

1 Samuel 14:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

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.

The people's fear of Saul's curse overpowers their physical need: they see 'the honey dropped' but 'no man put his hand to his mouth.' The Hebrew emphasizes restraint despite extreme temptation - honey literally dripping before exhausted, hungry warriors. Fear of the king's oath supersedes natural desire and practical need. Saul's word binds more than God's provision frees. This reversal of proper authority - king's command over divine gift - characterizes Saul's dysfunctional leadership.

Historical Context

Ancient curses were taken with utmost seriousness. The people's fear reflects belief in the effective power of pronounced oaths. Violation was thought to bring automatic negative consequences. This cultural context explains the troops' restraint despite exhaustion.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. When does fear of human authority prevent receiving what God provides?
2. How do we distinguish between proper respect for leadership and improper bondage to human decrees?

Interlinear Text

וַיָּבֹא אֵל	וְהָיָה	אֶל	הַיָּעַר	וְהָיָה	וְהָיָה	וְהָיָה	וְהָיָה
were come	And when the people	H413	into the wood	H2009	dropped		
H935	H5971		H3293		H1982		
וַיִּבְרַח	וְהָיָה	וְהָיָה	וְהָיָה	וְהָיָה	וְהָיָה	וְהָיָה	וְהָיָה
behold the honey	H369	but no man put	his hand	H413	to his mouth	H3588	feared
H1706		H5381	H3027		H6310		H3372
וְהָיָה	וְהָיָה	וְהָיָה	וְהָיָה	וְהָיָה	וְהָיָה	וְהָיָה	וְהָיָה
And when the people	H853	the oath					
H5971		H7621					