

# THE ROCK COMMUNITY CHURCH

## 1 Samuel 14:1-23

### "Bravery at Michmash"

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22:56

I wanna invite you to make your way to 1 Samuel 14. Grab your Bible and make your way to 1 Samuel 14. If you didn't bring a Bible and you wanna follow along, there should be a black one hiding underneath of your chair, maybe the one in front of you that you can follow along.

23:08

We're on page 286, 286 and those Bibles. So just for kind of a catch you up, if you weren't here with us last week, just remind everybody where we were in 1 Samuel 13, what we saw. So last week we remember, we saw Saul, King Saul kind of chewed out by the priest Samuel.

23:29

King Saul failed to trust God, failed to obey what God had instructed him very clearly to do. Saul had offered the sacrifices that he was supposed to wait for Samuel to come, wait for Samuel to come and to give him instructions of what God wanted him to do, but Saul got impatient.

23:46

Saul decided that he knew better than God did and Saul decided to do what he thought was best. So as a part of that conversation last week, Samuel informed Saul that he was

no longer, that his family was no longer going to be the dynasty that was going to lead Israel.

24:01

The kingship of Israel was going to be taken from him and from his family. God was going to choose another king to lead his people. What we saw really, it kind of boiled down to, summarized it was Saul's spiritual ignorance that we saw on display in chapter 13, but this week in 14, we're going to see a great sequel to that.

24:20

We're going to see more ignorance. We're going to see more missing the point in chapter 14 from Saul as we see the confrontation kind of spill over into chapter 14. So we're actually going to look at first Samuel 14 in a couple of parts.

24:35

So this week we're going to start and then next week we're going to finish it up. This week we're going to meet a leader who trusted God and modeled the characteristics that Saul lacked. It was actually Saul's son, Jonathan.

24:47

We're going to see in just a minute, but then next week we're going to see King Saul step back into the picture and we're going to see another example of Saul's poor judgment as he puts himself and the people of Israel and his son into a terrible position.

25:02

So last week we remember we were introduced to King Saul's son, Jonathan. Jonathan defeated the Philistine outpost, the little army outpost that they had in Gibeah. So this week we're going to see Jonathan step in as the hero.

25:17

Jonathan shows up and we have these two contrasting figures, this kind of comparison between King Saul and Jonathan in this week's passage. And we're going to see in a few different places in first Samuel, but we see King Saul and we see what we see in King Saul as a hesitant leader.

25:36

He shows no initiative. He shows no intention of ever going to go and to do what God had instructed him to do, right? All the way back at the very beginning of him being called to be king of Israel, God made it very clear that he was supposed to go and set Israel free from the Philistines.

25:54

That going against the Philistines, defeating the Philistines was a key part of Saul's job that God had called him to as he placed him as king over Israel, but King Saul is hesitant. He shows no initiative and he's just kind of hanging back and waiting for, I don't even know what he's waiting for, but he was not obedient to do what God had told him to do.

26:15

Meanwhile, we see Jonathan come into the picture here and Jonathan models great faith. He models incredible bravery as he rushes in to take action while seeking God's help in his circumstances. Jonathan trusted God.

26:29

Meanwhile, Saul just spent time looking and focusing on his circumstances and got overwhelmed by the things that were around him. The waters got deep and Saul got nervous and Jonathan stepped out in faith.

26:42

So let's take a look at our passage. We're gonna read 1 Samuel 14. We're gonna go from verse one down through verse 23. We'll kind of stop there and then save the rest of the chapter for next week. So let's read together.

26:54

I invite you to follow along in your copy or on the screens as I read. 1 Samuel 14, starting in verse one, it says, One day, Jonathan, the son of Saul, said to the young man who carried his armor, Come, let us go over to the Philistine garrison on the other side. But he did not tell his father.

27:10

And Saul was staying in the outskirts of Gibeah in the pomegranate cave in Migron. And the people who were with him were about 600 men, including Ahijah, the son of Ahitub, Ichabod's brother, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eli, the priest of the Lord in Shiloh, who was wearing an ephod.

27:27

And the people did not know that Jonathan had gone. But within the passes by which Jonathan sought to go over to the Philistine garrison, there was a rocky crag on the one side and a rocky crag on the other.

27:38

And the name of the one was Bozez, and the name of the other, Senah. And the one crag rose on the north in front of Michmash and the other on the south in front of Gibeah. And Jonathan said to the young man who carried his armor, Come, let us go over to the garrison of these uncircumcised.

27:55

It may be that the Lord will work for us, for nothing can hinder the Lord from saving, by many or by few. And his armor-bearer said to him, Do all that is in your heart. Do as you wish. Behold, I am with you, heart and soul. And then Jonathan said, Behold, we will cross over to the men, and we will show ourselves to them.

28:15

And if they say to us, Wait until we come to you, then we will stand still in our place and we will not go up to them. But if they say, Come up to us, then we will go up, for the Lord has given them into our hand, and this shall be a sign to us. So both of them showed themselves to the garrison of the Philistines.

