

I Samuel Lesson 11

I Samuel Chapter 11

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Memory verses for this week: *Ezek 44:28 And it shall be unto them for an inheritance: I am their inheritance: and ye shall give them no possession in Israel: I am their possession.*

Introduction: We continue our study on Samuel this week. In last week's lesson, we studied about Saul being anointed as King of Israel. God sent signs to confirm Saul to make him know that it was God who had chosen him to be the king. Chapter 10 closed with Samuel calling the people together at Mizpeh and had the tribes present themselves so that the tribe of Benjamin might be chosen, which was the tribe of Saul. Samuel then sent the families to their homes.

I. Saul's Victory at Jabesh-Gilead

1 Sam 11:1 Then Nahash the Ammonite came up, and encamped against Jabeshgilead: and all the men of Jabesh said unto Nahash, Make a covenant with us, and we will serve thee.

1 Sam 11:2 And Nahash the Ammonite answered them, On this condition will I make a covenant with you, that I may thrust out all your right eyes, and lay it for a reproach upon all Israel.

Nahash was king of the children of Ammon. We have a record of this in the next chapter in verse 12.

1 Sam 12:12 And when ye saw that Nahash the king of the children of Ammon came against you, ye said unto me, Nay; but a king shall reign over us: when the LORD your God was your king.

At the time of this event, Saul had been anointed king over Israel, but he was still a farmer king, and had a small following. Some of the people scoffed at his kingship and refused to acknowledge it. From verse 12 of chapter 12, we can see that one of the reasons Israel wanted a king was because they saw a threat from the Ammonites. They simply did not trust Samuel as a prophet to lead them against the army. The Ammonites had come into the country and laid siege against the city of Jabesh-gilead. This town was just east of the Jordan in the tribe of Gad. The people offered to make a covenant with Nahash the Ammonite king, and pay him tribute if he would withdraw his army from them. In verse 2, we find that Nahash agreed to do this if they would agree to pay a terrible price. He offers to do this if all the men of Jabesh agree to have their right eye punched out. This would be a reproach upon all of Israel. You would have to be pretty desperate to agree to some kind of agreement

like this.

Matthew Henry point out that the men of Jabesh had lost their virtue as Israelites.

I. *"Make a covenant with us, and we will surrender upon terms, and serve thee."* They had lost the virtue of Israelites, else they would not have thus lost the valour of Israelites, nor tamely yielded to serve an Ammonite, without one bold struggle for themselves. Had they not broken their covenant with God, and forsaken his service, they needed not thus to have courted a covenant with a Gentile nation, and offered themselves to serve them.

II. The besiegers offer them base and barbarous conditions; they will spare their lives, and take them to be their servants, upon condition that they shall put out their right eyes, v. 2. The Gileadites were content to part with their liberty and estates for the ransom of their blood; and, had the Ammonites taken them at their word, the matter would have been so settled immediately, and the Gileadites would not have sent out for relief. But their abject concessions make the Ammonites more insolent in their demands, and they cannot be content to have them for their servants, but, 1. They must torment them, and put them to pain, exquisite pain, for so the thrusting out of an eye would do. 2. They must disable them for war, and render them incapable, though not of labour (that would have been a loss to their lords), yet of bearing arms; for in those times they fought with shields in their left hands, which covered their left eye, so that a soldier without his right eye was in effect blind. 3. They must put a reproach upon all Israel, as weak and cowardly, that would suffer the inhabitants of one of their chief cities to be thus miserably used, and not offer to rescue them .

1 Sam 11:3 And the elders of Jabesh said unto him, Give us seven days' respite, that we may send messengers unto all the coasts of Israel: and then, if there be no man to save us, we will come out to thee.

1 Sam 11:4 Then came the messengers to Gibeah of Saul, and told the tidings in the ears of the people: and all the people lifted up their voices, and wept.

1 Sam 11:5 And, behold, Saul came after the herd out of the field; and Saul said, What aileth the people that they weep? And they told him the tidings of the men of Jabesh.

The men of Jabesh ask for seven days to seek for a man to deliver them. Surprisingly, the king of Ammon seems happy to agree to their terms. The call for help went out to the other tribes. It affected the other tribes, and they wept over what those men faced there in Jabesh. The terms of the agreement that King Nahash requested were hard to comprehend. When the call for aid came to Saul's town, they found him out working in the field.

Apparently being crowned king had not taken Saul to become high-minded or thinking too highly of himself. Rather he keeps on working which is a good example to us. Saul hears the weeping of the people and asks them why they were upset.

These people were kinfolks to those of Benjamin, since the virgins of Jabesh had been given to the few Benjamite men who escaped in the war that had resulted over the Levite's concubine. We recently studied that over in Judges Chapter 21.

Judg 21:8 And they said, What one is there of the tribes of Israel that came not up to Mizpeh to the LORD? And, behold, there came none to the camp from Jabeshgilead to the assembly.

Judg 21:9 For the people were numbered, and, behold, there were none of the inhabitants of Jabeshgilead there.

Judg 21:10 And the congregation sent thither twelve thousand men of the valiantest, and commanded them, saying, Go and smite the inhabitants of Jabeshgilead with the edge of the sword, with the women and the children.

Judg 21:11 And this is the thing that ye shall do, Ye shall utterly destroy every male, and every woman that hath lain by man.

