



Honing in on the Heart!’ Sermon Series

Sermon #24:

‘Our Own Words and Actions can Wreck Our Own Family!’

Wednesday, August 28th, 2024

Last week in ‘Honing in on the Heart:

- Last week we were under the tent for our revival. Wow, wasn’t it so awesome to see all of the incredible things that God did last week in the lives of people and under the tent?
- The last time we were in our ‘Honing in on the Heart!’ sermon series, we looked at 1st Samuel 14:1-23 with a sermon entitled ***‘Children, Learn from Your Parents’ Mistakes!’***
 - I asked the question: *How does this passage show us that Jonathan learned from the mistakes that his dad had already made as a man and as king of Israel?*
 - **Point 1: *The Drive to Fight. (V. 1-5)***

- **Point 2: *The Decision to have Faith. (V. 6)***
- **Point 3: *The Dedication to Follow Through. (V. 7-15)***
- **Point 4: *The Deliverance From the Lord. (V. 16-23)***

- Based on this sermon from two weeks ago, as an adult and even as a parent, are you aware that young eyes are watching you?
 - Does that have an affect on your actions and how you live?

‘Our Own Words and Actions can Wreck Our Own Family!’

1st Samuel 14:24-35

Sermon in a Sentence:

We can see in this passage that our own words and actions can potentially wreck our own family when we see Saul’s Own Selfishness, Saul’s Son has a Situation, and Saul’s Selfishness led the Soldiers to sin.

Intro:

- I personally think that as a person gets older, the more they are able to see the weight that their actions carry.
 - *As we often say, hindsight in 20/20.*
 - ***But, how much better would you and I be as adults, if we were able to withhold certain words and actions than to wreck our biological family or our Church family.***
 - Yes, Hindsight is 20/20, but when God is in control of our lives, we can avoid certain pitfalls

and problems if we walk with the spirit of God that is in us as believers.

- ***In our scripture text this evening, we get to see up close and personal, what words and actions of one individual, can do to an entire nation and even, his own son.***
 - What we find in this story is a person who wants to control everything and show that he is boss, even above almighty God.
 - A person who is rash and does not seek the face of God on very many things. When he does, he is often too late.
- ***So, what causes you and I to be culprits of wrecking our own biological and church families from time to time with the words we say and actions that we do?***
 - ***When we don't have a right heart with God.***
 - I've entitled our study of 1-2 Samuel 'Honing in on the Heart!' because much of both of these books focus in on the heart placement of mankind with God.
- W.W. said this concerning this situation with Saul, ***'Saul's heart was not right with God and he foolishly forced his army to agree to a vow of fasting until evening.'***
 - We will study in just a few moments as to why Saul did this.
 - ***But I want you to focus on yourself tonight as we look at the example of Saul.***

- ***You'll be tempted tonight to think about other Saul's Own Selfishness. (V. 24) people in your life that have sad mean things to you or done you wrong.***
 - As we examine and study this passage, satan will tempt you with that...
- ***But, I encourage you to not think about others, but to think about yourself and ask this simple question... are my own words and actions destroying my family?***

****Read 1st Samuel 14:24-35****

Question to Ask:

How does Saul's own words and actions show us how easy it can be to wreck our own family's when we prioritize our own agenda over God's will?

Point 1: Saul's Own Selfishness. (V. 24)

- 'And the men of Israel had been hard pressed that day, so Saul had laid an oath on the people, saying, "Cursed be the man who eats food until it is evening and I am avenged on my enemies." So none of the people had tasted food.'
- Before we can look at Saul's Selfishness, we need to look at what the narrator of 1st Samuel (writer), strategically does here.
- ***Within the entire scope of scripture, it is common that Bible writers insert into the story what we know as a flashback.***

