

WARM-UP

- When a challenge arises, do you usually face it head on or do you approach it cautiously? Why?
- When you and the majority of your peers don't have the same values or beliefs, how do you respond?
- What do you do when you have fears or doubts? Do you try to solve them alone or do you ask for help? Recall an instance explaining this.

WORD *Jonathan said to the young man who carried his armor, "Come, let us go over to the garrison of these uncircumcised. It may be that the LORD will work for us, for nothing can hinder the LORD from saving by many or by few."⁷ 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." **1 SAMUEL 14:6-7***

(Read also **1 SAMUEL 14:1-23**.)

Israel has had a history of conflict with other peoples, one of them being the Philistines. In this story, a large army of Philistines were fighting them on their territory. King Saul's son Jonathan and his men had defeated their troupe at Geba, and as a result, the Philistines retaliated with 30,000 chariots and 6,000 horsemen and troops, outnumbering the people of God (1 Samuel 13:2-7). As a result, everyone ran away in fear, except Jonathan and his armor-bearer. Today, let's look at their faith in God's power, their confidence to go and fight anyway to lead Israel to victory, and the lessons we can learn from them.

1 | Have faith in the midst of fear and doubt.

⁶Jonathan said to the young man who carried his armor, "Come, let us go over to the garrison of these uncircumcised. It may be that the LORD will work for us, for nothing can hinder the LORD from saving by many or by few."⁷And 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." 1 SAMUEL 14:6-7

(Read also **1 SAMUEL 14:2, 11.**)

While Saul and his men were terrified and keeping a safe distance from the Philistines, Jonathan and his armor-bearer had faith in God and His power. Instead of cowering in fear and doubt, they boldly approached the enemy camp. When facts put our faith into question, God invites us to place our confidence in Him so that we can experience His power and freedom. Recall a time when you couldn't do what you needed to because of fear and doubt. How did God restore your confidence and faith in Him?

2 | Have faith in the midst of overwhelming opposition.

¹²And the men of the garrison hailed Jonathan and his armor-bearer and said, "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."¹³Then Jonathan climbed up on his hands and feet, and his armor-bearer after him. And they fell before Jonathan, and his armor-bearer killed them after him. 1 SAMUEL 14:12-13

After seeing the two Israelites, the Philistines told them to come up to the camp. They were confident in their numbers and in being on higher ground. But Jonathan and his armor-bearer knew that God was on their side. As soon as they arrived, they easily defeated twenty men, which caused panic and confusion in the enemy camp. Though Jonathan and his armor-bearer were outnumbered, they knew that nothing was impossible with God. Even when the odds seem to be against us, God's good, pleasing, and perfect plan for our lives will always prevail. How has God shown you that He is fighting with and for you?

So the LORD saved Israel that day. And the battle passed beyond Beth-aven. 1 SAMUEL 14:23

Dealing with fear and doubt is normal. When facts are thrown at us, it may seem easier to give in. But even in doubt, we can take steps of faith, no matter how small they may be. May we allow God to remove fear and doubt from our hearts and minds as we see how powerful He is to save, so that we may persevere in faith—until we see victory.

APPLICATION

- Most of the time, doubt is a battle in the mind, while fear is of the heart. What are some practical ways you can overcome these on a daily basis?
- Are there areas in your life that seem overwhelming? How can you respond in faith today?
- Do you know anyone who is struggling with an uphill battle? How may you be an encouragement to that person this week?

PRAYER

- Thank God that through Him, all things are possible. Thank Him that we can put our faith in Him, our source of confidence and assurance.
- Ask God to quiet your fears and doubts so that you may hear His voice more and trust in His ways. Pray that you would not rely on your own abilities but on God and His word.
- Pray that God would use you as a testimony to others of being in faith, not fear. Pray that your life would point people to God.

NOTES



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