

By Many or By Few

1 Samuel 14

Chapter 13 and 14 are a literary unit

Chapter 13

God is looking for a leader who will trust and obey

10:8, 13:7-10

Obedience is more important than victory.

God can save with many or few, 14:6, cp. Judges 7:4-24

The Philistines

Are dominant, 13:17, 23

Are larger in number, 13:5, cf. 13:2, 13:15

Have superior equipment, 13:5; 13:19-22

Chapter 14

Contrast between Jonathan and Saul

Jonathan trusts God and attempts the non-rational, 14:1, 6-14

Jonathan has faith and vision

Perhaps--faith not presumption

Confidence leads to action, sometimes non-rational action.

Saul is inactive, seemingly frozen with indecision, 14:2-3

Saul has no faith, no vision

Sitting with the losers of Eli's failed family.

Jonathan is the hero of the day, 14:45

The word "save" is used three times of his activity (6, 23, 45)

Jonathan the savior of Israel

He has initiative (13:3-4)

He has imagination (14:6-14)

He has insight (14:27-30)

He would have made a great king

Ministry isn't about self-fulfillment

*The kingdom isn't for Jonathan to take or rule, but for him to serve.*¹

Saul is the distress-er of Israel

He is insubordinate (13:8-15)

He is stupid (14:24)

He has no remorse (14:36-44)²

The LORD saved Israel on that day (14:23) but the men of Israel were hard pressed on that day (14:25)

Saul keeps using "religion" to secure the victory for himself, 14:24b

14:18-19

Perhaps this will insure victory

Indecision

14:24b

No, this oath, soldiers fasting will insure victory.

14:33-35

Oh, no, now we must be religious again (because of Saul's foolish decision)

14:36ff.

Ok let's inquire of God

14:44

Takes an oath to kill his son... the human instrument of victory and the one who has wisdom throughout this chapter.

14:45

Saul, "wisely" gives in to the people, a trait he will repeat again, 15:24, 30

At the end of the day he is unwise yet very religious.

Two evaluations of Saul, which is right?

14:24 God views him a failure

14:47-48, Israel views him a success

So what?

A double-minded man is unstable in his ways, James 1:6-8

¹ D. R. Davis, *Looking on the Heart*, p.142.

² From D. R. Davis, *Looking on the Heart*, p. 141, n 8.

The goal of every believer must be to trust God and obey him, not to try to get him to acquiesce to our agenda.

The Kingdom of God is not about us, it is about God. You should serve it no matter what the cost.