- *I believe that is what is happening here in this passage tonight.*
 - I believe that the writer is taking us to the time in this narrative that would have been simultaneous with the opposition Saul had to the priests, and the battle description that is given that we studied two weeks ago.
 - ‘Now while Saul was talking to the priest, the tumult in the camp of the Philistines increased more and more. So Saul said to the priest, “Withdraw your hand.” **20** Then Saul and all the people who were with him rallied and went into the battle. And behold, every Philistine's sword was against his fellow, and there was very great confusion. **21** Now the Hebrews who had been with the Philistines before that time and who had gone up with them into the camp, even they also turned to be with the Israelites who were with Saul and Jonathan. **22** Likewise, when all the men of Israel who had hidden themselves in the hill country of Ephraim heard that the Philistines were fleeing, they too followed hard after them in the battle. **23** So the LORD saved Israel that day. And the battle passed beyond Beth-aven.’
- *So, I do believe that these verses took place before the battle (the rash vow), and during it.*
 - I believe there are **2** things we need to look at concerning Saul’s own selfishness...
- *Soldiers are Tired. (V. 24a)*
 - ‘And the men of Israel had been hard pressed that day,’ 1st Samuel 14:24a
 - *This is now the second time that the writer of 1st Samuel has used this term, ‘hard pressed’.*
 - *The first was back in 1st Samuel 13:6, when the Philistines attacked Israel with their 30,000 chariots and a calvary of 6,000.*
 - ‘When the men of Israel saw that they were in trouble (for the people were hard pressed)’ 1st Samuel 13:6
 - This is when the Israelites hid in caves, holes, graves, went to the other army and even left the promised land.
 - *So, why does this phrase in the english occur again and what does it mean?*
 - **Word Study**
 - The phrase ‘hard pressed’ in the english comes from the Hebrew word *‘Nagas’* נָגַס which literally means to drive someone in a military sense to exhaustion. This term is found 23 times

in the OT and usually means to be driven and oppressed by an enemy.

- *In this context, it means to drive someone to the point of extreme exhaustion, here, the philistines were the ones doing that to the Israelites in battle.*
 - Remember this is looking back to the situation before 1st Samuel 14:20, which is before Israel started winning the battle.
- *They had been exhausted from the battle, and probably didn't feel like continuing to fight, but the job wasn't done yet, so Saul came up with an idea...*
- *Saul Tyrannizes. (V. 24b)*
 - 'so Saul had laid an oath on the people, saying, "Cursed be the man who eats food until it is evening and I am avenged on my enemies." So none of the people had tasted food.'
 - *The last time that the narrator of Samuel told us that the people were 'hard pressed', they deserted the army.*
 - *So it seems that Saul lays this oath on the people to keep them from deserting again.*
 - Samuel scholar John Woodhouse said '*Once again we see Saul in desperate circumstances, taking desperate measures.*'

- The way that the writer of Samuel words this verse in the greek, gives us a big contrast between Saul and Johnathan.

- *Back in 1st Samuel 14:6, Jonathan showed faith by saying that the Lord will work for them.*
- *Here in verse 24, look closely at what Saul said 'Cursed be the man who eats food until it is evening and I am avenged on my enemies.'*

- *Notice that Saul uses the pronouns 'I' and 'my', while Jonathan pointed to God and His strength.*
- *We are much more likely to self destruct and also destroy those closest to us when we value the 'I' and 'My' instead of 'Your will be done Father!'*
 - Also, we must notice the slippery slope that Saul is on here...
- Back in 1st Samuel 13, Saul did not obey God but he still made reference to Him.
 - *Here in 1st Samuel 14, Saul makes a decision that would have gone against God, and there is no reference to Him in the Hebrew text.*

- Robert D. Bergen said ‘The Torah did not require soldiers to refrain from eating during battle; it was a command conceived of by Saul in an apparent effort to gain the Lord’s favor.’
 - *I believe Saul wanted to the right things, but he depended solely on himself to go about them instead of the Lord.*
- *Saul didn’t tyrannize his troops with this fast because God told Him to do so (if so the text would’ve made that clear), instead I personally believe that Saul wanted his soldiers to think he was wholly and fully dedicated to God.*
 - *He wants them to think something of him that he is not and that will continue to be a character flaw of Saul that we see all throughout 1st Samuel.*
 - But, you and I often have this same character flaw as well.
 - We want to do ‘Holy’ and ‘Christian’ things so that others will see as Holy and righteous, whether God has directed and led us in that way or not, that’s how we want others to view us.
- W.W. said *‘He (saul) thought that their fasting plus the presence of the ark would impress the Lord and He would give them victory. But Jonathan and his armor-bearer were already*

enjoying victory without either the ark or the fast.’

