

G'Day everyone.

We're continuing our look at the life of King Saul

So, it would be great to have your Bibles opened up to 1 Samuel 14, from verse 15 and we're going through to verse 48.

There's the usual outline for you to jot down notes if you wish.

Let's ask God to give us His understanding before we begin

Let's pray...

## Recap

To begin with, just a quick recap where we got up to last time

### [PowerPoint 1-Jonathan & his armour bearer]

- King's Saul's son Jonathan and his armour bearer, trusted God and **stepped out in faith** - they climbed up a cliff - and attacked a small Philistine outpost- and the Lord gave Jonathan a victory and 20 Philistine soldiers were defeated
- Now remember the whole Philistine army greatly outnumbered the Israelite army which now only had about 600 men
- So, has Jonathan's mini attack woken up a sleeping giant?
- Does God care really about His people?

That's our topic - this morning [evening]

God's care...

## Does God care about Israel? (14:15-23)

So please turn to our OT passage - 1 Samuel 14 starting at verse 15

### [PowerPoint 2a-Heading]

Does God care about Israel?

Let's see...

### [PowerPoint 2b-God cares about Israel]

- Well, straight away we see God *sends an earthquake* (v15)
- And He *sends panic and confusion* amongst the whole Philistine army (v15)
- Meanwhile Saul sees his army is dwindling (v16) and he does a head count of his troops and notices Jonathan and his armour bearer are both missing (v17)
- So, Saul summons the priest Ahijah and the ark of God - it looks like he is about to consult God and get some godly wisdom and guidance - only to change his mind when he hears the chaos in the Philistine camp (v18-19)
- The Philistines are in total confusion - fighting amongst themselves (v20)
- This enabled the Israelite army to rally - even those Hebrews who had joined the Philistine army - return to the Israelite army (v21)
- Even the Israelites who'd been hiding in hills of Ephraim - come back to Saul (v22)
- Does God care about Israel?
- Yes, he does - see v23 - "[so on that day the Lord saved Israel](#)"
- Of course, God cares for His people - He helped Jonathan win the first attack, He sent the earthquake and He sent the confusion amongst the Philistines

## Does God care about Jonathan? (vv24-48)

Then in verses 24-48 - we see a problem for Jonathan

### [PowerPoint 3a-Heading]

So, does God care about Jonathan?

Let's see...

### [PowerPoint 3b-Heading]

- We see in v24 - Saul makes a very foolish oath - that his soldiers aren't allowed to eat before evening - until the battle is won
- Saul is not told to make this oath - he just decides to make it!
- There are some useful scriptures - for us - that warn against making oaths
  - **Eccl 5:5** - It is better not to make a vow than to make one and not fulfill it
  - **Matt 5:33-37** - <sup>33</sup> "Again, you have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'Do not break your oath, but fulfill to the Lord the vows you have made.' <sup>34</sup> But I tell you, do not swear an oath at all: either by heaven, for it is God's throne; <sup>35</sup> or by the earth, for it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King. <sup>36</sup> And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black. <sup>37</sup> All you need to say is simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.
  - **James 5:12** - Above all, my brothers and sisters, do not swear-- not by heaven or by earth or by anything else. All you need to say is a simple "Yes" or "No." Otherwise you will be condemned.

- Nevertheless - Saul makes an oath
- Jonathan did not hear the oath made by Saul - so he eats some honey (v27) - and his eyes are brightened - in other words the honey makes Jonathan more alert!
- Remember Israel is known as the "land of milk and honey" - honey is not in hives though - it's just dripping in the forests
- **Illustration: affect food has on Jaffa children and grandchildren**
- Jonathan is told about the oath Saul has made by one of the soldiers (v28)
- Jonathan thinks it's a foolish oath - and that his father has brought trouble on Israel. He sees that he is much more alert with food in his belly (v29) and that the army could have been more successful with food in their tummies (v30)
- The oath causes the hungry soldiers to pounce on their plunder and eat sheep, cattle and calves with blood still in them (v32-33)
- This breaks God's law - as it says in Leviticus 17:13-14 - <sup>13</sup> "Any Israelite or any foreigner residing among you who hunts any animal or bird that may be eaten must drain out the blood and cover it with earth, <sup>14</sup> because the life of every creature is its blood. That is why I have said to the Israelites, "You must not eat the blood of any creature, because the life of every creature is its blood; anyone who eats it must be cut off."
- So, Saul orders his men to bring animals to a large stone and slaughter the animals properly - draining the blood first (v34)

