

Saul and Jonathan: No Weapon? God's Got This! **Steven Furtick.**

First Samuel 13:16: "Saul and his son Jonathan and the men with them were staying in Gibeah in Benjamin, while the Philistines camped at Mikdash. Raiding parties went out from the Philistine camp in three detachments. One turned toward Ophrah in the vicinity of Shual, another toward Beth Horon, and the third toward the borderland overlooking the Valley of Zeboyim facing the wilderness. Not a blacksmith could be found in the whole land of Israel, because the Philistines had said, 'Otherwise the Hebrews will make swords or spears!' So all Israel went down to the Philistines to have their plow points, mattocks, axes and sickles sharpened. The price was two-thirds of a shekel for sharpening plow points and mattocks, and a third of a shekel for sharpening forks and axes and for repointing goads". This is a rip-off. We don't measure in shekels, but this is entirely too much to pay to get your goads sharpened. "So on the day of the battle not a soldier with Saul and Jonathan had a sword or spear in his hand; only Saul and his son Jonathan had them".

So, on the day of battle... This is bad, to be in a day of battle and not have a sword or a spear. "So on the day of the battle not a soldier with Saul and Jonathan had a sword or spear in his hand; only Saul and his son Jonathan had them". I want to preach to you today from the subject No Weapon. Usually when we shout, "No weapon!" it's exciting, and it's a promise from God that "No weapon formed against you will prosper," but maybe you heard it different in the context where I just talked about how on the day of the battle, not a soldier with Saul and Jonathan had a sword or a spear in his hand. No weapon. This message is for somebody who is in a war without the weapons you need for that war. I have no idea what area of your life this will apply to.

My first thought goes to financial. My second thought goes to relational. My third thought goes to emotional. I think I covered everybody in those three, when I said, "You're in a war, but you don't have the weapons". If that has been you lately, and you have been thinking things along the lines of, "What the...am I supposed to do right now"? things that you have been thinking about lately, then this word is for you, because you're in a war that you don't have the weapons for. The question I want to work with a little bit today is...Where are your weapons? Every once in a while, I like to revisit a passage that was a part of my past, drag it into my present, and see if God has given me any perspective in the space between. The funny thing about this passage is it's a story I've been preaching since I was 16 years old. I outlined 1 Samuel 14... I know I read to you from 13, but I preached from 1 Samuel 14 for the first time when I was 16. What brought it back to my mind was that we celebrated our church's sixteenth anniversary last weekend. Not only that. My oldest child is 16 years old.

So, now I have a kid who's at the stage of life I was at the first time I preached this passage. The first time I preached it, it had 12 points. When I preached it the first time, I said all 12 points and didn't make one. I missed the whole thing. I can see now some things God wasn't able to show me at the time because I wasn't ready to see it. Now, having a son who's 16 years old who is smarter than I am, more talented than I am, taller than I am... See, I'm not changing out any of the pictures of my family in my house from this point forward, because I want it all to be right at that last time that he came up to my nose, just so he doesn't ever think he can beat me.

I have to keep that mental edge, that psychological advantage. But the passage I read to you mentions a father and a son. You might recognize the name Saul. He was the first king Israel ever had. He was the first king Israel had, and God didn't want them to have him, but they just had to have one, like that car you're making payments on for the next 76 years. You just had to have one. I'm not going to go to the person you are sitting next to. You just had to have them. Valentine's Day. When we look at the text as a father and son, it's really powerful, because you have Saul, who was the first king, and Jonathan his son, who is supposed to be king next from a human perspective, but can't be king because God has chosen David and rejected Saul, and it provides a contrast, which has been

eye-opening for me to study this week. It has been eye-opening for me to study for a couple of reasons.

The other day, I was saying something to one of my kids, and the Spirit of the Lord told me nicely, "Shut up". He said it nicer than that, but the way I'm saying it to you is "Shut up". What I was doing in the middle of telling my sons something was I was visiting my insecurity on them and making it a limitation that did not apply for their lives. I was kind of having one of those moments where I thought I was telling them the way things are, but what I realized in the middle of saying it was "That is the way things were for you; that does not have to be the way it is for them". And the Spirit of the Lord said, "Shut up. Don't say that. Don't speak that over them. Go scream it in your pillow. Go tell it to a counselor. Go write it down and scratch it out, but for God's sake, don't put your stuff on them. Don't weigh them down with your own unmet expectations of life so that they have to carry with them your resentment about things you didn't experience, but maybe I want them to".