28:30

The Philistines said, Look, Hebrews are coming out of the holes from where they have hidden themselves. The men of the garrison hailed Jonathan and his armor-bearer and said, Come up to us, and we'll show you a thing. Jonathan said to his armor-bearer, Come up after me, for the Lord has given them into the hand of Israel. Then Jonathan climbed up on his hands and his feet and his armor-bearer after him, and they fell before Jonathan, and his armor-bearer killed them after him.

28:57

That first strike, which Jonathan and his armor-bearer made, killed about 20 men within, as it were, a half a furrow's length in an acre of land. And there was a panic in the camp, in the field, and among all the people in the garrison, even the raiders trembled, the earthquake, and it became a very great panic.

29:15

And the watchmen of Saul and Gibeah of Benjamin looked, and behold, the multitude was dispersing here and there. And then Saul said to the people who were with him, count and see who has gone from us.

29:26

And when they had counted, behold, Jonathan and his armor-bearer were not there. So Saul said to Ahijah, bring the ark of God here, for the ark of God went at that time with the people of Israel. And now while Saul was talking to the priest, the tumult of the camp of the Philistines increased more and more.

29:44

So Saul said to the priest, withdraw your hand. And then Saul and all the people who were with him rallied and went into the battle. And behold, every Philistine's sword was against his fellow. There was a very great confusion.

29:57

Now the Hebrews who had been with the Philistines before that time, who had gone up with them into the camp, even they also turned to be with the Israelites who were with Saul and Jonathan. Likewise, when all the men of Israel who had hidden themselves in the hill country of Ephraim heard that the Philistines were fleeing, they too followed hard after them in the battle.

30:16

And so the Lord saved Israel that day and the battle passed beyond Beth -Haven. These are the words of the Lord. Would you pray with me, church? God, we thank you for your word. We're so thankful that we can gather here together, that we can consider what you have for us.

30:32

God, that we can look at a historical event like this battle between the Israelites and the Philistines, where you gave Jonathan this blessing to go and to push the Philistines back. God, we thank you for this history, but God, we pray that this wouldn't just be story time at The Rock Community Church.

30:50

God, that this wouldn't just be some historical lesson, that we learned some things that happened in the past, but God, we know that your word is living and active, that you're able to work in our lives, and so God, as we take this time this morning to consider what you would speak to us, God, we pray that you would speak and that we would listen.

31:07

God, we pray that you would impress upon our hearts the things that we need to hear. God, that you would give us the things that you would have us to receive and to put into practice in our lives as we consider the faith of Saul and Jonathan this morning.

31:19

So God, we give this time to you. We pray that you would use it for your work, and it's in Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Alright, well, as we jump in, we're going to go back and pick it apart a little bit, but the first 10 verses, what we see is Jonathan's initiative, right?

31:34

All the way at the very beginning of this chapter, just in the first few verses, we kind of get this update on some key characters that we're familiar with at this point in the story. First, we see in verse 1, we see Jonathan shows up on the scene, right?

31:49

He is tired of passively waiting, sitting, waiting for the opportunity for them to go and to do what God had told them to do. We know that in chapter 13, it kind of ended with a difficult circumstance, kind of a sketchy situation for Israel as they're sitting there massively outnumbered with just a few hundred or maybe a couple thousand people at most.

32:11

Meanwhile, the Philistine army has somewhere around 100,000 or more troops available to them on the other side of this valley. So Jonathan is sitting there knowing that God has told them, go and to conquer the Philistines, the Israelites were told, his dad was told, let's go defeat the Philistines, but now Jonathan is tired of waiting and so he decides to put a plan of action in place.

32:34

Can't help but form an opinion of Jonathan as we see Jonathan here. He's ready to go. He's ready to do something. It seems to me like we've got a young man with a taste for

adventure who refuses to passively sit by while God's enemies are right there across the valley, looking them in the face as they just passively sit and wait and wait and wait.

32:55

Meanwhile, we also see King Saul in these first few verses. Now King Saul is as far from the front lines. He has set up camp at the opposite end of camp, at the opposite end of town. It tells us he was at the pomegranate cave or some suggest that it was under a large pomegranate tree, but you know the details there don't really matter regardless.

33:15

He had removed himself from the front lines and we can tell that he's not making any immediate plans to act. Saul was told to go and to push back the Philistines. Saul may have been busy. I don't know.

33:29

It seems like he was probably conducting business sitting there under the tree or in the cave or wherever he was, but he's not busy doing the thing that he should be doing. He's not busy doing the things that God had told him to do as he was supposed to go and to attack the Philistines.

33:42

Even worse, we see here in these first few verses that Saul is now surrounding himself with people of questionable character because we see here, it tells us that King Saul has this priest that is there accompanying him.

33:57

That name may not sound familiar to us, Ahijah, the son of Ahitub, but what we know of this man, it tells us who his family is. You may recognize some of the names of some of his family members. This priest that Saul has chosen to employ was the great grandson of Eli, the high priest all the way back from the beginning of the book.



