

Buckle Up  
*It's going to be a wild ride*

"Jonathon's belt: dealing with pride"  
1 Samuel 17-18

No one here this morning would aspire to be like Satan; and yet, we have no doubt modeled one of his core characteristics: pride. God has not given us a great deal of insight into the days of eternity past but there are glimpses and intimations from Scripture that suggest that Satan's fall was precipitated by his pride. Many evangelical scholars believe that Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28 are intended as a description of Satan's fall from heaven due to the pride that poisoned his heart. Jesus himself commented to the disciples in Luke 10:18, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven." Ezekiel records a divine judgment that perhaps not only had meaning for his day but also to give us insight into that eternity past judgment of Satan, "Your heart became proud on account of your beauty, and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendor. So I threw you to the earth (Ezekiel 28:17).

Pride is rooted in the story of each of our lives. It is in our fingerprint, our DNA, deep seated in our very being. Pride keeps you from admitting you are wrong. Pride keeps you from taking the initiative for reconciliation. Pride keeps you from sharing your faith. Pride keeps you from acknowledging your need. In some ways, pride is like cholesterol: one type is good and another type is bad. To be proud of someone or something in an honorable way is good and wonderful. To be proud in a self-centered, self-promoting, self-serving way, self-preserving way is unhealthy, destructive, sinful. Our Bible belt story this morning is about Jonathon. Jonathon was the first born son of King Saul and had a most remarkable friendship with and impact on the life of David. Though they could have become rivals and enemies; due to Jonathon's remarkable humility, they would become legendary friends.

Our story unfolds in the Elah Valley immediately after David's unforgettable confrontation with Goliath of the Philistines. I propose it was Jonathon who slew the greater giant that day rather than David. Goliath was a menace, but pride was a monster. David slew one; Jonathon slew the greater. Let's learn from this lesser known giant slayer this morning the lessons of conquering pride in our own lives and how to cultivate a life of true humility. Here is where the legend of the giant killer began. And here David and Jonathon's famous friendship was born; in the Valley of Elah.



Now that we have pictured ourselves with the Israelites and the Philistines in the Valley of Elah, let's read the story of Jonathon's Belt.

As soon as David returned from killing the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul, with David still holding the Philistine's head. <sup>58</sup> "Whose son are you, young man?" Saul asked him. David said, "I am the son of your servant Jesse of Bethlehem."

18:1 After David had finished talking with Saul, Jonathan became one in spirit with David, and he loved him as himself. <sup>2</sup> From that day Saul kept David with him and did not let him return home to his family. <sup>3</sup> And Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself. <sup>4</sup> Jonathan took off the robe he was wearing and gave it to David, along with his tunic, and even his sword, his bow and his belt.

1 Samuel 17:57 - 18:4 NIV

It is amazing that a millisecond in time can change one's life. This was just such a time in the life of Jonathon and it would prove to be for David as well.

1. Humility is at the heart of a godly life.

- Jonathon's pedigree (the first of Saul's 4 sons and two daughters born of Ahinoam; two other sons born of Rizpah)
- Jonathon was the crown prince and clear heir to his father's throne (1 Samuel 20:30-31)
- True humility comes from spiritual clarity
- "I know where I came from and where I am going. But you have no idea where I come from or where I am going." (John 8:14b)
- "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves" (Philippians 2:3)

2. Great humility requires great courage.

- Jonathon's own exploits at Michmash (1 Samuel 14:1-23)





- The example of Jesus (2 Corinthians 8:9; Philippians 2:5-8)
3. Our greatest accomplishments are what we pour into the lives of others.
- The weapons and the wardrobe (1 Samuel 13:19,22)
  - The words of covenant blessing (1 Samuel 18:3; 20:16; 23:15-18)
  - Crafted communication and customized blessings (Ephesians 4:29; Genesis 49:28)
  - Generational blessings (2 Timothy 1:5)  
"I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also."
4. God empower us to eternally impact the lives of others.
- The story of Mephibosheth of Lodebar (2 Samuel 9:1-7)
  - Living with a Macedonian vision (Acts 16:9-10)

Pride may be hiding in your heart. Would you be willing to strip away your pride as Jonathon did long ago; to remove your robe, your tunic, your sword, your bow and your belt and give it away for God to rule in your heart? The altar is open; God calls; will you come?