And the Spirit of the Lord said, "Shut up". In 1 Samuel 13, the Bible says, "There was no weapon in the hands of God's people". What a horrible place to be, to have an enemy attacking you, not just from one side, not just from both sides, but the Bible says there were three detachments that had gone out from the Philistines. You recognize the name Philistine from the famous Philistine in the Bible, Goliath, but he hasn't showed up yet. He's in 1 Samuel 17, and he gets killed by David with a little tiny stone that he didn't think could do anything to him, but he found out that when God gets behind something, it has enough momentum to kill any enemy, regardless of scale, size, or strength. Goliath hasn't showed up yet, but he's a Philistine. Also, you might remember Delilah. Yet there were Philistines all over the place in this passage...one in Ophrah, one in Beth Horon, and one in that other place I can't remember the name of, but it starts with a Z.

I practiced pronouncing it, but I can't remember it right now. They're coming from everywhere against the Israelites. They're actually so strategically occupied in the land of Canaan that they have blocked off the passages by which the Israelites can move about. They've blocked off the passages in opposition to Israel's possession of the land. When God moved his people into the Promised Land, he didn't guarantee that none of their enemies would live there too. The relevance of this for us is God does not promise that he's just going to give us everything automatically. God never promised you for one moment that you wouldn't have to fight for joy through the feelings of despair. God never promised you for one moment that you wouldn't have to fight for an optimistic perspective in the face of a negative default setting. God never promised you for one moment that you would not have to fight for influence in the face of things that make you feel like, "Who am I to speak anything? Who am I to be anything? Who am I to do anything"? God never promised that. He only said it's possible, but the fact that it's possible doesn't mean it's automatic.

Possible is not automatic. If I had never invited her to be on my summer impact team, she would have never fallen in love with me on the bus, and if she never fell in love with me on the bus, we never would have walked down the aisle, and if we never walked down the aisle, she could not have experienced the gift of the goodness. What I'm trying to say to you is there are some things God has given you, but you still have to go for them. Go for it! If God puts something in your heart, you will have to go for it. "But I have God's grace". You have God's grace to empower you to go for what he has given you. That's what the grace is for! Yet with the passage of time, I've come to see this passage a little differently than I did when I was 16. When I was 16, I felt like Jonathan, but 25 years later (that's a quarter of a century), I saw myself as Saul this week. I want to read you both, and I want to see which one you've been acting more like lately. Then we'll talk about that, and then the Holy Spirit will show you what he needs to show you, and I'll be out of your way. I won't bother you anymore for at least seven days.

First Samuel 14 says something so interesting. "One day Jonathan son of Saul said to his young

armor-bearer, 'Come, let's go over to the Philistine outpost on the other side.' But he did not tell his father. Saul was staying on the outskirts of Gibeah..." That's where he was from. He was from the tribe of Benjamin. He never asked to be king. All indications are he never fully accepted his role as king. All indications are his insecurity kept him from embracing his God-given destiny. This is the guy I felt like this week. I want you to contrast the two, because it's a very powerful picture here. "Saul was staying on the outskirts of Gibeah under a pomegranate tree in Migron. With him were about six hundred men, among whom was Ahijah, who was wearing an ephod. He was a son of Ithabod's brother Ahitub son of Phinehas, the son of Eli, the Lord's priest in Shiloh. No one was aware that Jonathan had left. On each side of the pass that Jonathan intended to cross to reach the Philistine outpost was a cliff; one was called Bozez [the slippery one] and the other Seneh [the thorny one]. One cliff stood to the north toward Mikmash, the other to the south toward Geba".