34:16

You remember Eli's family, right? His sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were wicked, evil men who were rejected by God and actually executed by God for their sinfulness. God had chosen to reject these men, and so I think it's ironic that Saul, King Saul, the man who was just last week rejected by God as God's king of Israel, is now employing the grandson of a rejected high priest, Phinehas, if you remember the stories from back in Chapter 2 and Chapter 4.

34:48

Contrast between Saul and Jonathan starts to show up already just in the first few verses. It could not be more apparent to us. We've got two guys moving in two very different directions as we pick up the story this week.

35:01

So we see now as we continue through the passage, Jonathan starts to hatch this plan. Jonathan is tired of waiting. It's time for some action, right? So we get to verses 6 and 7. Let's read those again.

35:13

It tells us that Jonathan said to the young man who carried his armor, Come, let us go over to the garrison of these uncircumcised, these non-Jewish men. It may be that the Lord will work for us, for nothing can hinder the Lord from saving by many or by few.

35:30

And so his armor-bearer said to him, Do all that is in your heart, do as you wish, behold, I am with you, heart and soul. I want you to notice Jonathan's hope here. Jonathan's hope is not in his brilliant plan.

35:45

I also remind you Jonathan's hope is not in the odds. There is no tactical advantage to be had here. As Jonathan is sitting there with a few hundred soldiers at his back in King

Saul's army, we see that it's about 600 men at this point, looking across the valley at 100,000 or more soldiers that were there.

36:03

The odds don't say, let's rush into action, right? Jonathan's hope is not in his plan. It's not in the odds. His focus is on God's provision. His focus is on the fact that God told him to do it. And his comment here in these verses is that, you know, it may be that the Lord will work for us.

36:26

That doesn't reflect doubt, but it does reflect a little bit of, let's make sure that this is what God's calling us to. He's careful not to foolishly presume and rush into action. We see foolish presuming and running into action as a family trait that we see in his dad a lot, but Jonathan seems to seek the Lord in this decision.

36:46

You know, behind Jonathan's daring actions was the simple conviction of his faith, was the fact that he knew, he stated here in verse 6 and 7, right here in the middle of our passage, he says, nothing can hinder the Lord from saving by many or by few.

37:05

What he's saying is, it doesn't matter how many soldiers we have on one side or on the other, because if God has told us he will bless this decision, he wants us to go and to do this, the pragmatic details of, well, you know, we don't have as much firepower as they have.

37:21

We're outmanned, you know, what, thousands to one? But the details don't matter because Jonathan knows that nothing can hinder the Lord from saving whether it's with a few of us or whether it's by many. In other words, Jonathan realized that salvation, that his hope was not in his ability to do something but in God's ability to do something. Salvation was not going to come through human means but through divine power.

37:47

God is the one who is going to give them the victory if they were to succeed. So Jonathan's confidence is in God and his confidence in God's strength. It feels fairly familiar to some of you who may be familiar with the story of 1 Samuel.

38:02

If you've read ahead, perhaps a few chapters, if you know what's coming in just a few pages, the confidence that we see here in Jonathan, it reminded me of the confidence of another young man who rushes into a circumstance that doesn't make any sense for him to rush into.

38:17

But he goes in with confidence in 1 Samuel 17, this may sound familiar to some of you, young man named David before he enters into a fight with the Philistine giant, Goliath. First Samuel 17:37, David says, the Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear will surely deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.

38:42

While everybody else in the army, in the Israelite army was scared to go into face Goliath, David knew if God is with me, I have nothing to be afraid of. Now in human terms, we've got a young boy and we've got a Philistine giant warrior.

38:58

Essentially we've got anybody that remembers all the way back to the first Avengers movie, you see the Hulk just pick up and slam around, I think it was Loki, right? Just picks him up and slams him. That's essentially what's going to happen here in this story if we see Goliath fight David in David's power.

39:13

But David knows I'm not fighting in my power, I'm fighting in God's power. And so he said, God will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine. We see that same bravery here in Jonathan. We see Jonathan come in and he says, no, no, if God is going to give us this victory, nothing can hinder the Lord from saving, whether it's by many or whether it's by few.

39:34

Let's go back to 1 Samuel 14, sorry, David's got to wait for a few more chapters. But in verses 8 through 10, we see Jonathan propose this little test for whether God was going to bless their plan or not.

39:46

Verses 8 through 10, it tells us, Jonathan said to his armor-bearer that was there with him, behold, we will cross over to the men and we will show ourselves to them. And if they say to us, wait, we will come to you, then we will stand still in our place and we will not go up to them.

40:01

But if they say, come on up to us, then we will go up for the Lord has given them into our hand and this shall be assigned to us. This has a little bit of a familiar flavor to it. If you're familiar with the book of Judges, if you're familiar with the recent history of Israel right before we get to 1 Samuel, this has a little bit of a Gideon flavor to it, doesn't it?

