

MEN'S LIFE BLOOMINGTON & GOD @ WORK

Tuesday, January 26, 2016 – Theme: FOCUS

Jonathan's Victory

1 Samuel 13-14

Segment:

- Jonathan, without telling his father Saul, hatches a plan to attack a small outpost of the Philistines. He does so after assuming God's blessing. He slays 20 men with the help of one man, his armor-bearer.
- Saul hears of the slaying and understands the Philistines are in flux. He decides to pursue them and slay them while the getting is good. He presses his army to fight without rest or food until they are vanquished.
- Jonathan eats some honey not knowing Saul cursed anyone who ate. Saul says he must die. Saul's men rebuff Saul's decision and attest to Jonathan's actions being a sign God was in favor of him and the people by virtue of the victory.

Segment Questions:

- Why do you think Jonathan decided, by himself, to concoct this plan? What was the risk?
- What was the result and impact of his harrowing decision to test the Philistines in this way? Could it have backfired?
- What do you think went through Saul's mind when he understood the Philistines' condition? Would he have been excited or scared?
- If you had been the one to eat honey, find out about the curse, and know you could die, what would your reaction have been?
- Do you think both Jonathan and Saul were quick to be relieved when Saul's men came to Jonathan's defense?

Action Questions:

- Is there a time you ventured out on your own and made a decision without first asking for wise counsel? Could it have affected your family in a negative way?
- Have you ever found out after the fact that one of your actions was against the law, or very hurtful to a situation? Did you deny it, hide it, or come clean and try to fix it?
- Has anyone every come to your aid, vouched for you, or pleaded for mercy on your behalf?

1 Samuel 13-14

From: www.btstories.com

Jonathan looked at the Philistines' camp on the other side of the pass. He said to his armor bearer, "Let's go there and kill a few Philistines. The Lord just might help us. He's not limited by how many of us there are." The man agreed and Jonathan devised a plan.

They decided not to tell the king where they were going. When they got to the cliffs, the Philistines saw them and taunted them to come fight. Confident the Lord was on their side, the two men climbed up the cliffs and killed twenty Philistines.

News quickly spread through the rest of the Philistine camp and caused panic. They were convinced they were being attacked from behind. Suddenly the earth shook, and their panic turned to terror. They ran in every direction.

Men in Saul's camp saw this and told the king. In response, Saul assembled his troops. The panic in the Philistine camp intensified. When Saul's army marched into battle, he found that the Philistines were fighting each other.

Saul wanted his men to completely focus on winning the battle, so he shouted, "I put a curse on anyone who eats food before we win this victory." His men obeyed, but soon they became hungry and tired.

Jonathan didn't know what his father had said. He found some honey in the forest and ate it. Others immediately told him about the king's order. He said, "The king shouldn't have said that. Look at me. I ate some honey, now I'm ready to fight again. Our men should eat all of this food that the Philistines have left behind. Then they would fight harder."

Saul finally realized his army was famished! He had a meal prepared and allowed his men to eat. The king then wanted to go back into battle, but suddenly realized something was wrong. He called everyone together and said, "Something is wrong, and I'm going to find out who's behind it. Once I know who it is, he'll be put to death, even if he's my own son."

He then drew lots, and it fell on Jonathan. The king asked him, "What did you do?"

"I ate some honey. If I'm to die for that, then I'm ready to die."

Saul said to his son, "I took an oath, therefore you must die."

The people shouted, "Jonathan won't die! God used him to give us victory today. As the Lord God lives, not one hair of his head will fall to the ground."

So the people saved Jonathan's life. With that, the battle was over and the Philistines returned to their own territory.