

1 Samuel 14:1-23

7-25-10

“Seize Your Divine Moment!”

I. INTRO:

- A. **Prayer:** Lord we don't want to be average, mediocre, normal, compliant, predictable, safe Christians. Teach us to *seize our divine moment!*
- B. It was **Horace** the leading Roman lyric poet who gave us the great Latin Phrase, “**Carpe Diem**” *seize the day/the present!* [or **Carpe temporis punctum** - seize the moment!]
- Or, the Rabbinic phrase, "And if not now, when?" (Pirkei Avoth 1:14)

II. SEIZE YOUR DIVINE MOMENT!

- A. **JONATHAN ATTACKS!** (1-15)
- B. Jonathan, not Saul, was the true leader in Israel. The contrast between the 2 is striking:¹
- Saul was **sitting** while Jonathan was **attacking**.
 - Saul **trusted his growing army** while Jonathan **God** & did not depend on #'s.
 - Saul **watched** things happen, but Jonathan **made** things happen.
- C. (6) How was it that Jonathan was so courageous? **Key** in vs.6 “**The Lord** will work for us.”
- See** similar words by **King Asa** in 2 Chron.14:11.
- D. Jonathan's tactics defied military logic.
- I'm not a military expert. I didn't go to West Point. Wasn't even a Boy Scout. But I think I know enough to realize this is a **terrible** military strategy.
 - Let em see us??? You mean, *we'll sneak up in the shadows, maintain radio silence, & attack w/a stealth strike?*
 - Everyone knows** when you're *outmanned, outnumbered, outequipped*, you don't just come out! **Everyone knows** altitude has the upper hand.
 - Yet, Jonathan was moving out to **seize a divine moment!**
 - He didn't **create** it, but it also would not come w/o his **initiative**.
 - He was stepping into a moment where God would have to come through if it were going to achieve its ultimate end.
 - He **wasn't** being **presumptuous** as he was only creating an opportunity for God to bring victory He had **already promised**.
 - Joshua 23:10 **One man of you shall chase a thousand, for the Lord your God is He who fights for you, as He promised you.**

¹ Warren Wiersbe: With The Word; pg.169

2. He found an *established military outpost* that had a *superior strategic position*.
 - a) *i.e.* A camp on top of a steep hill.
3. He then revealed his position to the enemy.
4. Then, when invited to fight, he expends so much energy exposing himself to attack & exhaustion.
 - a) Amazingly God not only **protected** Jonathan but gave him a **great victory** as well.
 - b) Truly **faith** won the victory that day!²

E. When we *play it safe*, we squeeze **God** out of the formula.³

1. If we **go** where we know & **do** what we're certain will succeed, we remove our need for God.
2. Whenever we take on a God-sized challenge, self-sufficiency is no longer an option.

F. You have no control over when you **die** or (most often) how you **die**, but you do have control over how you **live**!

1. Jonathan wasn't choosing to **die**, he was choosing how he would **live**.

G. It may be that the Lord will work for us -

1. "Let's go & pick a fight. Maybe God will help!" :)
2. Jonathan understood that not everything was *guaranteed*.
 - a) What he knew for certain was that **God was powerful enough** to get the job done.
 - b) He knew God could use **a lot** of people, or **a few**. **Odds were irrelevant to God**.
3. Jonathan had an unwavering confidence in **God's capacity**.
4. Jonathan had absolute trust in **God's character**.
5. Jonathan's focus was **not**, *What is God's will for my life? But How can I give my life to fulfill God's will?*
6. Jonathan had **no certainty** concerning his *personal well-being*.
 - a) Jonathan's **only certainty** was that he was **moving in line w/God's purpose**.
 - b) **Erwin McManus** calls this the *Jonathan Factor*... "When we have absolute confidence in God in the midst of uncertainty & are willing to move w/God even w/o a guarantee of personal success."
7. Some boast, "I have **no real evil** to speak about", but they also have **no great good** to be proud of either! (*Is that you?*)