40:24

Gideon and his fleece, if you haven't read the story, go back and write this down in your notes. Judges chapter 6, but we see one of the judges, Gideon, who kind of puts God to the test a little bit.

40:34

He lays a piece of fleece out and says, God, if you want me to do this, make the fleece wet and the ground around it dry. Then we will make the ground wet and the fleece dry

and we've got this little test that Gideon wants to make sure that he's doing what God's instructing him to do.

40:49

We've got kind of a similar flavor to this as Jonathan says, I think this is what God wants, but let's be sure. He suggests this test. If the Philistines respond, wait, we'll come to you, that was their sign not to proceed.

41:03

It might indicate some level of skepticism that their defenses were up. They were prepared for this threat that was coming against them as the Philistines saw them come. If they said, no, no, you wait there, they knew this isn't the right time.

41:16

However, if the invitation came from the Philistines, they saw them and they laughingly said, come on up, and they were going to proceed. This might indicate that the enemy was overconfident. It might indicate that they had let their guard down in some way, but certainly Jonathan was saying, let this be the sign for us that God is indicating he will grant us success in our endeavor.

41:38

If they say, come on up, we know that God is with us in this. You know, I love this about Jonathan. Jonathan marches into this plan with just two of them going into an army compound of 100,000 soldiers.

41:53

The odds mean very little to Jonathan as he's marching in. And, you know, I can't help but fight this idea that he may have had Gideon on his mind. As he's putting this little test out for God similar to Gideon's fleece, I'm also reminded of the fact that in the book of Judges, Gideon gathers an army for himself that he's going to go into fight this Midianite force that was coming against him.

42:17

And God said, no, no, no, you've got too many people. And he narrows the army down. And God says, no, no, no, you have too many and he narrows the army down and he narrows it down and he narrows it down. And so Gideon and 300 soldiers in the book of Judges go and they route this entire Midianite army through God's power, through God's provision over and over and over again throughout the Bible, throughout God's history, throughout the church's history.

42:42

God's people have come to this same conclusion time and time and time again. Let me remind you of the words spoken to Abraham back in Genesis 18, verse 14. It says, is anything too hard for the Lord? At the appointed time, I will return to you about this time next year and Sarah shall have a son. Abraham was an old man, his wife was barren. They had reached old age, unable to have children. And God said, no, no, no, you're gonna have a child.

43:07

Nothing is impossible for me. God was going to accomplish what God wanted to accomplish in his timing. We remind you of Jesus's words in Matthew chapter 19, verse 26, Jesus looked at the people. He said, with man, this is impossible, but with God, all things are possible.

43:26

I chose these two out of a list of 40 examples that I could have come up with throughout the Bible that we see time and time and time again. God's people come to the same conclusion. All things are possible with God.

43:39

That's what the Bible teaches. Old Testament, New Testament. It doesn't matter. God is the hero in this story and in every story. God is able to work to accomplish whatever it is that he sees fit in his perfect timing, in his perfect way.

43:53

There was no circumstance that was too great for God. Jonathan and his armor-bearer, they lay this plan out. They say, all right, maybe God will lead us to victory against this Philistine army. They have their test and so Jonathan and the armor-bearer, they take off in faith that God was going to provide for them.

44:13

We see Jonathan's initiative in verses one through 10. Then in verses 11 through 15, we see God's provision now, God's provision. So we see the test play out in verses 11 and 12. It tells us that both of them, Jonathan and the armor-bearer, they show up and they show themselves to the garrison of the Philistines and the Philistines say, look, the Hebrews are coming out of their holes where they've hidden themselves.

44:38

The men of the garrison hailed Jonathan and his armor-bearer said, come on up here, come up to us and we will show you a thing. And Jonathan said to his armor-bearer, come up after me for the Lord has given them into the hand of Israel.

44:52

Jonathan and his companion, they let themselves be seen by these Philistine forces who, by the way, their response to Jonathan and this armor-bearer, they decide to mockingly dismiss them, right? Essentially, they're laughing at them.

45:08

Their response is essentially, come on up here, we'll teach you a thing or two. Come on, you two think you're gonna, yeah, come on up. Feel free, right? They quickly tell Jonathan, we're not scared of you, but their response tells Jonathan and his armor-bearer that they had received God's blessing, that God was going to grant them victory.

45:30

I also want you to notice Jonathan's comments here, that God has given them into whose hands? Into the hand of Israel. You notice it's Jonathan's not focused on himself. He's not focused on how this is going to bring him fame.

45:47

He's going to accomplish something for God. Jonathan's focus is not on him. It's on what God is going to do for his people, for Israel. He's not focused on himself. He's focused on the team. He's a team player. He's leading in a way that King Saul seemed to focus on himself over and over and over and over again. Meanwhile, what we see here from Jonathan is that he's got the people in mind. God has given the Philistines into the hand of Israel.

46:16

So now it's time for action, right? Verses 13 through 15, it's time for some action to happen. And so it tells us that Jonathan climbed up on his hands and feet. He's going up a steep cliff and his armor-bearer after him.