Verse 6 has been a source of many sermons for this preacher. "Jonathan said to his young armor-bearer, 'Come, let's go over to the outpost of those uncircumcised men.'" The first time he talked about them, he called them, politely, the Philistines. Now he's talking trash. "Those uncircumcised enemies of the living God". "They don't have a covenant. We do. Let's go. They don't have the God of heaven fighting for them. We do. Let's go". "Perhaps the Lord will act in our behalf. Nothing can hinder the Lord from saving, whether by many or by few." 'Do all that you have in mind,' his armor-bearer said. 'Go ahead; I am with you heart and soul.' Jonathan said, 'Come on, then...' I like it when you tell me to do whatever I have in my mind, because it makes me feel less crazy. "...we will cross over toward them and let them see us. If they say to us, 'Wait there until we come to you,' we will stay where we are and not go up to them. But if they say, 'Come up to us,' we will climb up, because that will be our sign that the Lord has given them into our hands.' So both of them showed themselves to the Philistine outpost. 'Look!' said the Philistines. 'The Hebrews are crawling out of the holes they were hiding in.' The men of the outpost shouted to Jonathan and his armor-bearer, 'Come up to us and we'll teach you a lesson.'"

They need some trash-talking tips. This is very PG. "So Jonathan said to his armor-bearer, 'Climb up after me; the Lord has given them...' Will give? Has given them. Is going to give? Has given them. "...into the hand of Israel". How do you know? Because they threatened us. How do you know? Because they insulted us. So, the insult (I'm just showing you this) from the Philistines is a sign to Jonathan and an invitation for what God can do: the impossible. I'm just giving you some context. "Jonathan climbed up, using his hands and feet, with his armor-bearer right behind him. The Philistines fell before Jonathan, and his armor-bearer followed and killed behind him. In that first attack Jonathan and his armor-bearer killed some twenty men in an area of about half an acre". So, that's Jonathan. He moves toward the Philistines with one weapon. And let's hear it for the armor-bearer. He had no weapon. That's the one, to me, in the passage who ought to be celebrated: the one who had to climb behind this young man.

A friend of mine asked me... I told him, "I'm preaching on Jonathan in 1 Samuel 14 this week, how he went over to the Philistines and said, 'Perhaps the Lord will act,' and how he stepped out, and he wasn't really sure, but he had to leave that in God's hands and do what he could do. I'm going to preach to people and tell them, 'You're in a situation where you're not really sure right now, and you have to go through a slippery, thorny place, and you have to go up, and you have to expose yourself, and you have to be willing to be seen, and you have to be willing to try something, and you have to be willing to make a move. You can't just sit around waiting for it.' I'm going to talk about how he made a move in that direction and God gave him a miracle, but God didn't give him a miracle before he moved". I'm going off on my friend, and then my friend said, "What do you think made Jonathan able to do that"? The Lord gave me on the spot an alliterated outline what made this young man able to do that. First was development. He wasn't 25 yet. Your prefrontal cortex doesn't fully develop until you're 25.

So, the first thing Jonathan had going for him was that he was dumb. He was dumb enough to do something based on the assumption that God can do anything. (I felt happy when I said it.) Everybody over 25, make some noise, because your prefrontal cortex is too developed for you to step out on a "Perhaps". Your primary question is, "What if it doesn't work"? Jonathan is like, "What if it does? What if God does say yes? What if God does deliver? What if we do get a victory? What if something amazing does happen? What if this is the time? What if this does work"?

The second thing Jonathan had going for him in my mind was (psychological term) detachment. To me, it's interesting that the text says, "Three detachments of Philistines". That's the enemy. They go out in detachments because there are thousands of them, but they go out separately. Detachments the Bible calls them. Well, Jonathan had a sense of detachment as well. The major world religions all coopt this term, but I'm using it in the Christian sense, because I am one. There's a sense in which Jonathan had to detach from the outcome and move forward by faith. How do you climb up to the enemy? How do you climb out of insecurity? How do you climb past what other people told you wasn't possible? One step at a time. Jonathan understands. "I know God can, and I think he might. Let's go". That is some advanced-level detachment to go, "All right. This is what I'm going to do. This is what we're going to do. We're going to go up. We're going to show ourselves. If they say, 'We're coming down to you,' we're not going up. If they say, 'Come up to us,' we'll go up, and God will give us the victory, and that'll be the sign that he has given them into our hands". There is a part of this that has to be left in God's hands. Detachment.

The third thing I told my friend was desperation, because they had no weapons. He knew, "If we stay here under this pomegranate tree, we will surely die. They will surely plunder us. If we go over there, God might give us the victory, so I'm going to move toward the might". Who is this for? You need to move toward the possibility of victory. A lot of times we can't do this, because while Jonathan is moving toward Philistines, enemies, battles, challenges... While Jonathan is moving toward that, remember where his father was. While Jonathan is moving toward Philistines, Saul is sitting under pomegranates. I don't know if this will make sense, but I want to ask you. Pomegranates or Philistines? You're like, "What's so wrong with pomegranates, Preacher? What do you have against pomegranates? Pomegranate is a perfectly acceptable fruit. There's nothing wrong with sitting under the tree". I agree with you. In fact, I so agree with you that I want to show you a Bible verse about pomegranates.

