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KINGDOM HONEY

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THE RASH OATH: WHEN LEADERS BIND WHAT THEY SHOULDN'T (VV. 24-30)

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. ²⁵ Now when all the people 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.”

1 Samuel 14:24-30 (ESV)

THE RIPPLE OF SIN: ONE BAD CALL LEADS TO BLOODSHED (VV. 31-35)

³¹ 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.” 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.

1 Samuel 14:31-35 (ESV)

For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it for you on the altar to make atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement by the life.”

Leviticus 17:11 (ESV)

THE REQUEST IGNORED: WHEN GOD IS SILENT (VV. 36-42)

³⁶ Then Saul said, “Let us go down after the Philistines by night and plunder them until the morning light; let us not leave a man of them.” And they said, “Do whatever seems good to you.” But the priest said, “Let us draw near to God here.” ³⁷ And Saul inquired of God, “Shall I go down after the Philistines? Will you give them into the hand of Israel?” But he did not answer him that day. ³⁸ And Saul said, “Come here, all you leaders of the people, and know and see how this sin has arisen today. ³⁹ For as the Lord lives who saves Israel, though it be in Jonathan my son, he shall surely die.” But there was not a man among all the people who answered him. ⁴⁰ Then he said to all Israel, “You shall be on one side, and I and Jonathan my son will be on the other side.” And the people said to Saul, “Do what seems good to you.” ⁴¹ Therefore Saul said, “O Lord God of Israel, why have you not answered your servant this day? If this guilt is in me or in Jonathan my son, O Lord, God of Israel, give Urim. But if this guilt is in your people Israel, give Thummim.” And Jonathan and Saul were taken, but the people escaped. ⁴² Then Saul said, “Cast the lot between me and my son Jonathan.” And Jonathan was taken.

1 Samuel 14:36-42 (ESV)

The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord

Proverbs 16:33 (ESV)

THE RANSOM OF JONATHAN: MERCY TRUMPS THE CURSE (VV. 43-46)

⁴³ Then Saul said to Jonathan, “Tell me what you have done.” And Jonathan told him, “I tasted a little honey with the tip of the staff that was in my hand. Here I am; I will die.” ⁴⁴ And Saul said, “God do so to me and more also; you shall surely die, Jonathan.” ⁴⁵ Then the people said to Saul, “Shall Jonathan die, who has worked this great salvation in Israel? Far from it! As the Lord lives, there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground, for he has worked with God this day.” So the people ransomed Jonathan, so that he did not die. ⁴⁶ Then Saul went up from pursuing the Philistines, and the Philistines went to their own place.

1 Samuel 14:43-46 (ESV)