1 Samuel 14:1-23

“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!]

1. 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**.
2. Saul trusted his growing army while Jonathan **God** & did not depend on #'s.
3. 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.”

1. See similar words by **King Asa** in 2 Chron.14:11.

D. Jonathan’s tactics defied military logic.

1. 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.

a) **Let em see us??** You mean, *we’ll sneak up in the shadows, maintain radio silence, & attack w/a stealth strike?*

b) **Everyone knows** when you’re *outmanned, outnumbered, outequipped,* you don’t just come out! Everyone knows altitude has the upper hand.

c) Yet, Jonathan was moving out to **seize a divine moment!**

   (1) He didn’t create it, but it also would not come w/o his **initiative**.

   (2) He was stepping into a moment where God would have to come through if it were going to achieve its ultimate end.

   (3) He **wasn’t** being **presumptuous** as he was only creating an opportunity for God to bring victory He had **already promised**.

   (4) 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.

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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!  

E. When we play it safe, we squeeze God out of the formula.
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?)

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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/attempt, & 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!

I. 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!