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YouTube Prayer Link

God's Expectations for Kings, Leaders, and Shepherds:

God's expectations of kings, leaders, and pastors are particularly severe. These expectations typically include:

God-fearing and obedience to God's laws: A king or shepherd is expected to fear God, submit to God's laws, and demonstrate godly and God-fearing character under leadership.

Justice and Kindness: God expects leaders to be impartial and merciful to their people, especially for the vulnerable.

Leading the people to the path of righteousness: The king or shepherd is called upon to guide the people to the path of righteousness set forth by God to stop evil and unrighteousness.

Humility and Repentance: If leaders make mistakes or go against God's will, God expects them to have a humble and repentant attitude, seeking God's forgiveness and returning to God's path.

Care for the souls and well-being of the people: The king or pastor is called upon to care for the souls of the people and work for the well-being of the people, not only for the material needs but also for the spiritual needs of the people.

Some biblical stories such as David, Samuel, and other kings, as well as descriptions of pastors in the New Testament, demonstrate God's high standards for leaders. However, this does not mean that God does not give forgiveness and restoration opportunities. God also shows love and mercy when leaders sincerely seek God's face, repent, and submit to God's will. According to the Old Testament, God's expectations for Paul include the following:

Obedience to God's commands: Saul was chosen by God as the first king of Israel. God expects him to be completely obedient to God's commands, to follow God's will, and not to deviate from God's law. However, in some cases, Saul failed to fully obey God's commands, causing him to lose God's support.

Confronting Israel's Enemies: God expects Saul to stand firm against Israel's enemies and defend the safety of God's elect under his duties as king. During the reign of Saul, he led the Israeli army in battle against the enemies of neighboring countries, which was considered one of the expectations of God for him.

Humility and repentance: When Saul disobeys God's will, God expects him to be humble and repentant. However, there were times when Saul showed a self-assertive side and a lack of true repentance, which led to problems in his relationship with God.

God's expectations of Saul included obedience to God, leading Israel against its enemies, and an attitude of humility and repentance when mistakes occurred. However, Saul was not always able to meet these expectations, which ultimately led to the failure of his reign and God's election of others.

Summary of 1 Samuel 14

In 1 Samuel 14, Saul's son Jonathan decides to go with his armed soldiers to the Philistine camp in an attempt to defeat them. Jonathan intended to use a stratagem to climb cliffs and start a battle by making contact with the enemy.

Jonathan climbed the cliff with his shieldmen and broke into the Philistine outpost. During the engagement, they killed 20 Philistines, causing chaos. At the same time, the Israeli army also attacked in the direction of the Philistines, which led to the beginning of the rout of the enemy. Jonathan's strategy proved successful, and he and his soldiers won a resounding victory in the battle.

Other forces led by Saul joined the battle, and the Israelite people, with God's help, destroyed the Philistine camp and seized their belongings. However, Saul ordered the soldiers not to eat anything, causing them to become exhausted. When Jonathan found a piece of honey, he disobeyed his father's orders and was criticized for it after eating it.

Samuel admonished the Israelites to obey God's law and warned them not to forget God in their own strength. Samuel also expressed God's love and concern for the people of Israel, promising that God would continue to protect them and help them overcome their enemies.

This chapter shows Jonathan's courage and wisdom and emphasizes God's strength and assistance. At the same time, it also warns people not to forget God and to obey God's laws and regulations.

Was God prejudiced against Saul?

In the Old Testament, it is not explicitly stated that God was biased against Saul. Rather, God's instructions and expectations are based on Saul's behavior and obedience to God. At one point during Saul's reign, he did not fully follow God's commands, which led to Samuel's rebuke of him.

Specifically, this event took place during the war of Saul against the Amalekites. God had commanded him to destroy everything in the Amalekites, including people, livestock, and even babies. However, Saul kept some things and claimed to have them as sacrifices to the gods. Samuel was unhappy with this, accusing Saul of not fully obeying God's commands and of acting against God's will.

In this context, it can be said that Saul's behavior led to God's rebuke, not because God was biased. God's instructions and judgments are based on human behavior and obedience to God, not on God's subjective preferences or prejudices.

We pray together

Heavenly Father, we come before You and pray to You for the pressure and justice of Kings and shepherds. Give them the wisdom and leadership to make just and fair decisions under pressure. The burden on their shoulders is heavy, and I ask You to give them perseverance and strength. So that they can rise above all difficulties and focus on the well-being of the people and the prosperity of society.

