

Arrogance Destroys, Faith Builds

Is life about you, or about the Lord?

First Samuel 13–14

Don Ruhl • Savage Street, Grants Pass, Oregon • December 21, In the year of our Lord, 2014

Song Leader and Song Suggestions: Larry Amberg – Songs on faith

Prelude:

I. It is written,

**12 Before destruction the heart of a man is haughty,
And before honor is humility.
(Pro 18.12)**

Persuasion:

I. First Samuel 13.1–2 – Saul Began to Build His Army

1 Saul reigned one year; and when he had reigned two years over Israel, 2 Saul chose for himself three thousand men of Israel. Two thousand were with Saul in Michmash and in the mountains of Bethel, and a thousand were with Jonathan in Gibeah of Benjamin. The rest of the people he sent away, every man to his tent.

A. First Samuel 10.26 said,

26 And Saul also went home to Gibeah; and valiant men went with him, whose hearts God had touched (1Sa 10.26).

B. Evidently the number of valiant men was 3,000.

1. With 3,000 the kingdom of Israel began, and
2. with 3,000 the kingdom of Christ began.

C. Then the Bible introduces us to a hero

1. who did wonderful things, but
2. whose life was overshadowed by someone else,
 - a) his best friend, and
 - b) that did not bother Jonathan.

II. First Samuel 13.3–4 – Jonathan Began the Attack

3 And Jonathan attacked the garrison of the Philistines that was in Geba, and the Philistines heard of it. Then Saul blew the trumpet throughout all the land, saying, “Let the Hebrews hear!” 4 Now all Israel heard it said that Saul had attacked a garrison of the Philistines, and that Israel had also become an abomination to the Philistines. And the people were called together to Saul at Gilgal.

- A. The people of God moved against their enemies, and
 - 1. the world considers the people of God the abomination!
 - 2. The Philistines could sacrifice children, but
 - a) no one considers them the abomination.
 - b) People even question God sending the Israelites against the Philistines.
- B. Truly, the Philistines were an abomination
 - 1. in the sight of God, and
 - 2. in the land.

III. First Samuel 13.5–7 – A Massive Force Faced the Israelites

5 Then the Philistines gathered together to fight with Israel, thirty thousand chariots and six thousand horsemen, and people as the sand which is on the seashore in multitude. And they came up and encamped in Michmash, to the east of Beth Aven. 6 When the men of Israel saw that they were in danger (for the people were distressed), then the people hid in caves, in thickets, in rocks, in holes, and in pits. 7 And some of the Hebrews crossed over the Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead. As for Saul, he was still in Gilgal, and all the people followed him trembling.

- A. Look at the numbers:
 - 1. 30,000 chariots,
 - 2. 6,000 horsemen, and
 - 3. foot soldiers without number!
 - a) Israel’s foot soldiers could not stand up to

b) chariots and horsemen.

(1) Therefore, the Israelites hid themselves in

(2) caves, thickets, rocks, holes, and pits.

(a) Some just fled the area.

(b) Those who stayed with Saul trembled.

B. What could Isarel do?

IV. First Samuel 13.8–12 – Saul Began to Decrease

8 Then he waited seven days, according to the time set by Samuel. But Samuel did not come to Gilgal; and the people were scattered from him. 9 So Saul said, “Bring a burnt offering and peace offerings here to me.” And he offered the burnt offering. 10 Now it happened, as soon as he had finished presenting the burnt offering, that Samuel came; and Saul went out to meet him, that he might greet him. 11 And Samuel said, “What have you done?” Saul said, “When I saw that the people were scattered from me, and that you did not come within the days appointed, and that the Philistines gathered together at Michmash, 12 then I said, ‘The Philistines will now come down on me at Gilgal, and I have not made supplication to the Lord.’ Therefore I felt compelled, and offered a burnt offering.”

A. Sometime earlier, Samuel had told Saul to wait,

8 “You shall go down before me to Gilgal; and surely I will come down to you to offer burnt offerings and make sacrifices of peace offerings. Seven days you shall wait, till I come to you and show you what you should do” (1Sa 10.8).

