

Episode: One-Hit Wonders No. 12

Narrator: Armor bearer

Primary Scriptures: 1 Samuel 14:1-48

Story Summary: Jonathan attacks the Philistines

Location: Philistine outpost, Israel

Time: Circa 1025 AD

Suggested Memory Scriptures: 1 Samuel 14:6-7

One of the great mysteries of the Old Testament is the date when King Saul found out David had been anointed as his successor. 1 Samuel 20:31 says Saul warned Jonathan that David was a direct major threat to Jonathan's potential kingship.

That verse is a strong indication that both Saul and Jonathan were aware David had been anointed as successor. Their reactions seemingly were very different. Saul wanted to establish his dynasty through Jonathan regardless of what God wanted. Jonathan seemed content to let David become king if that was God's desire.

When it comes to Jonathan, many people focus on his relationship with David. This video episode centers on an event that happened six chapters earlier than Saul's warning to Jonathan, one that demonstrated Jonathan was a powerful warrior who believed in the power of God.

Saul is commander of the far outnumbered and out-weaponed Israelites as they fight against the Philistines. The Philistines have become so powerful that they not only control the coastal plain, but have also taken control of much of the rest of Israel. Saul splits his forces and puts Jonathan in charge of one of them.

Rather than counting on his own prowess and the power of his army, Jonathan chooses to count on God. He tells his armor bearer that the two of them will attack a Philistine outpost. He has faith that God will give him a great victory, which is exactly what happens. The duo routs a large Philistine force through God's power.

The rout of one portion of the Philistine army leads to a great victory over the Philistines. Saul, Jonathan, and the entire force of Israelites start destroying the Philistines and are on the verge of ending the Philistine enemies forever. Then one of Saul's rash decisions ends the opportunity. On the threat of death, Saul had commanded his men not to eat, and they ran out of energy. This almost ended Jonathan's life, too, because he did not know about Saul's order and had eaten honey. Jonathan was unable to countermand the order, so the Philistines lived to fight another day.

Time proved the complete folly of Saul's order. Many years later, Saul, his family, and entire army come to fight the Philistines at Mount Gilboa. The Philistines have a complete victory over the Israelites and kill Saul and his sons, effectively ending Saul's dynasty.