Guard their hearts so that they may seek Your guidance and wisdom in every difficult moment. Let them be able to act under the principles of justice and bring about positive change in society. Lord, we also pray for the flow of justice to fill this world with peace, fairness, and mercy. Sustain kings and pastors as instruments of righteousness and peace to lead people to Your will. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

1 SAMUEL

Chapter 14

1Sa. 14:1 One day Jonathan son of Saul said to the young man bearing his armour, "Come, let's go over to the Philistine outpost on the other side." But he did not tell his father.

1Sa. 14:2 Saul was staying on the outskirts of Gibeah under a pomegranate tree in Migron. With him were about six hundred men,

1Sa. 14:3 among whom was Ahijah, who was wearing an ephod. He was a son of Ichabod's brother Ahitub son of Phinehas, the son of Eli, the LORD's priest in Shiloh. No-one was aware that Jonathan had left.

1Sa. 14:4 On each side of the pass that Jonathan intended to cross to reach the Philistine outpost was a cliff; one was called Bozez, and the other Seneh.

1Sa. 14:5 One cliff stood to the north towards Michmash, the other to the south towards Geba.

1Sa. 14:6 Jonathan said to his young armour-bearer, "Come, let's go over to the outpost of those uncircumcised fellows. Perhaps the LORD will act on our behalf. Nothing can hinder the LORD from saving, whether by many or by few."

1Sa. 14:7 "Do all that you have in mind," his armour-bearer said. "Go ahead; I am with you heart and soul."

1Sa. 14:8 Jonathan said, "Come, then; we will cross over towards the men and let them see us.

1Sa. 14:9 If they say to us, 'Wait there until we come to you,' we will stay where we are and not go up to them.

1Sa. 14:10 But if they say, 'Come up to us,' we will climb up, because that will be our sign that the LORD has given them into our hands."

1Sa. 14:11 So both of them showed themselves to the Philistine outpost. “Look!” said the Philistines. “The Hebrews are crawling out of the holes they were hiding in.”

1Sa. 14:12 The men of the outpost shouted to Jonathan and his armourbearer, “Come up to us and we’ll teach you a lesson.” So

Jonathan said to his armour-bearer, “Climb up after me; the LORD has given them into the hand of Israel.”

1Sa. 14:13 Jonathan climbed up, using his hands and feet, with his armour-bearer right behind him. The Philistines fell before Jonathan, and his armour-bearer followed and killed behind him.

1Sa. 14:14 In that first attack Jonathan and his armour-bearer killed some twenty men in an area of about half an acre. [Hebrew half a yoke; a “yoke” was the land ploughed by a yoke of oxen in one day.]

1Sa. 14:15 Then panic struck the whole army — those in the camp and field, and those in the outposts and raiding parties — and the ground shook. It was a panic sent by God. [Or a terrible panic]

1Sa. 14:16 Saul’s lookouts at Gibeah in Benjamin saw the army melting away in all directions.

1Sa. 14:17 Then Saul said to the men who were with him, “Muster the forces and see who has left us.” When they did, it was Jonathan and his armour-bearer who were not there.

1Sa. 14:18 Saul said to Ahijah, “Bring the ark of God.” (At that time it was with the Israelites.) [Hebrew; Septuagint “Bring the ephod.” (At that time he wore the ephod before the Israelites.)]

1Sa. 14:19 While Saul was talking to the priest, the tumult in the Philistine camp increased more and more. So Saul said to the priest, “Withdraw your hand.”

1Sa. 14:20 Then Saul and all his men assembled and went to the battle. They found the Philistines in total confusion, striking each other with their swords.

1Sa. 14:21 Those Hebrews who had previously been with the Philistines and had gone up with them to their camp went over to the Israelites who were with Saul and Jonathan.

1Sa. 14:22 When all the Israelites who had hidden in the hill country of Ephraim heard that the Philistines were on the run, they joined the battle in hot pursuit.

1Sa. 14:23 So the LORD rescued Israel that day, and the battle moved on beyond Beth Aven.

1Sa. 14:24 Now the men of Israel were in distress that day, because Saul

had bound the people under an oath, saying, “Cursed be any man who eats food before evening comes, before I have avenged myself on my enemies!” So none of the troops tasted food.

1Sa. 14:25 The entire army [Or Now all the people of the land] entered the woods, and there was honey on the ground.

1Sa. 14:26 When they went into the woods, they saw the honey oozing out, yet no-one put his hand to his mouth, because they feared the oath.

