I) V1-3 INTRO: Now it happened one day that Jonathan the son of Saul said to the Jonathan, the son of King Saul, attacked an outpost of Philistine soldiers

II) In response the Philistines gathered an enormous army to attack Israel (13:5)
The Philistines had thousands of chariots, cavalry, and foot soldiers

III) Saul assembled his troops for battle, but the Israelites were terrified
The people were hiding in caves, thickets, rocks, holes and in pits

IV) Because so many had fled, he could only muster 600 (13:15)

V) Israel's army was only a militia of farmers, and none had any swords
The Philistines had banned blacksmiths keeping them from forging spears or swords

VI) Only King Saul and his son Jonathan had swords, the rest had farming tools
The Philistines were so confident they simply assembled their troops to attack
They dispatched a garrison (50 soldiers) to the pass of Michmash, and waited
THIS IS WHERE WE PICK UP

VII) V1 Now it happened one day that Jonathan the Son of Saul said to the young man
Within 2 or 3 days, Jonathan decided to see what the enemy was up to

VIII) He crossed a pass that separated his position from the Philistines, in S Israel
NOTICE

IX) V1 But he did not tell his father Saul
Why did he not inform his father of his plans

X) ***First***: His father would obviously have forbidden him from doing this
Second: Such a plan would require complete secrecy
Third: It may simply be that the Lord had placed it on his heart to do so

XI) He chose to enter into this operation accompanied only by his ***armor bearer***
THE ARMOR BEARER

XII) An armor bearer was a trusted assistant who carried the commander's weapons
He would carry the large shield, and other weapons, freeing up the commander

XIII) He was courageous, fierce, of good character, well trained, and loyal unto death
He was physically strong and assisted in battle, protecting the leader

I) The armorbearer would stand with, lift up, and assist and protect against enemies

II) It was a great honor to be an armorbearer
This was because an armorbearer was trusted and often loved deeply

III) Interestingly, King David was King Saul's armorbearer
1 Sa 16:21-22 David came to Saul and stood before him. And he (Saul) loved him greatly, and he (David) ***became his armorbearer***. Then Saul sent to Jesse, saying, "Please let David stand before me, for he has found favor in my sight."

IV) As an armorbearer there were qualities he had that would enhance the leader
FIRST

V) He provided support: His physical presence would encourage his leader
It was encouraging to the leader that this was someone he didn't have to carry
What about me and my needs wasn't part of his vocabulary
SECOND

VI) He was quick to follow orders correctly
He took care of what was necessary, quickly and thoroughly
He was available, at the side of his captain, remaining on duty to meet needs
THIRD

VII) He was like a bodyguard, having courage, loyalty and faith
He didn't bail out in time of battle but stuck with him to the very end

VIII) Sometimes they even died with their leader
We will see this later in this book
1 Sa 31:4-5 Then Saul said to his armorbearer, "Draw your sword, and thrust me through with it, lest these uncircumcised men come and thrust me through and abuse me." But his armorbearer would not, for he was greatly afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword and fell on it. And when his armorbearer saw that Saul was dead, he also fell on his sword, and died with him.

IX) It was his job to protect the commander at all costs, including his own life
All warriors of distinction had personal armor bearers
Rick Valle: would I take a bullet for you?
LOCATION

X) V2 Saul was sitting in the outskirts of Gibeah under a pomegranate tree which was
This is just a few miles north of Jerusalem

I) V2 Migron is just north of this area, and Saul is just sitting under a well-known tree
Migron is a common word for a cliff, so the area around here is mountainous

II) Once again, Saul's troops have dwindled to around 600 men

III) V3 Ahijah the son of Ahitub Ichabod's brother the son of Phinehas, the son of Eli
Ahijah is the son of Ichabod's older brother Ahitub
Ahitub is the son of Phinehas, and Phinehas is Eli's son
POINT

IV) Ahijah is the great grandson of Eli, the former priest
BRIEFLY

V) He is wearing the ephod, not a normal priestly robe
The ephod is one that the high priest would wear (Lev 8:7-8)

VI) V3 The people did not know that Jonahtan had gone
GEOGRAPHIC MARKER

VII) V4-5 Between the passes by which Jonathan sought to go over to the Philistines'
This is a pass that is marked by two cliffs facing one another
Bozez: Shining, and **Seneh**, Thorny, face one another, north and south

VIII) V6 Jonathan said to the young man who bore his armor Come let us go over to the
This gives us insight into the faith and courage of Jonathan
Jonathan has courageously opposed the Philistines attacking their garrison
That was not enough for him, he wanted to deal them an even harsher defeat

IX) Notice how Jonathan says ***Let us go*** over to the garrison of ***these uncircumcised***
This was a way of calling them ***pagan***s, but went deeper than that
IT WAS A STATAEMENT OF FAITH