So, don't be sitting there thinking I'm hating on pomegranates, I have prejudice toward pomegranates. I love pomegranates as much as the next guy. They're messy, but I like them. Do you remember when the spies first went into the Promised Land, and Moses told them, "Bring back some of the fruit of the Promised Land," because they were coming out of Egypt? Remember when they came back carrying this pole full of the produce of Canaan, the fruit of what God was giving them? Do you remember it said they brought back a cluster of grapes that they had to carry between two of them because the cluster of grapes was so big? But watch what else was on that pole in Numbers, chapter 13. "When they reached the Valley of Eshkol, they cut off a branch bearing a single cluster of grapes. Two of them carried it on a pole between them..." Two of them carried it between them, and including on the pole were some pomegranates. "I really don't see the need in pointing out that there were pomegranates". Pomegranates don't grow in Egypt. This is new fruit for a new place that God is taking them by faith.

So, when I saw Saul sitting under the pomegranate tree, it served as a reminder to me that he was sitting under something God gave him. He was sitting under something that represented God's promise. Take this to Bible class this week. Ask about the pomegranates. The pomegranates are not only a sign of the promise, but it's what the priests wore on the edge of their robes. There was a vestment called an ephod. You saw it in 1 Samuel 14 as well. The priest would wear the ephod with the 12 stones that represented the 12 tribes, and he had Urim and Thummim that represented the

will of God. All of this is under the pomegranate tree with Saul, long after God has brought his people into the Promised Land. Can I teach you this from the Bible for a moment so you can get the background to understand what's happening in your life? Saul is not sitting in a bad place. He is sitting under something that represented the promise of God. On the edge of the robe the priests would wear was a bell and a pomegranate, a bell and a pomegranate, alternating...A, B, bell, pomegranate, bell, pomegranate.

This pomegranate is no accidental fruit. This is not an ordinary fruit. This is not a random detail the writer of 1 Samuel gives to us to let us know. He is sitting under the promise of God, and that's a problem. It is a problem when you sit under a promise of God when God is calling you to go forward. Now, there come situations in your life... All you can do is sit under the promise of God. I can't heal my own body. I just have to hold on to the fact that my life and my days are in God's hands and that by his stripes I am healed, and he can, and even if he doesn't, he's God and he's good and he's with me, but I also have a responsibility in other seasons of my life to move toward what I'm praying for. That's so anointed what Jonathan said to the armor-bearer. "Let's go toward the Philistines". You are in a season where God is calling you to go toward something, and Saul is sitting under something with somebody. Did you notice he had one of the descendants of Ichabod with him under the tree? Ichabod was the one who was named right after the ark was captured by the Philistines, the great-grandson of Eli the priest.

I know this is a lot of Bible background, y'all, but it's so significant for you to realize that where you sit, who you sit with, and what you believe about the will of God is critical to what happens next in your life. Of course Saul was sitting under the pomegranate tree. He had just been told by Samuel that God was going to take his kingdom away because he hadn't waited to offer the sacrifice. He was disappointed, literally. He had been appointed as king, and he was going to lose what he was. He had been defeated by the Philistines in chapter 15, and also, he didn't have the weapons. "Yeah, I hear you, Furtick. This all sounds good, and if I was a preacher and I knew all of these Bible verses and I had a perfect wife like Holly, like you're always up there talking about how great and how perfect she is, maybe this would be good for me too".

Why didn't the Israelites have any weapons? The Scripture said there was not a blacksmith found in the land of Israel. The reason there was no blacksmith found in the land of Israel is because the Philistines knew, "If we can keep the Israelites from taking what they have and shaping it into something they can fight with, they will always be weak". Here's what had happened that put Saul under the pomegranate tree and that keeps you in states where you don't trust God, don't think God wants to hear from you, don't pray, don't believe anything can change, just stand there in surrender to the way things are and call it faith. Trusting God without moving toward is not faith. The importance of a blacksmith is something I never saw when I was 16, but I see it now, because I have a 16, and I have a 14, and I have a 10. I have three of these. I see Philistines all around my kids. Graham is going to roll his eyes when I say this, because he hates when I do it, but I see social media raising a generation.

