some Hebrews who’ve crawled out of the burrows where they’ve been hiding!’  
  
12Then the men at MesSab called to JoNathan and the man who was carrying his weapons, and said:  
  
 ‘Come on up here to us and we’ll show you a few things.’  
  
So, JoNathan said to the man who was carrying his weapons:  
  
 ‘Now, follow me; for Jehovah has given them into the hands of IsraEl!’  
  
13Then JoNathan crawled up the hill on his hands and feet, with the man carrying his weapons close behind. 14And JoNathan and [his attendant] attacked them, killing 20 men using arrows, slings, and rocks that they’d found in the field… 15And this caused quite a change in attitude among the [Philistines] in and around MesSab!  
  
For they’d caught the men whom they destroyed off guard, and everyone was very disturbed over what had been done among them.  
  
  
16Meanwhile, Saul’s watchmen in GibeAh of BenJamin had noticed all the confusion on both sides of the enemy camp. 17And Saul said to the people who were meeting with him:  
  
 ‘Take a head count to see who’s left us.’  
  
So they took a head count and found that JoNathan and the man carrying his weapons were missing.  
  
18Then Saul said to AhiJah:  
  
 ‘Bring the sacred chest piece!’  
  
It was inside the Chest of God that day, there before IsraEl.  
  
19And as Saul was speaking to the Priest, he noticed that the sound in the Philistine camp was getting louder and louder.  
  
So he said to the Priest:  
  
 ‘Let’s gather all the hands!’  
  
20Then he gathered his troops, and they went and joined the battle.  
  
Well, the confusion was so bad in the Philistine camp that their men started attacking each other with swords. 21And at that, [Saul’s] men (who had [been hiding] for the previous two days) got up and joined the battle with Saul and JoNathan.  
  
22Also, when the IsraElites who had run to the hills of Ephraim heard that the Philistines were retreating, they came and joined in the battle too… And Jehovah gave the victory to IsraEl that day.  
  
23For, as the battle raged on through BethAven, about 10,000 men had joined Saul. And the war also continued to be fought in many of the cities and in the hills of Ephraim.  
  
24However, that’s when Saul did something very foolish; he placed a curse on the people when he said:  
  
 ‘Any man who eats before sunset is cursed, because I want my enemies to be punished!’  
  
As a result, none of his men had anything to eat.  
  
Meanwhile, many of his people had gathered in a grove of trees, 25and nearby (at the edge of a field), there were some beehives. 26And when some of his people went up to them, they found that they were full of honey. However, no one would taste any, because of the oath that [Saul] had spoken before Jehovah.  
  
27But, JoNathan hadn’t heard about the oath that his father had made in front of people, so he stuck his walking stick into a hive, snagged some honeycomb, and ate it.  
  
Then when he looked up, 28one of the men said:  
  
 ‘Your father swore an oath before the people that anyone who eats anything today is cursed.’  
  
Well, the men were famished, 29and JoNathan realized this, so he said:  
  
 ‘{Look!} My father is still cleaning out the land… And I’ve already eaten a little of this honey. 30If our people could have eaten what they took from their enemies today, they would have been able to kill even more Philistines!’  
  
31Of course, after they’d destroyed many Philistines at MichMash, the people were extremely tired. 32Then [that evening], while they were dividing up [the Philistine’s] flocks and herds, they slaughtered many calves and started eating the [raw] meat with its blood!  
  
33And when the report was brought to Saul that the people were sinning against Jehovah by eating the blood, Saul said:  
  
 ‘You’ve all sinned! Now, roll a large rock over here.’  
  
34Then Saul gave orders for each of his men to bring a calf and a sheep to be slaughtered there on the rock and then eaten.  
  
For he said:  
  
 ‘You must not sin against Jehovah by eating blood!’  
  
So, everyone brought [the animals] that night and slaughtered them there.  
  
35Then Saul built an altar to Jehovah, and he said:  
  
 36‘Now, let’s go after the Philistines tonight and let’s keep on cutting them to pieces until the morning dawns… Don’t leave a single man alive!’  
  
And they replied:  
  
 ‘We’ll do whatever you say!’  
  
Then [Saul] called for the Priest and told him:  
  
 ‘Bring [the Chest] of our God here.’  
  
37And Saul asked this before God:  
  
 ‘If I attack the Philistines, will you give them into the hands of IsraEl?’  
  
However, [God] wouldn’t answer him.  
  
38So Saul said:  
  
 ‘Bring [all the men of] IsraEl here and stand them in front of me, because I want to know if anyone has been [guilty of sin] today! 39As Jehovah (the One who saves IsraEl) lives; if someone were to tell me that it was my son JoNathan, even he must die!’  
  
But, nobody said a word.  
  
40Then he spoke before all the men of IsraEl, and said:  
  
 ‘You are all part of this, and my son JoNathan and I [are part] of it.’  
  
And the people replied to Saul:  
  
 ‘Then, do whatever you must!’  
  
41And Saul said:  
  
 ‘O Jehovah, God of IsraEl, give us a sign!’  
  
So lots were thrown, and Saul and JoNathan were chosen; and at that, the people were excused.  
  
42Then Saul said:  
  
 ‘Now, throw the lots between me and my son JoNathan, and whichever Jehovah chooses must die!’  
  
Well, when they threw the lots between him and JoNathan, JoNathan was chosen.  
  
43So Saul asked JoNathan:  
  
 ‘What did you do?’  
  
And JoNathan replied:  
  
 ‘I took a little honey on the tip of my walking stick and tasted it.  
  
 ‘So look; I must die!’  
  
44Then Saul said:  
  
 ‘May God [kill] me again and again rather than allow JoNathan to die today.’  
  
45So Saul spoke to the people and asked them:  
  
 ‘Shall I now kill the one who brought deliverance to IsraEl?  
  
 ‘As Jehovah lives; not a hair of his head should fall to the ground over the mercy that God has performed for IsraEl today!’  
  
And thereafter, all the people then prayed on behalf of JoNathan, and he wasn’t put to death.  
  
46Well, because of this, Saul didn’t chase after the Philistines that day… Everyone just went back to their homes.  
  
  
47So Saul was alloted the rulership over IsraEl, and he went to war with all his enemies throughout the land:  
  
 • The MoAbites,  
 • The AmMonites,  
 • The Edomites,  
 • The king of ZoBah, and  
 • The Philistines.  
  
And wherever he went, he was saved… 48He acted decisively and struck down the AmaLechites and anyone else who tried to walk on IsraEl.  
  
49Saul’s sons were:  
  
 • JoNathan,  
 • IshVi, and  
 • MelchiShua.  
  
He also had two daughters:  
  
 • Merob, and  
 • Michal.  
  
50Saul’s woman’s name was AhinoAm, and she was the daughter of AhiMaAz.  
  
The commander-in-chief of Saul’s army was AbNer (son of Ner), who was related to Saul.  
  
51Kish was Saul’s father, and AbNer’s father Ner was AbiEl’s son. 52He was a mighty fighter against the Philistines throughout Saul’s life.  
  
And thereafter, whenever Saul found a valiant or a very strong man, he was recruited to serve him.