X) He was saying they had no help coming from God, because ***they didn't know Him***
UNCIRCUMCISED

XI) Circumcision was an outer emblem of Israel's relationship with God
As a believer, in proper relationship with Him, Jonathan expected God to help

XII) Jonathan was saying that he had hope in the God who would be there for him
He knew that God would be with him, and would give him victory
Dt 3:22 Do not be afraid of them, for the Lord your God Himself will fight for you

I) Ps 146:5-6 Happy is he who has the God of Jacob *for his help*, whose *hope is in the LORD his God*, Who made heaven and earth, The sea, and all that is in them; Who keeps truth forever

II) Jonathan was saying he had a relationship with God, and God *would be with him*
These Philistine did not, and therefore were not protected by God

SECOND

III) He said *It may be* that the LORD will work for us
This is not presumption, but is a simple declaration of hope and *faith in God*
His point is that this is all in God's hand: He will do as He wills

IV) This reminds me of Daniel 3 with Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah
We know them as Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego

V) Nebuchadnezzar made an image of gold and commanded it to be worshipped
If the people refused, they would suffer immediate incineration
The young men refused to bow down, and were reported to Nebuchadnezzar
Nebuchadnezzar questioned them and told them to refuse is instant death

VI) Their response is convicting, yet inspiring
Dan 3:16-18 16 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego answered and said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. If that is the case, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and *He will deliver us* from your hand, O king. *But if not*, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up."

IN JONATHAN'S CASE

VII) He trusted in the God who had promised to deliver them from their enemies
Remember what we read in an earlier chapter
1 Sa 7:3 Samuel spoke to all the house of Israel, saying, "If you return to the LORD with all your hearts, then put away the foreign gods and the Ashtoreths from among you, and prepare your hearts for the LORD, and serve Him only; and *He will deliver you f*rom the hand of the Philistines."

THIRD

VIII) For *nothing restrains the LORD* from saving by many *or by few*
Jonathan knew that God is the *God of the possible*
Job 42:2 I know that *You can do everything* and that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You

I) Jer 32:27 Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh. Is there anything too hard for Me?
Lu 1:37 For *with God* nothing will be impossible.
Lu 18:27 Jesus said, The things which are impossible with men are possible with God

JONATHAN INSPIRED THE ARMORBEARER

II) V7 His armorbearer said to him *Do all that is in your heart*. *Go then* here I am with
I have the same heart as you: What you desire to do, I desire to do also

III) I am here to live with you and to die with you because I love you
If you turn around and move, I will be right behind you

IV) I will put my trust in the God that you are proclaiming
Ps 46:7 The LORD of hosts is with us; The God of Jacob is our refuge.

V) Jonathan was willing to take a *venture of faith*, and his armorbearer supported this
He did not say anything to undermine what God might have wanted to do
His heart was in sync with Jonathan's, and he trusted in the same God

VI) His armorbearer shared his faith and was not an Eeyore!

VII) V8-10 Jonathan said Very well *let us cross over to these men* and we will show
Jonathan wasn't tempting God, but trusting God to reveal if He was leading him

VIII) He had a plan: If they said *we will come to you*, they were showing courage
If they said, *come to us it* showed they were afraid to leave their positions to fight

IX) V11 So both of them showed themselves to the garrison of the Philistines
The Philistines mocked them, thinking they were deserters coming out of hiding
Perhaps they thought that they were going to join them against Israel

X) V12-14 The men of the garrison called to Jonathan and his armorbearer and said
Jonathan sees that God is in this, and tells his armorbearer *Let's go*!
Jonathan leading the way, his friend following, began to slaughter their enemies

XI) In a small area of land, a great victory was won as they killed 20 enemy soldiers
They may have thought that there were more than just two attacking them

I) V15 There was trembling in the camp in the field and among all the people
The result was great fear, a terror that weakened even the special OPS troops

II) On top of this was an earthquake that they understood was from God
God was fighting on the side of Israel, and the pagans saw this plainly

III) Ventures of faith continue to this day
It requires trust in God, direction from God, confirmation from God, and likeminded people working together for the glory of God

IV) Ministry is a great adventure of faith: it is simply trusting God to go before you
APPLICATION

V) Calvary Chapels have embraced this principle and have been blessed by God

VI) As a pastor I know I am not adequate for the task He has given me
I have come to realize that God intends to use those who are inadequate
Because when the task is much beyond your abilities, you cannot steal His glory

VII) God is not looking for great people, but people who are available
He is looking for those who are open and willing to take Him at His word

VIII) He simply is looking for someone to use to accomplish what He wants to do
2 Chron 16:9 For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him.