1Sa. 14:27 But Jonathan had not heard that his father had bound the people with the oath, so he reached out the end of the staff that was in his hand and dipped it into the honeycomb. He raised his hand to his mouth, and his eyes brightened. [Or his strength was renewed]

1Sa. 14:28 Then one of the soldiers told him, “Your father bound the army under a strict oath, saying, ‘Cursed be any man who eats food today!’ That is why the men are faint.”

1Sa. 14:29 Jonathan said, “My father has made trouble for the country. See how my eyes brightened [Or my strength was renewed] when I tasted a little of this honey.

1Sa. 14:30 How much better it would have been if the men had eaten today some of the plunder they took from their enemies. Would not the slaughter of the Philistines have been even greater?”

1Sa. 14:31 That day, after the Israelites had struck down the Philistines from Michmash to Aijalon, they were exhausted.

1Sa. 14:32 They pounced on the plunder and, taking sheep, cattle and calves, they butchered them on the ground and ate them, together with the blood.

1Sa. 14:33 Then someone said to Saul, “Look, the men are sinning against the LORD by eating meat that has blood in it.” “You have broken faith,” he said. “Roll a large stone over here at once.”

1Sa. 14:34 Then he said, “Go out among the men and tell them, ‘Each of you bring me your cattle and sheep, and slaughter them here and eat them. Do not sin against the LORD by eating meat with blood still in it.’” So everyone brought his ox that night and slaughtered it there.

1Sa. 14:35 Then Saul built an altar to the LORD; it was the first time he had done this.

1Sa. 14:36 Saul said, “Let us go down after the Philistines by night and plunder them till dawn, and let us not leave one of them alive.” “Do whatever seems best to you,” they replied. But

the priest said, "Let us enquire of God here."

1Sa. 14:37 So Saul asked God, "Shall I go down after the Philistines? Will you give them into Israel's hand?" But God did not answer him that day.

1Sa. 14:38 Saul therefore said, "Come here, all you who are leaders of the army, and let us find out what sin has been committed today.

1Sa. 14:39 As surely as the LORD who rescues Israel lives, even if it lies with my son Jonathan, he must die." But not one of the men said a word.

1Sa. 14:40 Saul then said to all the Israelites, "You stand over there; I and Jonathan my son will stand over here." "Do what seems best to you," the men replied.

1Sa. 14:41 Then Saul prayed to the LORD, the God of Israel, "Give me the right answer." [Hebrew; Septuagint "Why have you not answered your servant today? If the fault is in me or my son Jonathan, respond with Urim, but if the men of Israel are at fault, respond with Thummin."] And Jonathan and Saul were taken by lot, and the men were cleared.

1Sa. 14:42 Saul said, "Cast the lot between me and Jonathan my son." And Jonathan was taken.

1Sa. 14:43 Then Saul said to Jonathan, "Tell me what you have done." So Jonathan told him, "I merely tasted a little honey with the end of my staff. And now must I die?"

1Sa. 14:44 Saul said, "May God deal with me, be it ever so severely, if you do not die, Jonathan."

1Sa. 14:45 But the men said to Saul, "Should Jonathan die — he who has brought about this great deliverance in Israel? Never! As surely as the LORD lives, not a hair of his head shall fall to the ground, for he did this today with God's help." So the men rescued Jonathan, and he was not put to death.

1Sa. 14:46 Then Saul stopped pursuing the Philistines, and they withdrew to their own land.

1Sa. 14:47 After Saul had assumed rule over Israel, he fought against their enemies on every side: Moab, the Ammonites, Edom, the kings [Masoretic Text; Dead Sea Scrolls and Septuagint king] of Zobah, and the Philistines. Wherever he turned, he inflicted punishment on them. [Hebrew; Septuagint he was victorious]

1Sa. 14:48 He fought valiantly and defeated the Amalekites, delivering Israel from the hands of those who had plundered them.

1Sa. 14:49 Saul's sons were Jonathan, Ishvi and Malki-Shua. The name of his older daughter was Merab, and that of the younger was

Michal.

1Sa. 14:50 His wife's name was Ahinoam daughter of Ahimaaz. The name of the commander of Saul's army was Abner son of Ner, and Ner was Saul's uncle.

1Sa. 14:51 Saul's father Kish and Abner's father Ner were sons of Abiel.

1Sa. 14:52 All the days of Saul there was bitter war with the Philistines, and whenever Saul saw a mighty or brave man, he took him into his service.