What worries me about that, church... It's not about the technology. You have to understand. The Philistines had the best technology. They had learned how to work with iron. The Israelites were still working with bronze. So, when it says they didn't have weapons, the reason they didn't have weapons... The Philistines knew what to do with iron. So, every time the Israelites wanted their farming equipment sharpened, they had to go to the Philistines, which represents the world, who are not God's people, who do not have God's Spirit, who do not have God's promise. So now they had to go to the world to get their weapons. I talk to my kids about everything that is age appropriate to talk to them about, which includes, as much as they hate it, sex. I talk to my kids about sex, as much as it's appropriate for their age, and they hate it, but if you think I'm going to let TikTok teach my kid... Yeah, I said it. If you think I'm going to leave my kid without weapons because I'm uncomfortable, if

you think I'm going to let somebody teach Abbey how to twerk, and I'm not going to talk to her about what it means to be a woman... Get out of my face!

Are you crazy? Do you think I'm going to send my kids into the world to fight the Devil without weapons? Not just sex. Let's get off of that. I know. That's long enough. It's emotions too. Let me ask you. How many of you have lost battles because you didn't have a blacksmith? Is this not true? It's too late when you get into the battle to get a blacksmith. "What do you mean"? It's too late until you let anger take you over, and now your little lizard brain is running the show. Now you have a little lizard driving your decisions. It's too late at that point for you to learn that "My emotions don't control me if I have the Spirit of God inside of me". See, as much as you can know that... Is that a pomegranate tree you sit under or is it an actual process in your life that produces victory? There's a difference...the stuff we can shout over versus the stuff we can fight with. It's one thing to have farming equipment. It's another thing to have fighting instruments. The Israelites had the raw material. They didn't have a blacksmith.

Have you ever had to go to battle but didn't have a blacksmith? Have any of you in the room had to be a dad, but you didn't have a dad who showed you along the way how to do this? That was my dad's story. I'm in utter amazement what a good job my dad did considering the blacksmith he never had. His dad killed himself. He did good to stay alive. Then he told me... One time he said, "If you ever run into anything and you start thinking you have to kill yourself, you talk to me". He said, "I will drop everything I'm doing, and I'll take you fishing". I'm like, "Dad, I don't like fishing". He's like, "Whatever. The point is I will take you... You do not have to go that route". What was that? He was trying to be the blacksmith he never had. "Oh, that's wonderful you're telling me to just go for it. You sound like a Rocky movie, Pastor Steven. I can't put this into practice in my life". I know you can't, because you didn't have a blacksmith. When you don't have a blacksmith showing you, "Here is how you navigate this emotional state" or "This is how you take a Scripture and actually live it out," then you'll have plenty of pomegranates to sit under, plenty of good-sounding things, plenty of words, but no weapons.

I am seeing people go down left and right as a pastor right now. What else is new? It wouldn't bother me if the Devil was stronger than us. I messed up and stumbled across a verse that said, "Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world". Or as Jonathan said, "Nothing can hinder the Lord from saving, whether by many or by few". If that is true, why are you losing? If that is true, why isn't it working? The Lord spoke to me. He didn't have a blacksmith. When you don't have a blacksmith, you don't have anybody to show you how to take the raw material and turn it into something that is useful in your life. That's why I want to be a better blacksmith to you, man, so I don't tell you, "Oh, you can't do this, and you can't do that". I don't want to be Saul so you sit under the pomegranates with me. Even if I take this to a level of Elijah's music... That boy just made an album on his computer in his bedroom over the last four months...an entire album. I never did that, but I've been a pretty good blacksmith to him along the way. Two and a half years ago, he didn't even know what I was doing, but I snuck a recording mic in his room. At the same time, he was saying, "I don't like my voice. I don't want to sing. I don't like my voice".

