

## Authority of the People Over the King

*The King and the People Series*

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### What We Will Learn

- Disobedience to constituted authority displeases God
- Even if an order or ruling by the authority appears inappropriate
- The people may overrule constituted authority
  - By Collective decision
  - Based on following due process

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### What We Will Learn cont'd

- Example from interactions among Saul, Jonathan, and Israelites
- Jonathan disobeyed king's order
- Against eating during pursuit of Philistines
- God intervened to hold Jonathan accountable
- Saul announced full punishment for Jonathan
- But was overruled
- By collective decision of the people
- 1 Samuel 14:24–46

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### Jonathan Disobeys King's Order

- Jonathan was unaware of king's order against eating
- He violated the order by eating wild honey
- Criticized the king publicly
- Witnessed by several men of Israel
- 1 Samuel 14:24–30

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### 1 Samuel 14 (NKJV)

24 And the men of Israel were distressed that day, for Saul had placed the people under oath, saying, "Cursed is the man who eats any food until evening, before I have taken vengeance on my enemies." So none of the people tasted food.

25 Now all the people of the land came to a forest; and there was honey on the ground.

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### 1 Samuel 14 (NKJV)

26 And when the people had come into the woods, there was the honey, dripping; 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; therefore he stretched out the end of the rod that was in his hand and dipped it in a honeycomb, and put his hand to his mouth; and his countenance brightened.

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### 1 Samuel 14 (NKJV)

28 Then one of the people said, "Your father strictly charged the people with an oath, saying, 'Cursed is the man who eats food this day.'" And the people were faint.

29 But Jonathan said, "My father has troubled the land. Look now, how my countenance has brightened because I tasted a little of this honey.

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### 1 Samuel 14 (NKJV)

30 How much better if the people had eaten freely today of the spoil of their enemies which they found! For now would there not have been a much greater slaughter among the Philistines?"

- Jonathan disobeyed king's order
- Did not know about the order
- Criticized king publicly for bad judgment

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### God Intervened Holds Jonathan Accountable

- God turned away from Israel
- Would not respond to their prayer
- Because of Jonathan's disobedience
- Jonathan was identified as the culprit
- By prayer and lot
- 1 Samuel 14:36–43

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### 1 Samuel 14 (NIV)

36 Saul said, "Let us go down and pursue 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 inquire of God here."

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### 1 Samuel 14 (NIV)

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

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.

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### 1 Samuel 14 (NIV)

39 As surely as the Lord who rescues Israel lives, even if the guilt lies with my son Jonathan, he must die." But not one of them said a word.

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," they replied.

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### 1 Samuel 14 (NIV)

41 Then Saul prayed to the Lord, the God of Israel, "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 Thummim." Jonathan and Saul were taken by lot, and the men were cleared.

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

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### 1 Samuel 14 (NIV)

43 Then Saul said to Jonathan, "Tell me what you have done."

So Jonathan told him, "I tasted a little honey with the end of my staff. And now I must die!"

- Prayer and lot identify Jonathan as culprit
- He confessed he disobeyed king's order
- Submitted himself for punishment

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### King Overruled by The People

- King Saul declared punishment for Jonathan
- Decreed death for Jonathan
- Because he disobeyed order against eating
- But decree was overturned
- By collective decision of the people
- 1 Samuel 14:44–46

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### 1 Samuel 14 (NIV)

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

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 will 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.

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### 1 Samuel 14 (NKJV)

- Repeat Verse 45 in NKJV

45 But the people said to Saul, "Shall Jonathan die, who has accomplished this great deliverance in Israel? Certainly not! As the Lord lives, not one hair of his head shall fall to the ground, for he has worked with God this day." So the people rescued Jonathan, and he did not die.

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### 1 Samuel 14 (NIV)

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

- The people overturned the king's decree
- By "collective" decision
- Collective decision requires due process
- Based on rules and regulations of the people

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## Due Process for Collective Overrule

- Modern-day government example
- Decision of the legislature
- Decision of the judiciary (court system)
- Specific authorities defined by rules and regulations
- General protest by the people as input to collective decision process

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