

ON THE MAKING, BREAKING AND FORSAKING OF OATHS 1 SAM. 14:23-24

1 Samuel 14:23 So the LORD saved Israel that day (בַּיּוֹם): and the battle passed over unto Bethaven.

1 Samuel 14:24 And the men of Israel were distressed that day (בַּיּוֹם): **for** Saul had adjured the people, saying, Cursed be the man that eateth any food until evening, that I may be avenged on mine enemies. **So** none of the people tasted any food.

Oaths using specific words are not so common today. How can we define / describe an oath?

- A decision
- With / without words
- Made quickly
- In the heat of the moment
- That you will not change
- Often involving shame / pride
- **Requiring** humility / the humbling of self to change

I. Oaths should not be made!

That is: in general, on the whole....

1 Samuel 14:24 And the men of Israel were distressed that day (בַּיּוֹם): **for** Saul had **adjured** the people, saying, **Cursed** be the man that eateth any food until evening, that I may be avenged on mine enemies. **So** none of the people tasted any food.

1 Samuel 14:25 And all they of the land came to a wood; and there was honey upon the ground.

1 Samuel 14:26 And when the people were come into the wood, behold, the honey dropped; but no man put his hand to his mouth: **for** the people feared the oath.

Thoughts:

- The oath makes no sense
- The oath includes no reasons / reasoning
- The oath is all about Saul
- The oath is condemned by the author / Holy Spirit (14:23-24)
- The oath is **also** condemned within & by the story

1 Samuel 14:29 Then said Jonathan, My father hath **troubled** the land: see, I pray you, how mine eyes have been enlightened, because I tasted a little of this honey. **1 Samuel 14:30** How much more, if haply the people had eaten freely to day of the spoil of their enemies which they found? **for** had there not been now a **much greater slaughter among the Philistines?**

1 Samuel 14:31 And they smote the Philistines that day from Michmash to Aijalon: and the people were very faint. **1 Samuel 14:32** **And the people flew upon the spoil, and took sheep, and oxen, and calves, and slew them on the ground: and the people did eat them with the blood.**

- Oaths, in general, are forbidden in the rest of Scripture

James 5:12 But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation.

Matthew 5:33 Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: **Matthew 5:34** But I say unto you, **Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: Matthew 5:35** **Nor** by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. **Matthew 5:36** **Neither** shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. **Matthew 5:37** **But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.**

Matthew 23:16 Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor! **Matthew 23:17** Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold? **Matthew 23:18** And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty. **Matthew 23:19** Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift? **Matthew 23:20** Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon. **Matthew 23:21** And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein. **Matthew 23:22** And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon.

II. Oaths certainly shouldn't be made rashly!

Everything about this oath smells of emotions, rashness, ego, and certainly lack of counsel.

Deuteronomy 23:21 When thou shalt vow a vow unto the LORD thy God, thou shalt **not** slack to pay it: for the LORD thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee.

Deuteronomy 23:22 But **if** thou shalt forbear to vow, it shall be no sin in thee.

Deuteronomy 23:23 That which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt keep and perform; even a freewill offering, according as thou hast vowed unto the LORD thy God, which thou hast promised with thy mouth.

Proverbs 20:25 It is a snare to the man who devoureth that which is holy, and after vows to make enquiry.

Psalms 50:14 Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High:

Psalms 76:11 Vow, and pay unto the LORD your God: let all that be round about him bring presents unto him that ought to be feared.

Ecclesiastes 5:4 When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer **not** to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. **Ecclesiastes 5:5** Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay. **Ecclesiastes 5:6** Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before the angel, that it was an error: wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thine hands? **Ecclesiastes 5:7** For in the multitude of dreams and many words there are also divers vanities: but fear thou God.

III. Oaths, made rashly, have many unintended consequences!

What are some of those in this event?

- **This trapped Jonathan** 14:27-28
- **This limited Israel's success** 14:29-30
- **This caused a great sin** 14:31-32, 33-35

IV. One foolish oath usually produces / causes other foolish oaths.

1 Samuel 14:39 For, as the LORD liveth, which saveth Israel, **though it be in Jonathan my son, he shall surely die.** But there was not a man among all the people that answered him.

1 Samuel 14:44 And Saul answered, **God do so and more also: for thou shalt surely die, Jonathan.** **1 Samuel 14:45** And the people said unto Saul, **Shall Jonathan die, who hath wrought this great salvation in Israel? God forbid: as the LORD liveth, there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground; for he hath wrought with God this day. So the people rescued Jonathan, that he died not.**

Thoughts:

- **Oaths produce more oaths**
- **Emotions produce more emotional decisions**
- **Ego / pride / shame produces more of the same**
- **Christ & Christ alone produces humility, confession, grace, and forgiveness**

James 4:6 But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. **James 4:7** Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. **James 4:8** Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. **James 4:9** Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. **James 4:10** Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

1 Peter 5:5 Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. **1 Peter 5:5** Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. **1 Peter 5:6** Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.