

Jonathan: A Friend

⇒ **Introduction:**

- **"Jonathan" means "The Lord has Given"**
 - Perhaps the greatest gift, humanly speaking, that a person can have is a true friend.
 - Jonathan was this.
 - Hence, he was truly a gift from the LORD.

⇒ **I. Jonathan was courageous.**

- **See I Samuel 14:12-16**
 - He showed his courage by climbing the steep side of the gorge of Michmash, an outpost of the Philistines, and falling bodily on twenty men.
 - These men were killed, and the tumult started a panic in the camp of the enemy.
 - Then Saul came to attack, he found the Philistines fighting against each other.
 - The battle was won because of the courage of Jonathan.

⇒ **II. Jonathan was strong and fast.**

- **II Samuel 1:23**
 - This is one of the most beautiful passages in all the Bible.
 - It shows the beautiful relationship existing at death between Jonathan and Saul, and also shows the fact that Jonathan was strong and fast.

⇒ **III. Jonathan was a friend.**

- The outstanding thing about Jonathan was his friendship.
 - On the day of David's return from victory over Goliath, Jonathan was his friend.
 - He risked his life for David.
 - At one time Saul threw a javelin at him as he had at David because of Jonathan's friendship with David.
 - It was Jonathan who saved David's life when his father, Saul, became jealous of David.
- The outstanding thing about Jonathan certainly would be his friendship with David and his loyalty to him until his death.

⇒ **IV. Jonathan was unselfish.**

- Even when Saul suggested to Jonathan that David become the king in his death, he continued to be a friend.
 - Jonathan was the eldest son of King Saul.
 - No doubt he had had aspirations to be king.
 - Even so, he was so unselfish he was ready for David to be king in his stead.

⇒ **V. Jonathan was loved by the people.**

- After the battle with the Philistines, Jonathan was found eating honey.

- Saul had placed a curse upon anyone eating any food until evening. Jonathan did not know of the curse; hence, he was facing death.
- This is found in **I Samuel 14:28**.
- The people rescued Jonathan because of their love for him.

VII. Jonathan was killed along with his father in the battle of Gilboa.

.....His bones were placed in a vault at Bethshean. Later they were given an honorable burial.

CONCLUSION:

....."*And David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and over Jonathan his son: (Also he bade them teach the children of Judah the use of the bow: behold, it is written in the book of Jasher.) The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places: how are the mighty fallen! Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph. Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, neither let there be rain, upon you, nor fields of offerings: for there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away, the shield of Saul, as though he had not been anointed with oil. From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan turned not back, and the sword of Saul returned not empty. Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided: they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions. Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you in scarlet, with other delights, who put on ornaments of gold upon your apparel. How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thine high places. I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women. How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!" (II Samuel 1:17-27)*

.....David deeply lamented the death of Jonathan. He had lost life's most precious possession apart from eternal things--he had lost a friend. He wanted to do something in honor of Jonathan, and after Jonathan's death called Jonathan's son, Mephibosheth, to live in the palace as one of the king's sons. Mephibosheth was a crippled lad, and came at the request of David to be his own son, and it was all because of Jonathan.

.....The tragic thing is that so many go through life without ever experiencing the joy of a close human relationship such as David had with Jonathan. Wouldn't it be wonderful if every Christian could enjoy one such relationship and discover the meaning of real friendship!

THE CHILDREN'S LESSON:

Scripture: I Samuel 13 & 14, 18:1

Jonathan: A Friend

Objects to have:

Pictures of food: vegetables, meat, fruits as well as desserts and candy
Your Bible

Introducing the lesson:

.....(Show the children the pictures of the food and talk about each one as you show them. Talk with the children about foods that are really good for us, that are necessary for our good health. Talk with them about foods that are good if eaten only once in a while, like desserts. Then talk with them about things that are definitely harmful to our bodies; liquor, cigarettes, dope, etc. Tell them that we need to keep our bodies in good condition so that we can work for Jesus and have good lives.) A man in the Bible was very careful to eat something good to give him strength to do what he needed to do. That man was Jonathan.

.....Before we talk about Jonathan, let's do a little remembering. Remember the Israelites? They were millions of people whom God especially loved because as a nation they trusted Him. We heard about Moses, the man who was their leader as they came out of Egypt. We heard about Joshua, who was their next leader. After Joshua then there were people who were called Judges, One judge at a time was a leader of the Israelites. We heard about one of those judges two weeks ago, remember? That judge's name was (give the children an opportunity to tell you Gideon's name).

.....After the judges were the leaders of the Israelites, then the Israelites began to complain to God that they wanted to have a king. They wanted to be like other countries around them; they wanted to have a king. God gave them a king. That king's name was Saul. What was the name of the first king that the Israelites had? Yes, his name was Saul. King Saul had a boy; that boy's name was Jonathan. Jonathan was the prince of the Israelites because he was the son of King Saul. Jonathan grew to be a man. When Jonathan grew to be a man, there were hard times again. Remember the hard times that the people had when Gideon was chosen by God to be a judge? Remember the enemies, the Midianites, who treated the Israelites so very badly? Well, years and years passed after that, and once again the Israelites were having a hard time. I read this story in my Bible, in I Samuel.

Telling the story:

.....It was very frightening! The people were getting ready to run from their houses. The people were running to hide from the Philistines; these Philistines were other enemies of the Israelites. The Philistines were strong; they had thousands of chariots and they had thousands of horses and they had thousands of soldiers who all had swords and spears. The Philistines were being mean to the Israelites. First they killed the Israelite men who could make swords and spears; that way the Israelites had no weapons with which to protect themselves against danger. The Israelites said. "The Philistines are being so mean to us that we cannot stay in our homes anymore."