Nobody likes their voice when they're 13 if they're not Justin Bieber, but I'm not trying to get you to love your voice right now. I'm just trying to put something that you have to trip over when you wake up in the morning, so every time you see that mic, you might step on it one day, and you might sing something, and then you might sing something else. I'm not taking credit, because it's his battle, but I'm his blacksmith. I need every dad in here to change your Instagram bio to "Blacksmith". If you are nothing else... I need every pastor watching this sermon to rip something off, and you can preach it later, to just change your job title and put "Blacksmith," at least for the rest of 2022, because you have to see yourself as someone who has been given the responsibility by God to shape and to form. I found myself this week feeling sorry for Saul, because he didn't have anybody to show him

how to be a king. He was the first one. He had a powerful dad, but he had never been a king before. He didn't have a blacksmith.

Then when I was feeling sorry for Saul, I was feeling sorry for Jonathan, because the one who was supposed to be his blacksmith was so broken he couldn't show him how to do it either. Then I started wondering about you. I started wondering: Are you in a battle without a blacksmith? Are you in a war where you didn't have the weapons for it? That was the state of Israel, and that was why Saul was under the tree, and that was why the children of God were running to the world for their weapons. Let me bring this into a New Testament context. In 2 Corinthians, Paul is talking to the church about how we fight. Not if we fight (everybody has a fighting style) but how we fight. He says that though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. We don't go to the Philistines to get our weapons sharpened. It's too expensive. We don't go to social media to get our emotional needs met. It's too expensive. We don't go to the Devil for our dopamine hit. "Please, Devil, give me some dopamine. Make me feel good for a second. Give me pleasure for a second. Make me feel something for a second". It's too expensive. You can get it from the Devil, but it's too expensive.

How many of you have found out it is too expensive to go to the world to get your weapons? It's too expensive, because even if it works, it isn't worth it. That's why Paul says we don't wage war like the world does. We have to fight these battles. We have to live in this world. We have to be realistic, but we don't have to fight it that way. The weapons we have have divine power to demolish strongholds. That's in the Bible, y'all. That is the Spirit of Jesus inside of you. It is divine power to demolish strongholds. When you go to the world for your weapons, there's no power in them. When you go to the world for your weapons, it doesn't demolish strongholds; it creates strongholds. It creates dependence on the thing you are going to for the need you are trying to meet. Why would you go to the Devil for it when your dad has it in abundance when you are a child of God?

So Jonathan said, "Nothing can hinder the Lord. I have a covenant with almighty God". No weapon, and he got a victory. Well, he had one weapon. The armor-bearer had no weapon. Even in that the Lord spoke to me. He said, "Quit saying you don't have any. You have one". Sometimes one is enough. I am 42 in six days. (That's right in the middle where you're not sure if that's cheerable or not.) The thing I found out is that there is only one thing in the world I know I'm pretty good at, other than loving my wife, my kids, and all that. It's not baseball, at least not at a professional level. Even when it comes to the things I do in my life today, I'm not saying I'm great at administrating. I'm not saying I'm horrible at it, but I'm not great at it. I don't say I'm good at managing people. I'm good at it sometimes. I'm good at it in certain seasons, but I can't say I'm great at it. I found one thing I can do that God's hand is on, which I'm saying is sharing his Word, in case that's not clear. I hope it's clear. I hope that's obvious that God gave me that gift. Maybe it's not. I don't know. Sometimes I wonder. I'm saying I can do this, and God uses it, and I've been doing it since I was 16. Out of that one thing God gave me...

Let me tell you what the Devil will do. He will tempt you to diminish what you've been given. Out of this one thing I've given my life to do, I've been able to see God do amazing things. I've been all over the world doing this. I have stood in front of people who didn't even speak my language with an interpreter doing this. I have met people I never thought I'd get to meet doing this. I've seen people who came up to me and said their life was greatly helped doing this, yet this this that I do is talking. This this that I do is imperfect. This this that I do... Sometimes...I'm going to be honest with you...I feel like what I do is one of the weirdest things in the world: try to tell you what God thinks about stuff. Key word try. I'm figuring it out as I go as well. But out of this one imperfect, uncertain thing God has given me to do that I believe he called me to do, that I believe he graced me to do, that I stand up and do no matter how I feel about it... Out of this one thing God gave me to do, I have seen God do things.