² Shepherd's Notes: 1st Samuel; pg. 25

³ Erwin McManus: Seizing Your Divine Moment; pg.80

H. Imagine you're his armor-bearer for a minute.

1. God *might* help us? Hey, wake me up when you know!!!
2. I think this is what most of us have said. - We've gone back to sleep in the shade of the pomegranate tree, willing to set out once *everything is certain!*
3. Did he think, *maybe he has a death wish?* Or *maybe he has more information he's left undisclosed?*
 - a) No way...he said, "Do all that is in your heart. Go then; here I am with you, according to your heart."
4. As Christians why can't we celebrate our friends efforts/attempts, & not immediately get out our *red felt tip pen* & mark an "F" at the top of their page if we consider it a failure?
 - a) If you buy into what I'm saying, the only way we're going to encourage each other is by hearing a "*hey, way to try! way to go! way to grow!*" rather than, "*Looser!*"
 - b) It's what I've stated about *Pastor Bill Hybels* the founder of the *Seeker Friendly Movement*. As he came out a few years ago & said they re-evaluated, & didn't see the fruit they anticipated. *Your response?* I told you so! Or, thanks for trying!
- l. Oh by the way, there is **no principle** that says everyone who does God's will lives - at least not on this earth!
 1. *If the cross teaches us anything, it teaches us that sometimes God comes through after we've been killed!* (McManus)

J. When you move with God, He always shows up.

1. It's just difficult to predict **what** He will do or **how** He will do it.
2. Paul didn't always know **where** he was going(Acts 16) but he knew **why!**
3. If you wait for **guarantees**, the only thing that will be **guaranteed** is that you will **miss endless divine opportunities**...**THAT** you can be **guaranteed!**

K. Divine moments require you to *go through the pass!* [*venture beyond the point of no return*]

1. It's like **snow skiing** for the first time, where everything in your mind & body says **lean back**, but you have to commit, bend your knees & lean forward.
2. In **surfing** it's that moment you commit & there's no turning back.

L. Divine moments require us to move from the **invisible** to the **visible**, so that the invisible can become **visible!**

1. So many of us live our lives making sure we're **not seen**.
2. We chose to remain **anonymous**. We choose to remain **uninvolved**.
3. Our love for **personal privacy** disguises both our **indifference** & our **isolation**.
 - a) Here's what's sad, you can live your life & **never be seen!**

- b) No, not desiring the limelight. It's stepping up & making your life count.
- c) It's about volunteering when God is asking, "*Who will go on My behalf?*"
- d) It's not taking a step **back** when volunteers are asked to step **forward!** (3 stooges)

M. Divine moments require us **to go through the pass**;
 Divine moments require us **to let them see you**;
 Divine moments require us **to choose the way of the cross**;
 Divine moments require us **to trust**;
 Divine moments require us **to look for what God is doing & get in on it**;
 Divine moments require us **to not** be comfortable on the sidelines **but get out on the field**;
 Divine moments require us **to not** be an observer of life **but a liver of life**.

N. (12) **Hear the exhilaration in his voice?**

1. **Advance** unless the Lord tells you to **wait!** - **Why do we have this backward?**
 - a) Aren't there certain things that we don't need permission to do?
 - b) The one's we've already been commissioned to do?
 - c) We act as if the primary word from God is **STOP** when it actually was **GO!**
 - d) It's **moving forward** in alignment with **the purpose of God**.
 - e) Isn't Jesus first words in His great commission to us **Go?** [Go therefore & make disciples...]
 (1) **How would your life be different, working from a giant YES rather than a giant NO?**

O. (13) **Hands & feet** - what tenacity, or literally *doggedness*(all 4's). **Bold, daring, brave, fearless, audacious!** [showing a willingness to take surprisingly bold risks]

P. (15) **Earthquake** - Gods way of giving His thumbs up on someone.

1. **Also, God's way of surprising us with His magnificence! :)**

Q. **SAUL WATCHES!** (16-23)

R. (19) **Withdraw your hand** - Never mind, I'm not waiting on God.

S. (23) **So the Lord saved Israel that day!** (*the Lord* vs.6,10,12,23,45)

1. Today are you ready to **seize your divine moment?**
2. Ready to live **the Jonathan life**...full of **Intentionality & purpose?**
3. A 24 hour period is just packed full of **divine moments**.
4. In the game of Chess, **white** always makes the first move(offense).
 - a) **It's your move!**

T. **Prayer:** God we don't seek to read your **mind**...but simply to know your **heart!**