

Saul's foolishness (pt. 2)

The literary structure of 1 Samuel 14:36-46

A. Saul pursues: ³⁶ Then Saul said, "Let us go down after the Philistines by night and plunder them until the morning light; let us not leave a man of them." And they said, "Do whatever seems good to you."

B. The priest stops Saul/God doesn't answer: But the priest said, "Let us draw near to God here." ³⁷ And Saul inquired of God, "Shall I go down after the Philistines? Will you give them into the hand of Israel?" But he did not answer him that day.

C. Saul and his oath/ Jonathan shall surely die: ³⁸ And Saul said, "Come here, all you leaders of the people, and know and see how this sin has arisen today. ³⁹ For as the LORD lives who saves Israel, though it be in Jonathan my son, he shall surely die." But there was not a man among all the people who answered him.

D. Why no answer: ⁴⁰ Then he said to all Israel, "You shall be on one side, and I and Jonathan my son will be on the other side." And the people said to Saul, "Do what seems good to you." ⁴¹ Therefore Saul said, "O LORD God of Israel, why have you not answered your servant this day?"

E. Trial

If this guilt is in me or in Jonathan my son, O LORD, God of Israel, give Urim. But if this guilt is in your people Israel, give Thummim." And Jonathan and Saul were taken, but the people escaped.

⁴² Then Saul said, "Cast the lot between me and my son Jonathan." And Jonathan was taken.

D1. Why no answer: ⁴³ Then Saul said to Jonathan, "Tell me what you have done." And Jonathan told him, "I tasted a little honey with the tip of the staff that was in my hand. Here I am; I will die."

C1. Saul and his oath/Jonathan shall surely die: ⁴⁴ And Saul said, "God do so to me and more also; you shall surely die, Jonathan."

B1. The people stop Saul: ⁴⁵ Then the people said to Saul, "Shall Jonathan die, who has worked this great salvation in Israel? Far from it! As the LORD lives, there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground, for he has worked with God this day." So the people ransomed Jonathan, so that he did not die.

A1. Saul stops pursuing: ⁴⁶ Then Saul went up from pursuing the Philistines, and the Philistines went to their own place.