

I. Introduction and review.

II. God, through Jonathan, delivers Israel. v. 1-23

A. Jonathan formulates an audacious plan. v. 1-5

1. He determines to singlehandedly attack the Philistine outpost. v. 1a 13:3
2. Why doesn't Jonathan tell his father Saul what he is about to do? v. 1b
3. Saul appears to be avoiding battle. v. 2 22:6 Jdg. 4:5
4. Saul seems to have replaced Samuel with a priest from the line of Eli. v. 3 2:26-31
5. Jonathan's plan appears humanly impossible. v. 4-5

B. Jonathan advances in faith. v. 6-12

1. He doesn't fear the 'uncircumcised' Philistines. v. 6b 17:26
2. Jonathan has complete confidence in the LORD's power to save. v. 6c Josh. 23:10
3. Nothing is impossible with God. 17:37,47 Gen. 18:14 Ps. 115:3 135:6 Zech. 4:6 Job 42:2 Jer. 32:17 Mt. 19:26 Mark 10:27 14:36 Luke 1:37 18:27
4. Jonathan is careful to avoid sinful presumption - *perhaps*. v. 6c Dan. 3:17
5. Jonathan's armor bearer also shows great faith and loyalty. v. 7
6. Jonathan seeks a sign from the LORD. v. 8-10 2:34 10:7-9 Jdg. 6-7
7. The Philistines' arrogance invites God's judgment. v. 11-12a 17:43-44 Js. 4:6
8. Jonathan charges forward in complete faith. v. 12b

C. The Philistines are defeated and terrified. v. 13-15

1. After scaling the cliffs, Jonathan and his armor bearer kill 20 Philistines. v. 13-14
2. Then the entire multitude of Philistine fighters tremble and shake (with the LORD's help). v. 15 7:10 Josh. 23:10 Dt. 7:23 II Sa. 22:8 Am. 8:8 II Chr. 32
3. God proves that He can deliver by a few.

D. Saul and Israel (the many) join in the battle. v. 16-22

1. The lookouts see the commotion in the distance. v. 16 Josh. 2:9,14 Ex. 15:15
2. Saul determines who is missing. v. 17
3. Saul starts to seek guidance from the LORD. v. 18-19a 14:41-42 4:4ff 23:9 30:7 II Sa. 6:2 I Chr. 13:5f
4. Then Saul rushes to the battlefield. v. 19b-20a
5. The Philistines in their panic turn on each other. v. 20b 13:22 Ezk. 38:21 Jdg. 7:22
6. Those who had deserted and hid finally get on the bandwagon. v. 21-22

E. The LORD delivers His people. v. 23 10:19 Ex. 14:13

III. God still delivers those who trust Him.

A. What does it mean to trust God? v. 6

1. Faith is not merely optimism.
2. Faith is full confidence in God. Heb. 11:1
3. True faith doesn't presume upon God. Mt. 6:10 Lu. 22:42 Mk. 14:36 Da. 3:17-18 Js. 4:13-17
4. True faith is not foolhardy. Mt. 4:6-7
5. Faith in God's power does not exclude our responsibility to exert effort. Phil. 2:12f

B. How should we trust God in the midst of our warfare?

- 1. We need valiant men who will protect us from evildoers in the civil sphere.
Ro. 13:4 I Pe. 2:14**
- 2. We are engaged in spiritual warfare. II Co. 10:3-5**
- 3. In evangelism: nothing is impossible with God. Mt. 19:23-26**
- 4. God is determined in this age to use us in saving many. II Pe. 3:9 Mt. 28:18-20
Acts 18:9-10 Rom. 10:14-15**
- 5. God's power works in other seemingly impossible situations.**
- 6. You can have faith even if you are surrounded by unbelief.**

C. God can do great things with small resources.

- 1. We are too prone to look at our spiritual challenges with fleshly (Saul-like) eyes.**
- 2. One person with audacious faith can inspire others to follow.**
- 3. What can you do?**
- 4. God is glorified as He works in spite of our weakness. II Co. 12:9-10 I Co. 1:26ff**

IV. Concluding applications.

A. Jonathan is a great example of faith.

B. Jonathan's example points us to Christ.

- 1. Christ fought a mightier enemy. I Jo. 5:19**
- 2. He didn't merely risk His life. He gave His life for us. 14:36**
- 3. He rescued us when we were in a helpless situation.**

Discussion questions

- 1. What is the fundamental difference between the faith of Jonathan and the faith of Saul?**
- 2. What is the difference between faith and optimism or positive thinking?**
- 3. What do we have a right to expect from God when we ask in faith?**
- 4. How is the so-called faith of some presumptuous?**
- 5. What is the difference between trusting God and being foolhardy?**
- 6. What spiritual battles are we fighting?**
- 7. How can we emulate Jonathan's faith in our spiritual battles?**
- 8. What great thing will you attempt for God?**