Judg 21:12 And they found among the inhabitants of Jabeshgilead four hundred young virgins, that had known no man by lying with any male: and they brought them unto the camp to Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan.

II. Saul Becomes the Leader of God's People

1 Sam 11:6 And the spirit of God came upon Saul when he heard those tidings, and his anger was kindled greatly.

1 Sam 11:7 And he took a yoke of oxen, and hewed them in pieces, and sent them throughout all the coasts of Israel by the hands of messengers, saying, Whosoever cometh not forth after Saul and after Samuel, so shall it be done unto his oxen. And the fear of the LORD fell on the people, and they came out with one consent.

God moved on Saul, and it says the Spirit of God came upon Saul. He was greatly angered when he heard the threat of the Ammonites against the people there in Jabesh. He took a yoke of oxen and cut them into pieces, and sent them by messengers to all the tribes of Israel. This message was to tell the tribes that anyone who did not come to help to fight against the Ammonites would have their oxen cut up. He issued the call as coming from Saul and Samuel, indicating the great influence Samuel had on the people.

1 Sam 11:8 And when he numbered them in Bezek, the children of Israel were three hundred thousand, and the men of Judah thirty thousand.

1 Sam 11:9 And they said unto the messengers that came, Thus shall ye say unto the men of Jabeshgilead, To morrow, by that time the sun be hot, ye shall have help. And the messengers came and showed it to the men of Jabesh; and they were glad.

1 Sam 11:10 Therefore the men of Jabesh said, To morrow we will come out unto you, and ye shall do with us all that seemeth good unto you.

Saul sent a message to the people of Jabesh that on the following day, they would have help. This is the way it is with a sinner who does not know the Lord. There may appear no hope at all when things become clear in your relationship to God, but with the Lord, He can provide great help. Only through Christ can we approach God and have forgiveness of our sins. When the news reaches the men of Jabesh, they are very glad. The men of Jabesh send word to the Ammonites that they would come out unto them the following day.

Psa 121:1 A Song of degrees. I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.

Psa 121:2 My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth.

We can have great confidence in the day of battle when our help comes from the Lord.

1 Sam 11:11 And it was so on the morrow, that Saul put the people in three companies; and they came into the midst of the host in the morning watch, and slew the Ammonites until the heat of the day: and it came to pass, that they which remained were scattered, so that two of them were not left together.

Samuel and Saul marched the army of the Lord all night to the town of Jabesh. In the early morning, they fell on the Ammonites before the sun was up. By the time the sun was hot, the Ammonites were thoroughly defeated and no two of them could be found together.

III. People Show Anger Towards Those Who Had Rejected Saul

1 Sam 11:12 And the people said unto Samuel, Who is he that said, Shall Saul reign over us? bring the men, that we may put them to death.

1 Sam 11:13 And Saul said, There shall not a man be put to death this day: for to day the LORD hath wrought salvation in Israel.

1 Sam 11:14 Then said Samuel to the people, Come, and let us go to Gilgal, and renew the kingdom there.

This great victory of the Ammonites made Saul an instant hero. Some of his devoted followers remembered how the sons of Belial had rejected Saul. They did not want him to reign over them. Those followers desired to take the sons of Belial and put them to death. But Saul, at this time, was still a humble, forgiving man, and he refused to allow anyone to suffer because of his kingship. Samuel rather issues his call to come to Gilgal and renew the kingdom there. He had told Saul to do this earlier, but it had never been done.

J. Vernon McGee Noted that Samuel Used the Victory to Unite the Nation behind Saul.

Some of the Israelites opposed the idea of having Saul as their king. Samuel ignored that opposition until the nation was united in favor of Saul. Saul's leadership in dealing with the Ammonites took care of the resistance.

In the King James Study Bible, it talked about the 3 different records mentioning the anointed of Saul as King of Israel beginning in Chapter 10 in verse 1.

Samuel's anointing of Saul held spiritual significance. By it the king was set apart for service as God's earthly representative on the throne of Israel. Negative critics have imagined a contradiction between Saul's anointing here in Chapter 10 and the reports at verses 17–24 and 11:14, 15. Actually, the three accounts are supplementary, Saul's private anointing by God through His prophet being reported here, the public identification of Saul through the casting of lots being detailed in verses 17–24, and the formal proclamation of Saul's kingship being recorded in 11:14, 15. Because Israel had no precedent of royal protocol and because interests were strongly divided in the country (cf. v. 27; 11:12, 13), care and time were needed for both the selection and the confirmation of Saul's leadership.

IV. The Kingdom is Renewed

1 Sam 11:15 And all the people went to Gilgal; and there they made Saul king before the LORD in Gilgal; and there they sacrificed sacrifices of peace offerings before the LORD; and there Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly.

The people all went up to Gilgal and it was there that they made Saul king before the Lord. Saul officially became the first king of Israel, and all the people rejoiced. They offered peace-offerings before the Lord at Gilgal. When we follow the orders of the Lord, we too can rejoice.

1 Sam 10:8 And thou shalt go down before me to Gilgal; and, behold, I will come down unto thee, to offer burnt offerings, and to sacrifice sacrifices of peace offerings: seven days shalt thou tarry, till I come to thee, and show thee what thou shalt do.

Samuel had told Saul to go before him to Gilgal in Chapter 10, but Saul did not obey those orders. The great victory over the Ammonites no doubt caused Saul to take his place as King of Israel.

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Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and

more unto the perfect day.

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Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.