### [PowerPoint 4-Does God care about Jonathan continued?]

- Then Saul builds an altar to the Lord. This is the first time Saul has built an altar (v35) - at least Saul did something right after making such a foolish oath
- Then Saul has a new idea to invade the Philistines at night - v36
- The priest reminds Saul to inquire of the Lord first (v36)
- But when Saul inquires of the Lord - God doesn't answer (v37)
- Saul suspects there has been sin amongst his army (v38)
- Saul is so sure of himself - he even makes another oath - **surely as the Lord who rescues Israel lives - even if guilt lies with Jonathan he must die - But no one said a word - v39 - no one is going to do in the hero, Jonathan!**
- So, Saul prayed to the Lord - and consulted Urim and Thummim - special stones (Exodus 28:30, Num 27:21, 1 Sam 28:6, Ezra 2:63, Neh 7:65) in the priest's ephod (v40-41)

### [PowerPoint 5-Ephod]

[Explain Ephod]

### [PowerPoint 6-Urim and Thummim]

[Explain Stones - White/Black - Yes/No]

### [PowerPoint 7-Does God care about Jonathan continued?]

- The Stones/Lots - were used - v42
- The lots fall on Jonathan

- Jonathan confesses he ate honey - v43
- Saul says Jonathan must die - v44
- But the men of the army of Saul - say no - Jonathan is a hero - he achieved victory with Gods help - God is with him - so he must not die (v45)
- So, Jonathan was preserved
- After this episode - Saul stopped pursuing the Philistines for the time being (v46)
- And we're told - v47-48 - Saul continued to defend Israel from various enemies: the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zobahites and Philistines and Amalekites

The bottom line is:

God cares about for Israel

God cares about Jonathan

(pause)

Does God Care about us?

Let's see...

[PowerPoint 8-Heading]

**Does God care about us? (Matthew 6:25-27)**

In our NT passage - from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount

[Turn there now to Matthew 6:25-27]

[PowerPoint 8-God cares about us?]

- Jesus says don't worry

- Worry is: **the state of being anxious and troubled over actual or potential problems**
- Worrying is like riding a rocking horse - it gives us something to do but it gets us nowhere

Worrying is pointless

Statistics show that:

**40%** of the things we worry about - will *never happen*

**30%** -- are *about the past* that can't be changed

**12%** -- are about *criticism by others, mostly untrue*

**10%** -- are *about health*, which gets worse with stress and worry anyway

**8%** -- are about *real problems* that we actually face

- Jesus says don't worry about food, drink and clothes (v25)
- Our lives are more important than physical things
- His point is - it's Spiritual things that matter
  - Like having faith in God - that He sent Jesus to fix our sin - and give us eternal life
  - Like sharing the message of Jesus with others
  - Like loving and caring for others like Jesus did
- Jesus says God looks after birds - and we are more valuable to God than birds - and so God does care about us and will care for us (v26)
- And Jesus says - worrying can't prolong our life - in fact it will probably reduce our lifespan - with stress and worry
- Instead - it's spiritual things that matter

## Application

### [PowerPoint 9-Applications Heading]

So, three take home applications today - to apply these passages to our lives:

### [PowerPoint 9a-App1]

1. God cared about Jonathan - the hero of the story was saved - just like in a Disney movie - but God did not spare Jesus. Because God cares about us - He sent Jesus as our superhero! As the Apostle Paul puts it in Romans 8:31-32 - <sup>31</sup>What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? <sup>32</sup>***He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all-how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?***

### [PowerPoint 9b-App2]

2. The Bible has many examples of God's care for people - so we can take confidence from that - and stand firm on God's promises

Here's just 5 promises from God:

Deuteronomy 31:6 - Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you."

John 3:16 - For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life

Romans 6:23 - For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 9:10 - If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.



Romans 8:38-39 - <sup>38</sup> For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, <sup>39</sup> neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

[PowerPoint 9c-App3

3. God loves us and cares for us - so our response should be - [John 13:34-35](#)

<sup>34</sup>"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. <sup>35</sup>By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.

So our response should be - because God cares for us and loves us - instead of worrying about physical stuff - we should be getting on with spiritual stuff - and we should be loving others as God loves us - and showing the love of Jesus to all we come across - so they are attracted into a relationship with Jesus too.

So, let's make that our mission from today onwards...

Let's pray...