IX) He desires to use those who will not take the credit for success for themselves
He desires to use the humble who are inclined to give Him all of the glory
In this way, He can do great things through them and they will not take the credit

X) God seeks those who have begun to see what He is seeing
He desires us to see what He sees in order that we might do what He wants done
Ps 32: 8 I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye

XI) Over the years, I have asked the Lord to me what He would have me do
I have discovered He does not normally show me the whole picture at one time
Why? Because it would overwhelm me and I would not think it possible

I) God is looking for men whom His Spirit leads and who trust Him
Men who are willing to step out in faith and to believe Him for the impossible

II) Men who know their limitations but trust in His abilities
Mk 9:23 Jesus said , If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes

III) I first began learning to trust God when I began my first home Bible study in 1973
I trusted God to bring people willing to hear me attempt to teach
I taught home studies for *9 years* to a small amount of people

IV) When this church began we met in a home
We had 15 children and 25 adults
In 2 mos i began looking at buildings to rent because we outgrew the house

V) My assistants and I went through the city looking for buildings we could rent
We located a small church seating 120 and had 4 small rooms for classrooms
We moved in with around 60 adults and 30 children, including two infants

VI) Our offerings were barely enough to pay the rent, and I received a small salary
Within 3 mos, we were asked to leave and we began looking for a place to meet
We eventually found a school that was available to rent

VII) We did not have the funds to pay for the rent for the school
The cost to rent it was 9 times more than we paid for the small church we rented
When I first heard the amount, I knew we could not afford it

VIII) We were asked to vacate at the end of the month, and on a Wed I prayed for help
As I went to bed the Spirit spoke to my heart: you will need a building seating 200
God met our need in a supernatural way and we began meeting in the school

IX) From that school we moved to another school
They did not want us there so they took away our parking

X) This opened the door for us to purchase property
We found property in Ontario but did not have the funds
We were lacking $180,000.00
I came home tearful because I sensed God directing me to talk to Chuck

I) We purchased the property, outgrew it and had to rent OHS for Su services
From there we moved to our present property

II) When we were about to close on this property, we were over $100 thousand short
We needed the money for closing costs in our down payment
Without ever mentioning it to our congregation, our offering increased to cover it

III) During that season I began to learn something about living by Faith
Money is not the issue, the issue is: Is God leading me in this?
If God guides, God provides

IV) For the first 16 years we never received offerings: Yet we were able to hire staff, support missionaries, purchase properties, support radio ministry and anything else we needed

V) Every time we moved we could not afford the new location
Yet every time we decided to move, God provided the money to pay the rent
He has also provided the funds for every staff member

APPLICATION

VI) What can we do to be willing to take Ventures in Faith

FIRST

VII) Ask God to give you a clear awareness of your gifts and abilities
Do not ask God to make you like someone else: Ask Him to make you into His man

SECOND

VIII) Ask God to give you vision of what He would have for you to do
Jn 4: 35 "Do you not say, `There are still four months and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest

THIRD

IX) Spend considerable time in the study of God's word and prayer
Pay careful attention to men God used, to learn from their lives

***FOURTH*:**

X) Surround yourself with people of faith
It is good to have practical people, but it is not good for people with no experience or faith to lead. They will undermine your efforts

XI) Raul's advice about mortgaging my home: don't do it

I) If God seems to be leading you in a certain direction, then seek wise counsel
Pr 11:14 Where there is no counsel, the people fall; but in the multitude of counselors there is safety

FIFTH

II) Guard your heart against anything that originates in your flesh
Faith is not presumption, placing you in a foolish place
Faith is not competition: Attempting to duplicate and do a better job than someone else
Faith is not something you do so you can brag and exaggerate your successes

SIXTH

III) Step out in faith and trust the Lord
Ps 37:4-5 Delight yourself also in the LORD, and He shall give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass

CONCLUSION

IV) Maybe God wants to do something bigger than we can imagine, so why limit Him?
If we did not think like Jonathan, we would still be in a front room in Pomona

FINALLY

V) There was Jonathan, but there was also an armorbearer
Somebody who would say Do all that is in your heart…here I am with you

VI) None of this would have happened if God did not bring armorbearers
Children's ministries, greeters, ushers, parking lot attendants, worship teams

VII) They make Easter services, conferences, breakfasts, small groups, hospital visitations and so much ministry possible
There is so much that can be done when you have somebody like that next to you

VIII) Jonathan could have stood alone, even questioning himself, *but for his friend*
You can have great faith, but so many times we need an armorbearer
Phil 2:19-22 But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, that I also may be encouraged when I know your state. For I have no one like-minded, who will sincerely care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus. But you know his proven character, that as a son with *his* father he served with me in the gospel.

IX) Thank God for armorbearers