Chapter 14 begins with Saul's son, Jonathan, suggesting to his armor-bearer that they sneak out of the Israelite camp and attack the Philistines. Jonathan has faith that God will help them defeat the enemy, and his armor-bearer agrees to go with him. They climb up a rocky cliff, and when they reach the top, they kill about twenty Philistines. This causes a panic among the Philistine army, and the Israelites who had been hiding in fear join the fight and defeat the Philistines. Meanwhile, Saul is resting under a pomegranate tree when he hears the noise of the battle. He asks his troops to count the soldiers and finds out that Jonathan and his armor-bearer are missing. Saul orders the priest to consult God to see if they should continue the battle, but God does not answer.

Jonathan realizes that he has broken one of Saul's commands, which was to fast until the evening, and he eats some honey. When Saul finds out about this, he orders that Jonathan be put to death, but the people speak up for Jonathan, reminding Saul of his bravery in defeating the Philistines.

The Israelites continue to fight against the Philistines, and God gives them a great victory. However, Saul makes a foolish vow not to eat until evening, and when the people start to eat, he is unwilling to break his vow. This angers the people, who realize that Saul's vow has caused them unnecessary hardship.

Chapter 14 shows how faith in God can lead to unexpected victories, as Jonathan's boldness and trust in God leads to the defeat of the Philistines. It also highlights the consequences of foolish vows and the importance of trusting in God's provision instead of relying on our own strength. Saul's impulsive vow causes unnecessary suffering for the Israelites and shows his lack of trust in God.

Here are some important verses from chapter 14 of 1 Samuel in the Christian Bible:

1 Samuel 14:6 - "Jonathan said to his young armor-bearer, 'Come, let's go over to the outpost of those uncircumcised men. Perhaps the Lord will act in our behalf. Nothing can hinder the Lord from saving, whether by many or by few.'"

1 Samuel 14:23 - "So the Lord rescued Israel that day, and the battle moved on beyond Beth Aven."

1 Samuel 14:52 - "All the days of Saul there was bitter war with the Philistines, and whenever Saul saw a mighty or brave man, he took him into his service."

These verses showcase Jonathan's bravery and faith in God, as he and his armor-bearer defeat the Philistines despite being vastly outnumbered. This victory is attributed to the Lord's intervention and is a reminder that God is sovereign over all things. The verse also highlights the

ongoing battle between the Israelites and the Philistines during Saul's reign, and Saul's efforts to strengthen his army by recruiting mighty and brave men into his service.

1 Samuel chapter 14 showcases the courage and faith of Jonathan, Saul's son, as he leads a bold attack against the Philistine army. This chapter explores themes of bravery, divine intervention, and the power of a committed heart.

One of the key themes that emerges from this chapter is the theme of bravery and faith in the face of overwhelming odds. Jonathan, along with his armor-bearer, initiates a daring assault on the Philistines, despite being vastly outnumbered. They demonstrate unwavering trust in God's deliverance and display incredible courage to step out in faith.

This chapter serves as an inspiring example of taking bold action in alignment with God's purposes. It reminds us that when we trust in God's strength and guidance, we can overcome seemingly insurmountable challenges. It encourages us to have faith in God's power and to step out courageously, even when circumstances appear daunting.

Furthermore, 1 Samuel chapter 14 highlights the significance of divine intervention. As Jonathan and his armor-bearer engage the Philistines, God responds by causing confusion and panic among the enemy troops. The Philistines turn on each other, resulting in a great victory for Jonathan and the Israelites.

This chapter reminds us that God is active in our lives and intervenes on our behalf. It emphasizes the importance of relying on God's supernatural intervention rather than solely depending on our own strength or strategies. It encourages us to trust in God's faithfulness and to seek His guidance and intervention in all our endeavors.

Additionally, 1 Samuel chapter 14 underscores the power of a committed heart. Jonathan's resolve to confront the Philistines and his unwavering trust in God's deliverance reflect his deep devotion and commitment to God's purposes. His courage and faith inspire those around him and contribute to the Israelites' victory.

This chapter challenges us to examine our own hearts and level of commitment to God's purposes. It encourages us to cultivate a steadfast devotion to God, seeking His will above our own desires. It reminds us that a committed heart can inspire others and make a significant impact for God's kingdom.

In conclusion, 1 Samuel chapter 14 brings forth reflections on bravery, divine intervention, and the power of a committed heart. It encourages us to step out in faith and trust God in the face of challenges, to seek His divine intervention, and to cultivate a heart fully committed to His purposes. May we be inspired by Jonathan's example, trusting in God's strength, and dedicating ourselves wholeheartedly to His plans.