46:30

And it tells us that the Philistines, they fell before Jonathan and then the armor bear killed them after him. That first strike, which Jonathan and his armor-bearer made, they killed about 20 men within, as it were, a half furrow's length and an acre of land.

46:45

There was a panic in the camp, in the field, and among all the people. The garrison, even the raiders that they had sent out last week, as you remember, in chapter 13. Even the people who had gone out tells us that they were terrified.

46:58

It tells us that the earth quaked, and it became a very great panic. Clearly, what we see here is that the hand of God is at work on behalf of the Israelites and against the Philistines. These two young Israelites with, you know, the element of surprise, okay, I



don't know how much surprise it takes for two men to go in and to stir havoc among an army of 100,000.

47:22

But it tells us that these two young Israelites with the element of surprise bring down about 20 Philistine soldiers on their own. And then, as the Philistines come and they find these 20 Philistines dead, then they proceed to have this giant earthquake pop up that God sends in the middle of the Philistine camp.

47:38

It sends them and their camp into a panic. Philistines were thrown into confusion. They're unable to put two and two together. They're unable to mount any sort of a counter-attack, an effective counter-attack.

47:52

What we see is that God is at work, that God is providing this victory to Jonathan and to the people of Israel. God was going to be able to provide what what Jonathan knew he was able to provide. We saw Jonathan's initiative.

48:06

We see God's provision here in the middle, but now let's look at the last several verses 16 through 23. We're gonna see Saul's reaction to this to this whole event. Verses 16 and 17 we see, meanwhile, back at camp, Saul and the Israelite army, they realize that something's happening.

48:25

Something's going on here. We have the little valley here. They're looking across, certainly probably keeping tabs on the Philistine army, and they start moving. But this isn't an organized movement.

48:37

This isn't, you know, they're sending parties out there. They're flanking. They're marching on us. Nothing like that. They look across at the Philistine army and they see chaos breaking out among the camp.

48:48

And upon seeing that chaos, Saul wants to know what's going on. Who went over there? What changed? What happened? And so Saul's response is round everybody up. We're having a roll call.

49:01

All right, John, here, Tom, here, Jonathan. Jonathan? Jonathan's not here. Jonathan's armor-bearer is not here. King Saul realizes that his son's missing and, you know, to give a shout-out to all the parents out there, if a parent has lived and raised a child and hasn't lost their kid for at least a few moments at some point, you're lying to me, right?

49:28

We've all had a moment or two, maybe they were right behind you, but King Saul, he doesn't know where his son is. Where is Jonathan gone? What's he up to? What's Jonathan doing? We continue on. We see verses 18 and 19.

49:42

We see this stark contrast between Saul and his son, Jonathan. Saul certainly has to remember the trouble that he had gotten himself into just in chapter 13. Just a page earlier, we saw King Saul decide he knew what was best.

49:59

He did not seek the Lord. He did not follow God's instructions, and so he got himself in a load of trouble. Got his butt chewed on by Samuel as he got the kingdom taken away from him. So Saul, remembering that, he calls for the priest, he calls for Ahijah to come.

50:17

Hey, bring the Ark of the Covenant. We're going to seek God's direction, seemingly wants to make sure he does things the right way. But in verse 19, it tells us that Saul gets impatient. It tells us that while Saul was talking to the priests, the tumult in the camp of the Philistines, it's increasing more and more.

50:35

And so Saul says to the priest, withdraw your hand. Essentially, he tells the priest, stop what you're doing. What we see here is that Saul decided that he couldn't wait any longer. Sounds familiar, doesn't it?

50:52

We just did this last week. With just one chapter earlier, I don't know if it was days or weeks or months or years, whatever it was. It wasn't too terribly long because nothing eventful happens in the story between chapter 13 and chapter 14.

51:08

But it appears Saul grows impatient and he instructs the priest, hey, just stop what you're doing. God wasn't speaking to Saul or at least he wasn't speaking fast enough for Saul. The priestly rituals needed to be set aside.

51:20

They were taking too long. And so he decides to interrupt the divinely ordained procedures. God had said, no, you're going to do it this way. And Saul goes, all right, we tried, but you didn't speak up fast enough.

51:32

So we're going to do it my way now. Uh oh. We've seen this from Saul, right? This is just more proof of Saul's spiritual incompetence. Saul can't wait any longer for God's direction. So Saul decides we need to go. Priests, set your stuff aside. It's time for the men to go to war. So Saul and the army rush off to join the battle. And Gordon Kettie, one commentator I was reading, he notes the problem for Saul in his commentary.

52:02

He says, Saul gives us the impression that he felt he was supposed to be religious, observed certain conventions at the appropriate times, but really did not have the deep convictions of his own. He used religion as opposed to living a personal faith in the Lord.

52:19

We see a difference in Jonathan and in Saul because what we see in Jonathan is Jonathan knows that God is going to come through for him, that God is going to lead him, and he seeks God's direction and he and he waits for God.