.....The dads and the moms picked up their babies and took their boys and girls by the hand and hurried away from their homes when the Philistines were not looking. They ran to caves in the sides of mountains and hills. Some ran to the woods where they could hide among the trees. Some found some deep, huge holes in the ground and settled there to live. The Israelites were afraid, and they ran to hide and live in places where the Philistines would not find them.

.....King Saul and Prince Jonathan wanted to do something about getting the Philistines out of their country, and away from their people. They wanted to go to war against the Philistines.

.....King Saul went to a place near the Jordan River. He said, "Gather around, men, we'll wait here to see whether we should go to war against the Philistines. We want to see what God wants us to do." It was going to be hard to fight against the Philistines, because no one in the Israelite army had a spear or a sword! The only two people who had a spear and a sword were King Saul and Prince Jonathan. The rest of the people had farm tools, axes and hoes and plowshares, and that's all they had with which to fight. But, there is something about the Israelites that we want to remember: God loved them. As long as they obeyed Him, then He could help them. And God can do anything!

.....Jonathan did not want to wait. He wanted to go out immediately against the Philistine soldiers. Jonathan said to the soldier who always fought beside him, "Friend, let's not say anything to anybody about this: I want to go out and do what I can to get rid of the Philistines. See that place over there near that other mountain? There is a fort there of Philistine soldiers. Let's you and me go and take that fort." Jonathan's armor bearer agreed with him, and they left the camp of the Israelites without anybody's seeing them. They hurried down the side of the mountain. Quietly and quickly they went through a narrow place which was between two great big rocks. Then they climbed another hill, and there was the fort of the Philistines.

....."Stop! Shhh! Armor bearer, we'll see whether we should go on. I'm not exactly sure that the Lord wants us to start fighting against the Philistines this very minute. I'm going to call to them. If they tell us to come on, then I'll know that the Lord is leading us and will help us in the battle. If they tell us to stay in this place, and wait for them, then I'll know that we should not go to fight them." The armor bearer was very still.

.....Jonathan called out to the Philistines, "Philistines, we're coming to get you." Jonathan was a very brave man, wasn't he? He was not afraid of the enemy because he knew that God was with him. Jonathan was not afraid of hard work, either; he wanted to do something that would help his people.

.....The Philistines called back, "Come on!" That was the signal that Jonathan was waiting for! Jonathan crawled on his hands and knees. His armor bearer was right behind him. They crawled up to the first

soldier who was standing guard duty and watching for any Israelites. Jonathan sprang and killed that Philistine!

.....They then sneaked up on another Philistine soldier. They killed him! At another place in the big field, there was another soldier. They killed him! All together Jonathan and his armor bearer killed twenty Philistine soldiers. Just about that time the Lord took over. God caused the earth to shake. There was a terrible rumble; there was an earthquake. All the other soldiers in the fort heard the noise of the earthquake; then they started looking around and saw twenty dead soldiers. They all became panicky, and in their confusion, they started fighting each other! Brave Jonathan had done the right thing; he had followed God's leading in going out to fight the enemy.

.....Jonathan and his armor bearer were tired, but they knew that there were many more Philistine soldiers than the ones that had been in the fort. There was still much fighting that had to be done. Jonathan and his armor bearer were running through the woods; they were on their way to get more Philistines. Jonathan saw a tree that had some honey in it.

.....Some bees had made a hive in a big, old tree and there was so much honey in that tree, that it was flowing out onto the ground. Jonathan thought, "That's just what I need, I need to eat some honey for strength to go on with the battle." Jonathan dipped his rod or stick into the honey, brought it up to his mouth, and ate some of the honey.

.....By this time many Israelite soldiers had come to join Jonathan and his armor bearer. These Israelites had heard the sound of battle and decided to come and help fight all the other Philistines that were around. When they saw Jonathan eating the honey, they were horrified! They said, "Jonathan, your father King Saul made us all promise that we would not eat any food today. King Saul said that there would be a curse come upon anybody who broke his commandment."

.....Jonathan said, "I did not hear my father give this order. I will talk with him about this later. The honey has given a great deal of new energy; now I am ready to go into battle again with the Philistines. Let's go!" Jonathan and the soldiers fought the Philistines long and hard. Remember, the Israelites did not have swords and spears; they had only farm tools. God enabled them to win the battles.

.....When the day ended, Jonathan went back to where King Saul was. Jonathan talked with his father, "Father, God truly directed us in battle today. I have to tell you that I did not know about your command to the people that they not eat anything all day; I ate some honey. The honey has given me a great deal of energy and enabled me to fight long and hard against the Philistines. Look at the people, Father, They are exhausted. If you had not made them promise that they would not eat food all this day, they would have been able to fight better and go even a greater distance to get more Philistines. Because they got so weak and

tired from not eating some good food, we could not go to other places to get more Philistines today."

.....You see, children, King Saul had stopped loving God as he should have. Because of that King Saul was not as wise as he could have been. God had given Jonathan wisdom and strength.

.....Jonathan was a brave young man. Jonathan was a hard-working young man. Jonathan also was a friend when someone needed a friend. David needed a friend, and Jonathan was a good friend to David. Jonathan was a good man; all goodness comes from God.

.....Let's trust God more and more. Let's let God tell us what to do, let's let Him tell us what to say let's let Him tell us what to be, let's let Him love others through us; just as Jonathan did.

Learn our Bible verse:

..... "*...for the Lord hath delivered them into our hand....*"

..... - *I Samuel 14:10*