

## **Jonathan's Bold Plan**

1 Samuel 13:16 – 14:52

by Don Falkos

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Jonathan and his armor bearer went to engage the Philistines. No one knew they had left the Israelite camp. Jonathan said, "We'll let them see us at the base of the cliff. If they say, 'Stay where you are or we'll kill you,' then we'll stop. But if they say, 'Come on up and fight,' we'll take that as a sign from the Lord."

The Philistines saw them coming and shouted, "Come on up here, and we'll teach you a lesson!"

Jonathan said to his armor bearer, "Let's go. The Lord will help us defeat them!"

They climbed up and killed twenty Philistines. Suddenly, the entire Philistine army was in a panic. Then the Lord sent an earthquake, which terrified them even more.

When Saul learned what was happening, he didn't wait for the Lord's blessing. Instead, he and all his men rushed out to battle and found the Philistines killing each other. There was terrible confusion everywhere. Many who had previously deserted Saul now rejoined him, and Israel won a great victory that day.

During the battle, Jonathan found and ate some honey. Another soldier told him, "Before we left camp your father bound the army with an oath, 'Cursed is anyone who eats anything today before our enemy is defeated.' "

Jonathan said, "My father has made a mistake. It would have been better to let the men eat. The little bit of honey I ate has revived me and given me the strength to fight on."

After the victory was won, Saul learned what Jonathan had done. He said to his son, "You shall die for this."

But the men intervened, "Never! God used Jonathan to give us victory today. As surely as the Lord lives, not a hair of his head will fall to the ground." And so they saved Jonathan's life.