

Saul's foolishness (pt. 1)

The literary structure of 1 Samuel 14:23b-35

A. Forbidden eating: ²³And the battle passed beyond Beth-aven. ²⁴And 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."

B. The people didn't eat:

a) **No food:** So none of the people had tasted food.

b) **Honey:** ²⁵Now when all the people came to the forest, behold, there was honey on the ground.

b1) **Honey:** ²⁶And when the people entered the forest, behold, the honey was dropping,

a1) **No food:** but no one put his hand to his mouth, for the people feared the oath.

C. Jonathan ate:

a) **The oath:** ²⁷But Jonathan had not heard his father charge the people with the oath,

b) **Jonathan eats the honey:** 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.

a1) **The oath:** ²⁸Then one of the people said, "Your father strictly charged the people with an oath, saying, 'Cursed be the man who eats food this day.'"

B1. The people weak from not eating:

a) **Faint:** And the people were faint.

b) **Criticism of Saul:** ²⁹Then Jonathan said, "My father has troubled the land.

c) **The benefit of his eating:** See how my eyes have become bright because I tasted a little of this honey.

c1) **The army would have benefited:** ³⁰How much better if the people had eaten freely today of the spoil of their enemies that they found.

b1) **Criticism of Saul:** For now the defeat among the Philistines has not been great."

a1) **Faint:** ³¹They struck down the Philistines that day from Michmash to Aijalon. And the people were very faint.

A1. Forbidden eating:

a) **Animals/eaten with the blood:** ³²The 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.

b) **A great stone:** ³³Then 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."

a1) **Animals/eaten with the blood:** ³⁴And 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.

b1) **An altar:** ³⁵And Saul built an altar to the LORD; it was the first altar that he built to the LORD.