- *Because Saul wanted his soldiers to view him as ‘more spiritual’ he deprived them of what they really needed in the middle of battle...*
 - *Calories! Certainly being in battle they were exerting many calories and it wasn’t being replenished with food.*
 - *If God was responsible for directing this fast, then God would have sustained them, but it was Saul’s idea and not God’s leading.*
 - This would be like telling a runner that they can’t have water while running a marathon.
 - Saul’s own selfishness was going to develop into a bigger problem for his son and the soldiers...

Point 2: *Saul’s Son has a Situation. (V. 25-30)*

- ‘Now when all the people[a] came to the forest, behold, there was honey on the ground. **26** And when the people entered the forest, behold, the honey was dropping, but no one put his hand to his mouth, for the people feared the oath. **27** But Jonathan had not heard his father charge the people with the oath, so he put out the tip of the staff that was in his hand and dipped it in the honeycomb and put his hand to his mouth, and his

eyes became bright. **28** Then one of the people said, “Your father strictly charged the people with an oath, saying, ‘Cursed be the man who eats food this day.’” And the people were faint. **29** Then Jonathan said, “My father has troubled the land. See how my eyes have become bright because I tasted a little of this honey. **30** How much better if the people had eaten freely today of the spoil of their enemies that they found. For now the defeat among the Philistines has not been great.” 1st Samuel 14:25-30

- ***In verse 25 the forest area would have been the hill country of Ephraim, now the flashback is over and these verses pick up chronologically with where we left off in 1st Samuel 14:23.***
 - ‘So the LORD saved Israel that day. And the battle passed beyond Beth-aven.’
 - ***At this time, the battle would have moved into the woods, and it’s obvious that Jonathan and the armor bearer met up with the main army.***
 - I believe there are **4** to look at this situation that Saul’s own selfishness created.
- ***Fearful People. (V. 26)***
 - ‘Now when all the people[a] came to the forest, behold, there was honey on the ground.’
 - ***There’s a well known quote from the movie band of brothers that states, ‘It’s better to be respected than to be feared.’***

- Obviously, Saul used a religiously known tool, to invoke fear into his men.
- ***The honey was most likely on the ground throughout the forest from the philistines who had retreated through the forest and likely stirred up the hives.***
 - ***Their stomachs are telling them to eat of the honey to nourish their bodies, but the fear that they have of king Saul and the oath he made has kept them from doing this.***
- ***Again I want to be clear, if it was God who ordered this fast, than God would have sustained and provided for them.***
 - But it was not motivated by God but by Saul.
 - When we follow the commands of God, we are walking by faith in Him, but when we follow the man manufactured regulations, we are only tempting God Himself.
- ***If the soldiers would have had some of the honey, it would have given them more strength to finish the battle.***
 - Remember, God does give us things that we as mankind have dominion over to help us accomplish His will.
- ***Food for the Body. (V. 27)***