B. However, Saul’s fear and the fear of the people got to him.

1. He carried out the sacrifices himself.

2. Then the moment he finished, Samuel showed up.

C. To Saul, the important thing consisted of animal sacrifices.

1. He was not thinking as the Lord things, and

2. that caused him to lose his humility and

- a) to become arrogant,
- b) believing that he could do things for which he had no authority.

D. Even as the Israelites had treated the Ark of the Lord

- 1. as a good luck charm during the days of Eli,
- 2. so Saul treated animal sacrifices as good luck charms.

V. First Samuel 13.13–15 – The Lord Rejected Saul and Sought Another Man

13 And Samuel said to Saul, “You have done foolishly. You have not kept the commandment of the Lord your God, which He commanded you. For now the Lord would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. 14 But now your kingdom shall not continue. The Lord has sought for Himself a man after His own heart, and the Lord has commanded him to be commander over His people, because you have not kept what the Lord commanded you.” 15 Then Samuel arose and went up from Gilgal to Gibeah of Benjamin. And Saul numbered the people present with him, about six hundred men.

A. Saul did not think as the Lord thinks.

- 1. Therefore, Saul lost the kingdom.
- 2. Now, we say that the kings had to descend from Judah, but
 - a) if Saul had maintained his humility,
 - b) we would say that the kings descended from the tribe of Benjamin.

B. Do not lose your humility.

- 1. The Lord runs the show.
- 2. We do not.
 - a) You can know whether you have stayed humble
 - b) by whether you keep the commandments of the Lord.
 - (1) If you do not,
 - (2) then you believe you have found something better.
 - (a) That grows out of an arrogant heart, and
 - (b) it will lead to your downfall.

C. However, the man whom the Lord sought

1. who had a heart like the Lord,
2. would grow in power and fame.

VI. First Samuel 13.16–18 – The Philistines Sent Out Raiding Parties

16 Saul, Jonathan his son, and the people present with them remained in Gibeah of Benjamin. But the Philistines encamped in Michmash. 17 Then raiders came out of the camp of the Philistines in three companies. One company turned onto the road to Ophrah, to the land of Shual, 18 another company turned to the road to Beth Horon, and another company turned to the road of the border that overlooks the Valley of Zeboim toward the wilderness.

- A. The Philistines readied themselves for war
- B. by sending out raiding parties.

VII. First Samuel 13.19–22 – Israel Had No Weapons

19 Now there was no blacksmith to be found throughout all the land of Israel, for the Philistines said, “Lest the Hebrews make swords or spears.” 20 But all the Israelites would go down to the Philistines to sharpen each man’s plowshare, his mattock, his ax, and his sickle; 21 and the charge for a sharpening was a pim for the plowshares, the mattocks, the forks, and the axes, and to set the points of the goads. 22 So it came about, on the day of battle, that there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people who were with Saul and Jonathan. But they were found with Saul and Jonathan his son.

A. The Philistines

1. outnumbered the Israelites,
2. outgunned the Israelites,
3. had more equipment than the Israelites, and
4. were taller than the grasshopper Israelites.

B. Yet, Zechariah 4 declares,

**6b ‘Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’
Says the Lord of hosts.**

(Zec 4.6b)

C. Psalm 20 makes this awesome announcement,

- 7 Some trust in chariots, and some in horses;
But we will remember the name of the Lord our God.**
**8 They have bowed down and fallen;
But we have risen and stand upright.**
(Psa 20.7–8)

VIII. First Samuel 13.23 – The Philistines Moved into Position

23 And the garrison of the Philistines went out to the pass of Michmash.

- A. They truly believed they could take on the people of Yahweh God.
B. Even as some today think they can do it, but
 1. they shall fail,
 2. even as the Philistines failed.
C. Now you shall see Zechariah 4 and Psalm 20 in action.