52:32

Meanwhile, Saul decides what he thinks is best, and he and he tries to offer some some casual obedience to God, but he's not truly actually seeking God in any of this. Jonathan sought God's direction and waited for God to lead.

52:48

Jonathan trusted the Lord, but but Saul decided what he thought quickly cast aside this inconvenient ritual of seeking God's direction. You know, God was a checkbox for Saul. Saul decided, all right, I need to make sure that we got God's blessing and we've got the the right army and we've got the right weapons and we've got God was just a checkbox for Saul.

53:11

Saul didn't really seem interested in following God's instructions. He didn't really seem interested in seeking God's guidance. He just wanted to make sure that he could say, yeah, I did what God told me to do.

53:22

But in verses 20 through 23, we still see God provide victory. Verse 20 tells us that Saul and all the people who are with him rallied and went into the battle. And behold, every Philistine's sword was against his fellow.

53:35

There was a very great confusion. Now the Hebrews who had been with the Philistines before that time, who had gone up with them into the camp, even they also turned to be with the Israelites who were with Saul and Jonathan.

53:48

Likewise, when all the men of Israel who had hidden themselves in the hill country, they heard that the Philistines were fleeing, they too followed hard after them in battle. So the Lord saved Israel that day and the battle passed beyond Beth -aven.

54:01

Saul and the army rush into battle. By the way, just a reminder from last week's passage, Saul and the rest of the army rush into battle with one sword, right? Saul had a sword, Jonathan had a sword, that's all they had.

54:13

But God has thrown these Philistines into such a confusion, they were attacking each other. By the time they get over there, Jonathan and his armor-bearer come over, freak them out to the point where they don't know which side is up, which side is down, who's right, who's wrong.

54:27

They just start swinging the sword and killing anything in front of them. I have to assume that a few Israelites were probably able to grab a sword off of a dead Philistine laying there, but regardless of how many, of who killed what, and regardless of any of those details, what the narrator for us makes clear in this passage is that it was God who brought the victory in this story.

54:52

This isn't an instance of, and the Israelites mustered up, we have some 300 Spartans thing happen, no, no, this is God who brought the victory this day. Truly, Jonathan's faith was rewarded when he said all the way back in verse six, nothing can hinder the Lord from saving by many or by few.

55:14

God was going to work, God was going to accomplish his purposes on behalf of his people. Kind of seems like a good stopping point for us this week, right? After verse 23, I've got a little space in another header in my Bible, so it seems like a good stopping point.

55:27

Certainly, we see that the Philistines running away, the Israelites are in pursuit, that this victory has been won, and the Philistines are running away scared with their tails between their legs. But as we pick up next week, what we're gonna find is that the events of this day had just started.

55:44

Next week, we're gonna see some interesting developments where Saul does what Saul thinks is best, and it makes another mess. Again. But this week's passage seems to bring faith and pragmatism into, we've kinda got this face -off between those two, right?

56:02

We've got Jonathan over here with his faith, and we've got Saul over here with his pragmatism, and we have to make sense of what do we do with these things? You know, there's times in life, in our lives, as we look at things that are just going on every day in our lives, there's times in life where what God has told us to do, and what we would describe as the reasonable course of action, they don't always line up, do they?

56:27

There's times where what God says in the reasonable course of action, they don't seem to easily fall in line with one another. It's in those instances that we have to make a

choice. It's in those instances where we have to choose, will we respond like Saul, who foolishly refrained from obeying, refused to do what God had told him to do because he looked around at his circumstances and he said, nah, this doesn't make a lot of sense to me.

56:54

You know, my business savvy says this is a bad idea. My military acumen says, no, we probably shouldn't start this fight right now. Saul was looking around at all the circumstances and said, no, obeying God's not a good idea.

57:08

Or do we respond like Jonathan with faith that God was going to provide for those who obey, regardless of what the circumstances look like? Because we've got one guy who says, the circumstances matter more than what God says.

57:23

And we've got one man over here that says, what God says matter more than what the circumstances tell us. So it's a simple application, but it's a really difficult application for us today. Because what we see here in this contrast between Jonathan and between Saul, it forces us to ask this question, do we believe that God is able to act on our behalf?

57:45

Do we believe that God is able to empower us, to open doors for us to do things that he calls us to? If God says, go and do this, are we gonna trust our circumstances? Or are we gonna trust and do what God tells us to do, even if it doesn't make sense?

58:01

If God tells you to go and to tell somebody that God loves them and share the message of the gospel with somebody, are you going to be the one to make the decision to go? No, they would never believe. No, I don't need to share with them because that's gonna be awkward, or they're gonna get mad. Are you gonna make that decision, or are you

gonna be obedient to do what God tells you to do and trust that God can open doors for evangelism to happen when he says to?

58:27

Are you going to look at a thing that you feel like God's calling you to do? Some ministry opportunities, some missions things, you know, whatever it may be. Are you going to look at something and go, no, no, but we don't have enough money.

