

e-KardíaGram

Nutrition

Now the men of Israel were pressed to exhaustion that day, because Saul had placed them under an oath, saying, "Let a curse fall on anyone who eats before evening—before I have full revenge on my enemies." So no one ate anything all day, even though they had all found honeycomb on the ground in the forest. They didn't dare touch the honey because they all feared the oath they had taken. But Jonathan had not heard his father's command, and he dipped the end of his stick into a piece of honeycomb and ate the honey. After he had eaten it, he felt refreshed. But one of the men saw him and said, "Your father made the army take a strict oath that anyone who eats food today will be cursed. That is why everyone is weary and faint." "My father has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan exclaimed. "A command like that only hurts us. See how refreshed I am now that I have eaten this little bit of honey." (1 Samuel 14:24–29 NLT)

One amusing set of television advertisements for a chocolate bar used to proclaim, "You're not yourself when you're hungry." While I don't recommend a diet of candy to allay your hunger pangs, underneath the marketing message there is a truth about how we feel and how our brains and bodies operate when our blood glucose level is low. You know—probably too well—the groggy headache, the grouchy disposition, and the lowered resistance to stressors that accompany not eating for long durations. Apart from a self-imposed fast when one purposely prepares to endure this for a spiritual reason, being hungry negatively affects our physical and emotional selves.

The story of Israel versus the Philistines offers a portrait of these physiological and psychological effects. Under a poor leader in Saul and his restriction on food intake during battle, the Israelites were definitely not themselves. Jonathan, however, in his blissful ignorance, became proof positive that an increase in blood glucose—in his case via honey—offers refreshing energy. Now take that principle farther: how can **you** be a source of honey? Yes, this is where the Bible informs real life. When you were "not yourself," someone was like honey to you, I'm sure. So, to whom can you be like honey today? —Jeff Russell