IX. First Samuel 14.1–6 – Nothing Restrains the Lord

1 Now it happened one day that Jonathan the son of Saul said to the young man who bore his armor, “Come, let us go over to the Philistines’ garrison that is on the other side.” But he did not tell his father. 2 And Saul was sitting in the outskirts of Gibeah under a pomegranate tree which is in Migron. The people who were with him were about six hundred men. 3 Ahijah the son of Ahitub, Ichabod’s brother, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eli, the Lord’s priest in Shiloh, was wearing an ephod. But the people did not know that Jonathan had gone. 4 Between the passes, by which Jonathan sought to go over to the Philistines’ garrison, there was a sharp rock on one side and a sharp rock on the other side. And the name of one was Bozez, and the name of the other Seneh. 5 The front of one faced northward opposite Michmash, and the other southward opposite Gibeah. 6 Then Jonathan said to the young man who bore 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 restrains the Lord from saving by many or by few.”

- A. While the king, the commander of the Lord's forces, sat in the shade,
 - 1. his son did not want to sit around, because
 - 2. he believed in the power of the Lord of the heavens and the Earth.
- B. Don't you just love what Jonathan said to his armorbearer in verse 6?
 - 1. Jonathan believed the Lord would work for them.
 - 2. Jonathan believed that nothing can restrain the Lord.
 - a) How is it that Israel managed to survive for
 - b) 1400 years from the Exodus to the birth of Jesus?
 - (1) How is it that the church managed to survive and to thrive
 - (2) from Jewish and Roman persecution
 - (a) to communist and fascist persecution?
 - (b) All the enemies of God's people are gone.
 - i) New ones have arisen, but
 - ii) the church continues to spread over all the world.

X. First Samuel 14.7–12 – Jonathan Devised a Plan

7 So his armorbearer said to him, "Do all that is in your heart. Go then; here I am with you, according to your heart." 8 Then Jonathan said, "Very well, let us cross over to these men, and we will show ourselves to them. 9 If they say thus to us, "Wait until we come to you," then we will stand still in our place and not go up to them. 10 But if they say thus, "Come up to us," then we will go up. For the Lord has delivered them into our hand, and this will be a sign to us." 11 So both of them showed themselves to the garrison of the Philistines. And the Philistines said, "Look, the Hebrews are coming out of the holes where they have hidden." 12 Then the men of the garrison called to Jonathan and his armorbearer, and said, "Come up to us, and we will show you something." Jonathan said to his armorbearer, "Come up after me, for the Lord has delivered them into the hand of Israel."

- A. The faith of these two men led them to enter into the Philistine camp,
 - 1. where the soldiers were larger and

2. outnumbered the two.

B. Jonathan's magnificent faith

1. should amaze us, yet,

2. it should not, because

a) if there is a God in heaven, and

b) if we are His people,

(1) of course we can do exploits that the world can never do.

(2) In this case, God and two men made the majority!

XI. First Samuel 14.13–14 – The Earth Loved It

13 And Jonathan climbed up on his hands and knees with his armorbearer after him; and they fell before Jonathan. And as he came after him, his armorbearer killed them. 14 That first slaughter which Jonathan and his armorbearer made was about twenty men within about half an acre of land. 15 And there was trembling in the camp, in the field, and among all the people. The garrison and the raiders also trembled; and the earth quaked, so that it was a very great trembling.

A. Jonathan knocked them down, and

1. his armorbearer finished them off.

B. Did you hear what verse 14 said?

1. These two men fought about 20 men

2. in about half an acre of land, about half the size of our paved lot here.

C. Look at the reaction:

1. The camp trembled,

2. The field trembled,

3. All the people trembled,

4. The garrison of the Philistines trembled,

5. The Philistine raiders trembled, and

6. The Earth trembled.
 - a) Truly, there was a very great trembling!
 - b) The Earth belongs to the Lord, and
 - (1) the Earth did not like the abominations of the Philistines.
 - (2) Therefore, the Earth trembled at the defeat of the vile Philistines.

