

# Jonathan's Courage

Prince Jonathan and his armor-bearer scale a cliff to attack a Philistine garrison alone, declaring that nothing restrains the Lord from saving by many or by few.

1 Samuel 13:1-14:23

CHARACTERS: Jonathan, Jonathan's Armor-bearer, Philistines, Saul

THEMES: Bold Faith, Initiative, God's Power, Trust

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THE MILITARY SITUATION facing Israel was desperate. The Philistines had gathered a vast force—thirty thousand chariots, six thousand horsemen, and countless soldiers. Israel's people were hiding in caves and pits, and Saul sat passive with about six hundred fearful men.

Into this atmosphere stepped Jonathan. Without consulting Saul, he said to his armor-bearer, 'Come, and let us go over unto the garrison of these uncircumcised: it may be that the Lord will work for us: for there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few.' The armor-bearer responded with united faith: 'I am with thee according to thy heart.'

They approached the Philistine garrison and proposed a test: if the Philistines said 'Come up to us,' they would take it as God's sign of victory. The Philistines mocked them and called them up. Jonathan and his armor-bearer climbed the cliff on hands and feet and struck down about twenty men.

Then the Lord sent a great trembling through the Philistine camp. The enemy fell into supernatural confusion, every man's sword turning against his fellow. Israel's hidden soldiers emerged, and God gave a great victory that day.

Jonathan's account teaches that God seeks those who will take initiative based on faith, who understand that divine power is not constrained by human limitations. Two men armed with faith accomplished what six hundred armed with fear could not.

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