

# 1 Samuel 26:21

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then said Saul, I have sinned: return, my son David: for I will no more do thee harm, because my soul was precious in thine eyes this day: behold, I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly.

## Analysis

---

Saul's confession contains the most transparent self-assessment of his reign: 'I have sinned... I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly.' The Hebrew 'sakhal' (played the fool) indicates senseless, irrational behavior, while 'shagah' (erred) suggests wandering from the path. Yet despite this clarity of self-knowledge, Saul's pattern will reveal that conviction without repentance produces only momentary remorse. His promise 'I will no more do thee harm' will prove hollow, demonstrating the difference between emotional response and genuine change.

## Historical Context

---

This is one of several occasions where Saul acknowledged David's righteousness after being confronted with evidence of David's mercy. The pattern of confession followed by resumed persecution reveals the depth of Saul's spiritual bondage and the inadequacy of mere emotional response to sin.

## Related Passages

---

**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

## Study Questions

---

1. What is the difference between momentary conviction and genuine repentance?
2. How do you evaluate whether confession will lead to lasting change?

## Interlinear Text

---

לֹא	כִּי	דָּוִד	בְּנִי	שׁוּב	חָטָאתִי	שָׂא	וְלֹא	אָמַר
		<b>David</b>	<b>my son</b>	<b>return</b>	<b>I have sinned</b>	<b>Saul</b>	<b>Then said</b>	
		H3588	H1121	H7725	H2398	H7586	H559	
יָקָרָה	אֲשֶׁר	תַּחַת	עוֹד	לִי	אֶבֶר			
					<b>for I will no more do thee harm</b>			
					H7489			
הֵן	הֵן	הַיּוֹם	בְּעֵינֶיךָ	נַפְשִׁי				
		<b>this day</b>	<b>in thine eyes</b>	<b>because my soul</b>				
		H2088	H5869	H5315				
מְאֹד:	הַרְבֵּה	וְאָשָׁגָה	הִסֵּפִי					
	<b>exceedingly</b>	<b>and have erred</b>	<b>behold I have played the fool</b>					
	H3966	H7235	H7686					

## Additional Cross-References

---

**1 Samuel 15:24** (Sin): And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD, and thy words: because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice.

**1 Samuel 24:17** (References David): And he said to David, Thou art more righteous than I: for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil.

**Exodus 9:27** (Sin): And Pharaoh sent, and called for Moses and Aaron, and said unto them, I have sinned this time: the LORD is righteous, and I and my people are wicked.

**Matthew 27:4** (Sin): Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that.

**1 Samuel 15:30** (Sin): Then he said, I have sinned: yet honour me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people, and before Israel, and turn again with me, that I may worship the LORD thy God.

---

From KJV Study • [kjevstudy.org](http://kjevstudy.org)