XII. First Samuel 14.16–23 – Jonathan Motivated Others

16 Now the watchmen of Saul in Gibeah of Benjamin looked, and there was the multitude, melting away; and they went here and there. 17 Then Saul said to the people who were with him, "Now call the roll and see who has gone from us." And when they had called the roll, surprisingly, Jonathan and his armorbearer were not there. 18 And Saul said to Ahijah, "Bring the ark of God here" (for at that time the ark of God was with the children of Israel). 19 Now it happened, while Saul talked to the priest, that the noise which was in the camp of the Philistines continued to increase; so Saul said to the priest, "Withdraw your hand." 20 Then Saul and all the people who were with him assembled, and they went to the battle; and indeed every man's sword was against his neighbor, and there was very great confusion. 21 Moreover the Hebrews who were with the Philistines before that time, who went up with them into the camp from the surrounding country, they also joined the Israelites who were with Saul and Jonathan. 22 Likewise all the men of Israel who had hidden in the mountains of Ephraim, when they heard that the Philistines fled, they also followed hard after them in the battle. 23 So the Lord saved Israel that day, and the battle shifted to Beth Aven.

- A. Israel could hear something big happening in the Philistine camp, but
 1. Saul and Israel did not know
 - a) what it was, or
 - b) who was responsible.
 2. Therefore, the king did a count and discovered
 - a) that Jonathan and his armorbearer
 - b) were missing and thus must have been the responsible ones.
- B. Verse 20 shows that the Philistines were so startled by Jonathan

1. that they started fighting one another!
2. They were totally confused.

C. Thus, verses 20–22 show

1. that all the Israelites joined the battle,
2. including the ones who had hidden themselves.
 - a) Someone stood up and fought the enemy, and
 - b) that put a spark in the hearts of those who had previously been fearful.

D. The writer concluded that the Lord saved Israel!

1. Yes, Jonathan did something great.
2. Yes, Israel joined the battle.
 - a) However, the Lord made it all possible, and
 - b) if Jonathan were here today he would say so himself!

XIII. First Samuel 14.24–35 – Saul Troubled the Land

24 And the men of Israel were distressed that day, for Saul had placed the people under oath, saying, “Cursed is the man who eats any food until evening, before I have taken vengeance on my enemies.” So none of the people tasted food. **25** Now all the people of the land came to a forest; and there was honey on the ground. **26** And when the people had come into the woods, there was the honey, dripping; but no one put his hand to his mouth, for the people feared the oath. **27** But Jonathan had not heard his father charge the people with the oath; therefore he stretched out the end of the rod that was in his hand and dipped it in a honeycomb, and put his hand to his mouth; and his countenance brightened. **28** Then one of the people said, “Your father strictly charged the people with an oath, saying, ‘Cursed is the man who eats food this day.’ ” And the people were faint. **29** But Jonathan said, “My father has troubled the land. Look now, how my countenance has brightened because I tasted a little of this honey. **30** How much better if the people had eaten freely today of the spoil of their enemies which they found! For now would there not have been a much greater slaughter among the Philistines?” **31** Now they had driven back the Philistines that day from Michmash to Aijalon. So the people were very faint. **32** And the people rushed on the spoil, and took sheep, oxen, and calves, and slaughtered them on the ground; and the people ate them with the blood. **33** Then they told Saul, saying, “Look, the people are sinning against the Lord by eating with the blood!” So he said, “You have dealt treacherously;

roll a large stone to me this day.” 34 Then Saul said, “Disperse yourselves among the people, and say to them, ‘Bring me here every man’s ox and every man’s sheep, slaughter them here, and eat; and do not sin against the Lord by eating with the blood.’ ” So every one of the people brought his ox with him that night, and slaughtered it there. 35 Then Saul built an altar to the Lord. This was the first altar that he built to the Lord.

- A. Saul became zealous to defeat the enemy, but
 - 1. in his zeal he did something foolish.
 - 2. He made everyone fast until they defeated the enemy.
- B. There is a time to fast, and a time to eat.
 - 1. While engaged in warfare, that is the time to eat.
 - 2. You fast when you do not have to engage in heavy physical activity.
- C. Jonathan spoke the truth that his father had troubled the land with this oath.