One is enough. I don't have to be good at basketball to do this. I don't even have to be good at counting to do this. There's a lot of stuff that I have reconciled to the fact that I will never be great at that, but standing in the grace God gave me and doing the thing God called me to do, this gift... I have been preaching on this boy called Jonathan for 25 years. I have preached at least 300 sermons on this one text, and one was enough. I preached it in Australia. I preached it in Singapore. I preached it in London. I preached it in Camden, South Carolina. I'll preach it in Ballantyne when I'm 42. I'll preach it, if God gives me the grace, when I'm 84. I will preach this one word, one gift, one calling, one weapon. You say, "There was no weapon". No, there was one. God has always given you something. The prophet asked the woman, "What do you have in your house"? She said, "Nothing except a little oil".

Do you see that thing you almost overlooked, that thing you didn't think was worth mentioning? That was the one the miracle was in. "You mean one weapon was enough to kill 20 Philistines"? It was by faith. God likes to do it like that, because he doesn't want you giving the credit to your weapons. He doesn't want you to praise your weapons. He wants you to praise him. I don't know if it's true that they didn't have any weapons. They just didn't know where their weapons were. Can I show you something? What's your name again? Your story inspired me. Yolanda. I was thinking this might just be for you. This whole word might just be for Yolanda. They were talking about Yolanda earlier and all she has been through. I thought about telling you... Do you know where your weapons are? A lot of people don't. They just accept depression. They don't know how to worship. I'm not saying I don't feel depression. I'm saying I don't accept that as being my new default setting and the limitation of my life.

We have addictions. We all have addictions. "Not me," as you scroll. You are delusional. Yolanda, I started by calling this sermon No Weapon. There were no weapons with the Israelites because there were no blacksmiths. All of the ways the Enemy kept you from getting what you should have had, and all of the ways he wants to use what you think you should have had that you don't have to keep you from doing what God called you to do... That was my message, and it said there wasn't a weapon in the hands of Israel. In the hands of Israel, that's true, but guess who did have weapons. The Philistines. They had weapons. They made weapons. They had the monopoly on metalmaking, so they were fully weaponized. That's just the way God wanted it. I'm about to show you something that blew my mind. Oh, I hope it blows your mind, because while you're sitting there thinking about what you don't have that God didn't give you... You know he has given you all things richly to enjoy, and he has given you forgiveness of your sins and salvation through the blood of his Son...all that.

"I don't have any weapons". You have the Holy Spirit, the mind in Spirit, which is life and peace, to show you everything, every good and perfect gift. "I don't have any weapons". Y'all, I remind myself of the older brother in the prodigal son story, sitting in the father's house talking about, "You never gave me a goat. You give your other son, the one you really like, the goat. You don't give me a goat". The father is like, "You're always with me, and all I have is yours". This is not about resource; it's about recognition...recognizing what you already have, recognizing who you already have. "Everybody left me". Not everybody. Not everybody is gone. Not everybody is flaky. Not everybody is a Judas or a betrayer. I love how Jonathan moved toward what was too big for him with what he had. Go with what you have. If it's one armor-bearer, go with what you have. If you are already past the point in your life... See, Saul didn't have to stay under the tree either. Saul had a weapon. At the end of his life, he fell on his own sword. The weapon Jonathan won with Saul killed himself with. It wasn't about what they had; it's about what they did with it.

There is somebody on your row who went through a divorce and lived through it and learned from it and moved forward, and it did not make them... I'm telling you, it hurt them. It was hard for them. They wished they never would have had to go through it. They wouldn't wish it on you, but they made it through it. It is not what happens to you that defines you. Do you need me to turn Yolanda loose

with the microphone? Did you hear what she went through? And did you see her worshiping? Some of us didn't worship because we didn't get to park close enough. They were saying all of these things she went through, and she's still worshiping. You must have read all the way to 1 Samuel 14:20. I'm not sure if you did, but something tells me you did. In 1 Samuel 14:20, the Bible says that when Jonathan moved toward the enemy with his one weapon...

Look at what God did that Jonathan could not do. You've been looking at what's against you, forgetting what's for you, forgetting who's for you, forgetting who's in you. When Jonathan moved forward in the strength he had, with the sword he had, with the partner he had, with the resources, the wisdom, the plan he had...not the one he wanted, the one he had...watch what God did. The Bible says, "Then Saul and all his men assembled and went to the battle. They found the Philistines in total confusion..." "But we don't have any weapons". But your enemy does. When they got to the battle, guess what happened. The Philistines, their enemies that had kept them in hiding, were striking each other with those iron swords. I just picture the Philistines sharpening their swords, not knowing their swords that they were sharpening were going to be the very instruments of their own demise.