- ‘But Jonathan had not heard his father charge the people with the oath, so he put out the tip of the staff that was in his hand and dipped it in the honeycomb and put his hand to his mouth, and his eyes became bright.’
- ***The phrase ‘his eyes became bright’ is a hebrew idiom here.***
 - What it means in this context is that although Jonathan didn’t know about the oath that his father gave, the honey that hit his lips perked him up and gave him nourishment after much physical exertion that he would have used on the battlefield.
- Ezra also used this idiom in ***Ezra 9:8***
 - ‘But now for a brief moment favor has been shown by the LORD our God, to leave us a remnant and to give us a secure hold[a] within his holy place, that our God may brighten our eyes and grant us a little reviving in our slavery.’
 - ***In the context of Ezra’s day, this was a spiritual reviving, not a physical nourishment. But, the idiom is used elsewhere.***
- The phrase ‘his eyes became bright’ literally means in the Hebrew, to ***light up***.
 - ***This is important because it is a contrast from Saul’s dark curse not to eat.***
- So, we see that Jonathan had food for the body and next we see the soldiers reactions.
- ***Faint at the Sight. (V. 28)***
 - ‘Then one of the people said, “Your father strictly charged the people with an oath, saying, ‘Cursed be the man who eats food this day.’” And the people were faint.’
 - ***The one soldier couldn’t believe what Jonathan had done and probably feared for his life or a great punishment that his fellow soldier, the king’s son, may receive.***
 - The best way to examine the overall health of the army at this time due to Saul’s deadly decree, is to look at one specific word.
 - ****Word Study****
 - The english word ‘faint’ comes from a hebrew word ***‘Uwph’*** ***וּפָּה*** which literally means ***weary, but can also mean to fly away.***
 - In this context, I take this to mean that their bodily strength had flown away from them causing them to be weary.

- *Epecially after seeing 1 man, Jonathan, put honey in his lips while they knew that they could not.*
 - *There are scholars out there who will make the argument that the soldiers didn't tell Jonathan sooner, because it could have been Saul's intention for his son to die.*
- While I'm not sure if that's true or not, the response that Jonathan has certainly reveals the escalation building up between Jonathan and Saul.
- ***Foolishness of the father was revealed to the son. (V. 29-30)***
 - 'Then Jonathan said, "My father has troubled the land. See how my eyes have become bright because I tasted a little of this honey. **30** How much better if the people had eaten freely today of the spoil of their enemies that they found. For now the defeat among the Philistines has not been great."
 - In verse 1 of 1st Samuel 14, we see that Jonathan didn't tell his dad of the attack he was planning on the philistines which gave us the first clue that there was tension.
 - *Jonathan is essentially saying that he felt like his dad was foolish by giving this oath.*

- *Based on what Jonathan says here, you can tell that with his military mind and vision, he feels that the Israelites could have had an even greater and stronger victory had the men been able to eat.*
 - *Jonathan boldly declares that his father's leadership had brought 'trouble' on the land.*
 - I'm sure these words that Jonathan uttered would eventually get back to his dad. And this would intensify the rift in their relationship.
 - Colossians 3:12 reminds those of us who are leaders in God's Kingdom that we are to clothe ourselves with compassion and not competition.
 - 'Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience,' Colossians 3:12
 - ***Tonight we've seen Saul's Own Selfishness, and the Situation he put his son in, but now Saul's own decisions would lead his soldiers to sin.***
- Point 3: *Saul's Selfishness led the Soldiers to Sin. (V. 31-35)***
- 'They struck down the Philistines that day from Michmash to Aijalon. And the people were very faint. **32** The people pounced on the spoil and took sheep and oxen and calves and slaughtered them on the ground. And the people ate them with the blood. **33** Then they

told Saul, “Behold, the people are sinning against the LORD by eating with the blood.” And he said, “You have dealt treacherously; roll a great stone to me here.”[b] 34 And Saul said, “Disperse yourselves among the people and say to them, ‘Let every man bring his ox or his sheep and slaughter them here and eat, and do not sin against the LORD by eating with the blood.’” So every one of the people brought his ox with him that night and they slaughtered them there. 35 And Saul built an altar to the LORD; it was the first altar that he built to the LORD.’

- *Not only did saul’s rash and foolish vow cause the soldiers to be physically weak, but it also created an abnormal craving for food.*

- *The fighting continued, but the hunger did not stop.*

- Remember, that Saul’s rash vow was only for that day, so as the fighting continued into the next day, the men could eat, and boy did they...
 - There are 3 things we need to see here concerning the situation of sin that Saul put his soldiers in.