XIV. First Samuel 14.36–45 – The People Saved Jonathan

36 Now Saul said, “Let us go down after the Philistines by night, and plunder them until the morning light; and let us not leave a man of them.” And they said, “Do whatever seems good to you.” Then the priest said, “Let us draw near to God here.” 37 So Saul asked counsel of God, “Shall I go down after the Philistines? Will You deliver them into the hand of Israel?” But He did not answer him that day. 38 And Saul said, “Come over here, all you chiefs of the people, and know and see what this sin was today. 39 For as the Lord lives, who saves Israel, though it be in Jonathan my son, he shall surely die.” But not a man among all the people answered him. 40 Then he said to all Israel, “You be on one side, and my son Jonathan and I will be on the other side.” And the people said to Saul, “Do what seems good to you.” 41 Therefore Saul said to the Lord God of Israel, “Give a perfect lot.” So Saul and Jonathan were taken, but the people escaped. 42 And Saul said, “Cast lots between my son Jonathan and me.” So Jonathan was taken. 43 Then Saul said to Jonathan, “Tell me what you have done.” And Jonathan told him, and said, “I only tasted a little honey with the end of the rod that was in my hand. So now I must die!” 44 Saul answered, “God do so and more also; for you shall surely die, Jonathan.” 45 But the people said to Saul, “Shall Jonathan die, who has accomplished this great deliverance in Israel? Certainly not! As the Lord lives, not one hair of his head shall fall to the ground, for he has worked with God this day.” So the people

rescued Jonathan, and he did not die.

- A. Saul wanted to smash the Philistines, and
 - 1. he consulted the Lord about it, but
 - 2. the Lord did not answer him.
- B. After going through a procedure to find out why the Lord remained silent,
 - 1. Saul made another arrogant and foolish promise.
 - 2. He promised that even if the sin had been found in his son Jonathan,
 - a) he would have to die.
 - b) Then the Lord used the casting of lots to show
 - (1) that Jonathan was the problem, because
 - (2) he had broken his father's oath.
- C. However, the people were wiser than their leader, because
 - 1. they saw that the Lord worked through Jonathan.
 - 2. Therefore, they saved him from his own father.

XV. First Samuel 14.46–48 – The Exploits of Saul

46 Then Saul returned from pursuing the Philistines, and the Philistines went to their own place. 47 So Saul established his sovereignty over Israel, and fought against all his enemies on every side, against Moab, against the people of Ammon, against Edom, against the kings of Zobah, and against the Philistines. Wherever he turned, he harassed them. 48 And he gathered an army and attacked the Amalekites, and delivered Israel from the hands of those who plundered them.

- A. Saul did not get to finish the job against the Philistines, but
- B. he did fight against all the enemies of the Lord.
 - 1. There was no doubt now
 - 2. that he was the sovereign one in the land.

XVI. First Samuel 14.49–51 – The Family of Saul

49 The sons of Saul were Jonathan, Jishui, and Malchishua. And the names of his two daughters were these: the name of the firstborn Merab, and the name of the younger Michal. 50 The name of Saul's wife was Ahinoam the daughter of Ahimaaz. And the name of the commander of his army was Abner the son of Ner, Saul's uncle. 51 Kish was the father of Saul, and Ner the father of Abner was the son of Abiel.

XVII. First Samuel 14.52 – Fierce War

52 Now there was fierce war with the Philistines all the days of Saul. And when Saul saw any strong man or any valiant man, he took him for himself.

- A. Saul continued to take from the people,
- B. which Samuel had said would happen.

Exhortation:

I. Humility goes against our natural inclination, but

- A. remember what the Holy Spirit said,

**12 Before destruction the heart of a man is haughty,
And before honor is humility.
(Pro 18.12)**

- B. Why do you love Jesus?

1. Was He arrogant?
2. Was He humble?
 - a) Which of the two did He demonstrate when He washed feet?
 - b) When you confess the Lordship of Jesus,
 - (1) you humble yourself before Him,
 - (2) even as He humbled Himself before the Father.

II. Humble yourself in the sight of the Lord, and

- A. He will lift you up.

B. He will do that first by washing away your sin.