

# 1 Samuel: The Faith of Jonathan

## 1 Samuel 13:15-14:23

Saul and Jonathan are left to fight the incoming army with 600 fragile men, two swords, an armor bearer, and a cursed priest. While Saul steps back and lets Jonathan do the job he is supposed to be doing, Jonathan's confident faith in God's help leads him to go to battle in what seems like insurmountable, hopeless circumstances. Although he is unsure of the outcome, he doesn't confine God to his own limited human knowledge but instead moves forward trusting that God will act.

## Application

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1. When Jonathan and his armor bearer sneak out to battle and he says, "Perhaps the Lord will help us, for nothing can hinder the Lord," we see a major indication of Jonathan's faith. Instead of presuming to know exactly what God is doing or limiting God, he is full of trust and free from fear. In what circumstances do you need to have the same perspective of "Perhaps"? Where do you need to act in faith and trust?
2. In what ways are you hung up by the fear of failure? What is your real problem with failure? (e.g. self pity, pride, fear of man, an idol of significance, a false belief of success, etc.)
3. If you were living out this story as Jonathan, there is no way you could have predicted the outcome of an earthquake and panic among the Philistines. When has this happened in your life? When have you taken a step in faith that seemingly made no sense, and God exceeded your expectations?
4. We all have moments that resemble both Jonathan and Saul. Use the lists below to help you discern who are you most like?

Jonathan	Saul
Free to fail	Not free to act in faith or fail
Doesn't have a high need for control	Overwhelmed by circumstances
Doesn't ask, "what if" but instead "perhaps"	Worried about what everyone else thinks
Trusts in God that he can't see rather than the oppressive circumstances that he can see	Consumed with control
Resilient	Fearful
Fights for the right things instead of asking, "What is this going to cost me?"	Lets other people do work he is responsible for
Not trapped by his past	Feeds off the victories of others
Trusts in God not himself	Trusts in himself

## Key Points

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- Your thought life will determine the decisions you make.
- Practically, we can see that Saul's disobedience begins with both hanging out with the wrong people and letting someone else do his job.
- American Christianity has bred the lie that everything we do has to succeed, when instead we know that failure is important and actually humbles and redirects us.
- Jonathan is an easy leader to follow because when you are around him, you know it is not about him.
- God doesn't want us to know on the front end what happens after our step of faith. He wants us to deal with our pride and fear first, make ourselves available, and then trust him with the outcome.
- In verse 24, we are reminded that although Jonathan took the step in faith, *the Lord* saved Israel that day. Jonathan could have never predicted the circumstances or forced God's hand to move.
- When we give expressions of faith, God honors it.
- We all have fear, but our response should be to have courage and just make simple decisions.
- Courage and fear grow together; just because we have courage doesn't mean we won't have fear.
- If you are not a Christian, you don't have access to this power and courage yet which comes from a relationship with Christ.