- **Desperation. (V. 32)**

- ‘The people pounced on the spoil and took sheep and oxen and calves and slaughtered them on the ground. And the people ate them with the blood.’

- Once they won the battle, they now had food that they could pounce on and that’s exactly what they did.

- *We must remember that the jews were required by the Old Covenant law to drain out the blood of the animals before preparing the meat.*

- *According to Leviticus 3:17, Leviticus 7:26, Leviticus 17:10-14, Deuteronomy 12:23-24 and Genesis 9:4, blood was not to be eaten.*

- *I personally believe that the soldiers did know better and that they were to drain the blood out, but their appetite took the place of putting the animals on the altar.*

- They were desperate, they were hungry, and Saul was the one who put them in that spot.

- **Disobedience. (V. 33)**

- ‘Then they told Saul, “Behold, the people are sinning against the LORD by eating with the blood.” And he said, “You have dealt treacherously; roll a great stone to me here.”’

- *Although we don’t know for sure, I assume that the ‘they’ here are the priests.*

- *Now, Saul cares. Saul care when it is too late.*

- Is this not what you and I do so often? We care whenever it's convenient. We care whenever it's too late instead of doing the right things ahead of time to prevent such disobedience in one's life.

- *In all reality, you and I are often the guilty ones when it comes to leading others astray, although we often don't admit it.*

- 'Therefore let us not pass judgment on one another any longer, but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother.' Romans 14:13

- Saul gets upset at them for sinning without admitting and realizing that he is the one who led them to sin in the first place and put them in this situation.

- *Don't be so selfish and self-conceited that you put those that you love and lead, where they feel that sin is their only option.*

- (No matter what it's never the only option, but don't put them in a predicament where they have to even make that decision.)

- *The phrase 'roll a great stone' meant that they could butcher animals with height and room to be able to drain the blood properly.*

- *Duty. (V. 34-35)*

- 'And Saul said, "Disperse yourselves among the people and say to them, 'Let every man bring his ox or his sheep and slaughter them here and eat, and do not sin against the LORD by eating with the blood.'" So every one of the people brought his ox with him that night and they slaughtered them there. **35** And Saul built an altar to the LORD; it was the first altar that he built to the LORD.'

- *Saul tried to make things right by bringing an altar quickly and having Israel sacrifice properly.*

- It was his duty and the duty of the people to get back to God's law, but it doesn't take away the fact that saul led them astray in the first place.

- *It's never okay to blame others and not take accountability for our own actions.*

Conclusion:

- *No one in this sanctuary tonight is perfect. No one is without sin. Including me, I view myself as chief of sinners as the apostle Paul himself did.*

- While we aren't perfect, we should strive for perfection in the way that we live for Christ Jesus.

- Some of us tonight need to be reminded that our tongue leads to actions, and that our tongue is the most deadliest weapon in the history of humanity.
 - ‘And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life,[a] and set on fire by hell.[b]’ James 3:6
- ***Sometimes we don’t realize just how destructive our words and actions are and can be, till they destroy those we love the most.***
 - ***By looking at this text tonight it is my prayer that you don’t have to do damage control after you’ve said or done something to hurt those you love, but that you can prevent it before it ever occurs.***
 - The Apostle Paul gives us one way we can do this...
 - ‘We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ,’ 2nd Corinthians 10:5
 - Before you leave tonight, I want you to speak with the Lord.
 - ***Maybe there are circumstances or situations in your life that you need to ask God to forgive you of things you may have done to hurt others like Saul***

did here, simply because your heart was not right with God.

- ***Or tonight, you want to make sure that the Saul inside of each one of us doesn’t come out...***
 - ***Point 1: Saul’s Own Selfishness. (V. 24)***
 - ***Point 2: Saul’s Son has a Situation. (V. 25-30)***
 - ***Point 3: Saul’s Selfishness led the Soldiers to Sin. (V. 31-35)***