58:36

We don't have enough people. We don't have enough resources. We can't do that. How could we ever accomplish that? Are you going to look at it and explain all the reasons that it won't work or are you going to look at it and say, no, no, if God tells us to go do it, God's going to provide enough for us to go do it.

58:52

Do you believe that God can provide a way when there seems to be no way? Is God able to accomplish what He wants to in your life? Because if we're inspired by Jonathan's faith, we are going to do the same thing that Jonathan did.

59:08

We are going to offer ourselves to the Lord's service and we are going to be confident of God's grace to empower us to do whatever it is that He's calling us to do. I want to share a couple of slides with you.

59:18

Some famous church quotes from incredible men who have gone before us. The first one is a man named John Knox. He was a Scottish preacher during the time of the Reformation. John Knox actually talking about the ministry of Jonathan here in 1 Samuel.

59:36



When recalling the example of Jonathan, John Knox declared, one man with God is always in the majority, right? We got one guy going in against an army of 100,000 and John Knox goes, no, no, no, no, you're doing the math all wrong.

59:51

Because one man with God is always in the majority. Talking about how when we're willing to do what God tells us to do, when we're willing to be fully surrendered, to go and to trust God even when it doesn't make sense to us, D.L. Moody famously once stated, the world has yet to see what God can do with a man fully consecrated to him, but by God's help, I aim to be that man. Seems like the attitude that we should reflect, right?

01:00:24

There's not many people who have fully said, God, whatever it is that you want me to do, I'm in. My answer is always going to be yes. You don't have to sell me. You don't have to convince me, God, I'm in.

01:00:34

The world has yet to see what God can do with one man fully consecrated to him or woman, right? But our desire is to be that. We have a choice today. We look at these two examples. We can choose for ourselves.

01:00:51

We can identify ourselves with Saul, who allowed fear, who allowed pragmatism to cause him to sit idly and to disobey what God had clearly told him to do. God said, go in, attack the Philistines, take this land, do what I tell you to do, push them back.

01:01:10

And Saul goes, yeah, yeah, but, but they've got more soldiers. They've got better weapons. They've got, but, but, but, but-- Saul made excuses. We can identify ourselves with Saul or we can identify ourselves with Jonathan, a man who took action because of his profound faith and the power that God was able to accomplish what God wanted to accomplish.

01:01:32

In verse six, he said, nothing can hinder the Lord from saving by many or few. It doesn't matter what the resources are. It doesn't matter what the numbers are. What matters is that God has told me to do it and I'm going to go do it.

01:01:46

William Carey, a famous missionary who started a missionary endeavor that went into India, one of the first missionaries into the country of India, William Carey once said, attempt great things for God and expect great things from God, right?

01:02:03

That's what we see here in Jonathan. We see Jonathan saying, no, no, no, God called me to do this. I'm going to step up and I'm going to go. I'm going to attempt some great things for God. Two guys against a hundred thousand man army doesn't make a lot of sense, but Jonathan was willing to attempt a great thing for God and expected that God was going to follow through.

01:02:27

That's what we see in this example of Jonathan, attempt great things for God, expect great things from God. This is the valuable challenge for all of us. When we seek God, when we pursue His plan, when we trust that God's way is better than our way, that God knows what we need to do better than we know what we think we need to do.

01:02:46

When God lays it all out in front of us, the question simply becomes, are you going to choose what God tells you to do or are you going to choose what your logic tells you to do? Are you going to step out in faith and trust that if God has told you, go and try this.

01:03:08

Go and reach out in this ministry area. Go and take the gospel to this family member, to this friend. Go and step out and try. Go do something. We simply have to now ask the question, has God told us to do that, right, if He's told us to?

01:03:27

But now the question just boils down to faith. Do you trust that God is able to do, to provide for, to accomplish what He wants to accomplish in your life, or are you going to make excuses about how you can't do it?

01:03:40

I have good news for you. Whatever it is that God calls you to, you can't do it. But God can. God can, right? When I was in college, far more years than I'd like to claim at this point, but when I was an undergraduate student, I went to Liberty University.

01:03:59

There was a man named Jerry Falwell that was the chancellor. He kind of started the school. You guys may remember the name Jerry Falwell. Jerry Falwell was kind of the leader of the moral majority back years ago.

01:04:09

He was a preacher out on the East Coast. Anyways, my freshman year, my undergraduate was Jerry Falwell's last year of life. He died right at the end of my freshman year. But every week, Dr. Falwell would come.

01:04:24

He would speak to us in chapel. Every Wednesday morning, we got to sit and listen to this man talk for 45 minutes about how God had been faithful, about God had done these things in His life, about how God had worked and called him to do all kinds of incredible things.

01:04:39

One of the things that I remember him talking about most, he had a few kind of grandpa-isms that were just awesome, and I loved those things. But one of the things that he would always talk about was, you got to have a "BHAG."

01:04:51

Anybody ever heard that term before? All right, big, hairy, audacious goal. What's your BHAG? What's your big, hairy, audacious goal? What is it that God, you believe God is going to call you to? You believe God is going to empower you to do, and you're going to have that goal, and you're going to trust that if you take steps and you're obedient, it may not make any sense, but God is going to do work in that situation.