I want the Devil to know that no weapon formed against me will prosper. No weapon! The Devil has been busy, hasn't he? He has been trying to defeat you and discourage you and get you depressed, and he's sharpening the swords. He planned the attack, and he thought, "If I hit them here, if I hit them there, if I cut them off here, they'll stop coming". What he didn't know is the weapons may be in the hands of the Philistines, but the Philistines are in the hands of God. When you move toward what God has called you to, you will be surprised, and maybe the very weapon you thought was going to kill you is going to be the one God is going to use to save you. There it is. That is the prophetic word. You've been praying. You've been asking God to show you something. Some of you have been asking God to confirm, "Why am I going through this? Why is this coming against me? Why can't I get past this? Why can't I move through this? Why didn't I have someone to help me with this"? God said, "I wanted to show you what I could do".

So, the thing the Enemy sharpened to kill you is going to be the thing God uses to save you, if you move toward. If you sit under the pomegranates, your faith will surely weaken. If you move toward the Philistines... I'm talking straight into the face of your fear, straight into the face of what's fighting you, in the power of God. The weapons we fight with don't come from the world. I see Isaiah 54:16 in a new light now, where God said, "Behold, I created the blacksmith who blows the coals in the fire, who brings forth an instrument for his work". Your enemy is God's instrument too. He uses all of that. Think of the thing you think God can't use. That's what I'm talking about. Think of the thing that makes you embarrassed. That's what I'm talking about. Think of the thing that is facing you from three different detachments, and that's what I'm talking about. When they got to the battle and used what they had, they found that God created the blacksmith. God will not permit anything to happen to me in my life that he will not use for his glory. Do you believe that? "Nothing can hinder the Lord from saving, whether by many or by few".

I came to talk to somebody who is down to one weapon, one person, one word from God. You're moving toward some Philistines today. Who are you? Wave at me. The Lord said to tell you: the promise of Isaiah 54:17 is that no weapon formed against you will prosper. Not that it won't be formed; it's just that it won't work. The enemy was killing the enemy. The swords they sharpened to kill the people of God... When God moved, they started... I see your enemies beginning to scatter today. I see your enemies fleeing from you seven ways today. I like to picture what the Devil thought when he was prompting the heart of Judas to betray Jesus. "Oh, this is going to end it. This is going to kill the ministry of Jesus". Do you not realize the very thing the Devil prompted Judas to do set salvation in motion? He killed the Enemy with his own sword. Now, you have to put your own faith on this word, because if all you do is sit under this like it's another pomegranate, it won't deliver you, but

if you can move forward on this word today...

Lord, I pray for those who are moving toward a passageway today. I don't know if it's the beginning of a new relationship. I don't know if it's the beginning of a new challenge, but they've been feeling it down deep. "I don't have the weapons for this war. I don't know what to do. I'm not literate in this. I've never been exposed to this. I'm not experienced with this". But, Lord, you have not left us without a weapon. You have given us your Word. You have given us your Spirit. You have given us your Son. We're going forward with what we have.

Father, I thank you today that as this word has been preached, somebody is getting up from a pomegranate tree, walking away from Ichabod, and moving toward what they're praying for. This week, give them the courage, the instruction, the specific prompting of your Spirit to move toward something they're praying for, something they're hoping for. God, you know how hard it is to come out from under that tree. Everybody is under that tree. Everything we've known is under that tree. The ephod is under that tree. The priest is under that tree. Everything is under that tree...except you. You're calling us forward. I thank you for your presence, God, not only in this place. I thank you for your presence as we go forward toward the Philistines in our own lives. That's where we need you. That's where we need your Word. That's where we need to worship.

Lord, I thank you today that your Word never returns void. No weapon. No disease, no heartbreak, no failure...no weapon. No accusation, no virus...no weapon. No betrayal, no pain, no trauma...no weapon. No weapon is greater than your Word. No weapon is greater than your Spirit. No weapon is greater than your presence. No weapon is greater than the covenant we have with you. No weapon that is formed shall prosper! No weapon! It was formed, but it didn't work. No weapon! Put it in the chat right now. No weapon. I'm going to tell you something. If God didn't give it to you, you don't need it right now. He gave you what you need for where you're going. No weapon, no problem. I have a word from almighty God!