01:05:20

If God is going to do that, He's going to do it, and it doesn't matter how strong or weak you are. God's purposes are perfectly accomplished in His timing, in His strength. So if God's not calling you to it, all right, you're going to fall flat on your face, like awesome.

01:05:39

Swing hard, right? Pastor Mike always likes to say, if you're going to try something, run full speed. If you're going to hit that wall, hit it hard and leave a you-sized hole in the wall. It's okay. Sometimes we're going to fall down.

01:05:55

But dream big for Jesus. Step out in faith and trust that just like Jonathan did, that if God's calling you to that, it doesn't matter what the odds say, because God is able to accomplish what He wants to accomplish, whether it's by many or whether it's by few.

01:06:11

Whether it's something that makes sense and you can do it, or whether there's no way that you could ever do it, because the good news is you don't have to. If it's something God wants done, God's going to accomplish it.

01:06:27

God's going to be the one to empower you. So like my quote just a minute ago from William Carey says, attempt great things for God and expect great things from God. So our question this morning is a simple one, but it's a complicated one.

01:06:42

Simple for me to ask, it's more difficult for you to answer, right? I like those kind of questions. What we have to ask this morning of this, will we step out in faith this morning? Will you step out in faith this morning to do what God might be calling you to do?

01:07:01

Pretty straightforward, right? That's a binary yes or no question. Are you going to step out to do what you believe God's calling you to do? Are you going to decide? No, I can't do that. No, that doesn't make any business sense.

01:07:17

No, I'm not the right guy. No, sorry. Not me. Not right now. It's not the right time in life. It's not the right season. I need to get some things together. You know, that wouldn't make a lot of business sense for me right now.

01:07:29

You know, my family is just not quite there in that season. I'm too busy. I've got-- guys, we can all play that game, right? Anybody in the room that can make up some excuses, right? We can all do that.

01:07:41

We can all quickly get ourselves out of something if we don't want to do it. We can make up a million reasons not to do something. The question is, should you?

01:07:54

Should you be making up the excuses or should you just say yes, Lord, and go storm the castle like Jonathan did? I think if God calls you to it, God's going to empower you to do it. Our prayer team is going to be down here after the service.

01:08:08

They'd love to pray with you about whatever your BHAG is, whatever it is that you feel like God's calling you to, right? Let us pray with you about that. They would love to pray with you about whatever it is that you feel like God's calling you to.

01:08:19

You can also go out the back doors. We've got our prayer wall back here in this corner. You can go write those prayer requests down and leave them for our prayer team. They'd love to pray for them tomorrow night.

01:08:27

They're going to send those out to our prayer team all across our church. People will be praying for you. You're sticking on that piece of paper back there. But at this point, I just want to encourage you, what does God have for you?

01:08:39

And then ask the question, are you willing to step up and do it? Would you pray with me? God, we thank you for these beautiful stories that we see. God, they're not just history. They're not just things that we look back.

01:08:58

I mean, they are. We know that Jonathan really marched up that rocky crag and really killed some Philistines. God, we know that Saul really did make some really dumb decisions in life and refused to obey.

01:09:12

But God, this isn't just history. God, this is a model that we can see ourselves in. God, every story in the Bible is not about us. We know it's ultimately about you. But God, we see ourselves in these characters sometimes. We see ourselves in Saul when we choose to allow fear to speak louder to us than you. We see ourselves in Jonathan when we're willing to trust and to step up and to say, God, allow me to go and to step out in faith.

01:09:40

God, give us faith like Jonathan had. God, give us the willingness to step out and to go and to do what you call us to do. God, help us to have wisdom to know what it is that you're calling us to do.

01:09:55

Help us to know your word, to know what you call us to. God, there may be things that we try and God, that's not you. That's an idea that we had. We may fall short in some things. But God, we also know that there are many things that you call us to so very clearly.

01:10:11

I know we can go and do. God, you tell us so clearly in your word, go and preach the gospel to every nation that we should go and we should take the good news of salvation that Jesus died to save sinners.

01:10:22

How will people around us here unless someone preaches to them? God, you call us to go be those people. Give us faith to go do that. God, you call us to give of ourselves, to serve as each of us has received a gift, to use it to serve the church and to serve other people.

01:10:42

You command that of us. And so God, that's not something that we have to question or have misunderstanding about. God, you tell us to. So God, give us the strength to not make excuses, but to go and to do what we're able to do.

01:10:57

Give us faith to step out. Give us faith to attempt big things for you and then to trust that you're gonna be the one that ultimately accomplishes your purposes. Give us strength to step out. Give us wisdom to know where to step.

01:11:14

And God, empower us to do what you call us to do. God, we love you. We thank you for loving us. We thank you for the Holy Spirit. It's in His power that we go and do all these things that we're talking about. It's in Jesus name that we pray. Amen.