

1 Samuel 11

May 24, 2012

Saul is confirmed as king. What a good start/heart he had.

I. JABESH GILEAD (V. 1-3)

V. 1

The last time we read of Jabesh Gilead, it was a tragic story and it's rather ironic. Cause the children of Israel had gone up against the children of Benjamin, due to the perverted sin of Gibeah, of Benjamin; and the men of Jabesh Gilead were the only ones who did ***not*** show up to fight for the country.

Now we see the tables are turned, and they need men to show up on their behalf, for Nahash, the Ammonite, had come up and encamped against Jabesh Gilead; they were surrounded.

So the men of Jabesh Gilead, ask, "Is there any way we can work this out peacefully...make a covenant with us and we'll serve you," but look what happens.

V. 2-3

Imagine that, "Sure I'll work out a deal with you, let me gouge out everyone's right eye, take away half your vision, cripple you from ever fighting back, and best of all, in the whole ruthless loss of you right eyes, I will bring reproach on all Israel.

One version says, "...bring disgrace on all Israel."

The Ammonites, who were descendants of Lot, according to Genesis 19:38, must have been pretty strong; and the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead must have known that alone they didn't stand a chance...that they would even ***consider*** such a deal

Nahash, his name means "serpent," this guy was probably pretty bad, and apparently he had already been a threat, he may have been the real root reason the people asked for a king (see 12:12).

The people were weak and afraid, because they were not in right relationship to God.

Remember, if you're not in right relationship with God, you won't have that confidence to know that He will defeat every single one of your enemies, and your enemies will come in and bring you into bondage, hinder your ability to see Spiritual things and bring reproach upon you, your family, the ministry, and even God Himself.

So the so-called elders ask for 7 days, to see if they can muster up some help.

II. GIBEAH (V. 4-6) (approximately 50 miles from Jabesh Gilead)

V. 4

It's just so fascinating that Gibeah is the place the people go; that Gibeah is the place that Saul is living, cause Gibeah was that place of perversity in Judges 19; Gibeah was "that close" to being wiped off the face of the map – but apparently God had mercy.

And what we find woven into this word, is that it's all a story of grace - unmerited favor - God's Reward At Christ's Expense.

Jabesh Gilead doesn't deserve to be saved, and Gibeah and anyone from Gibeah doesn't deserve **to** save, and all of Israel, who is in the very process of rejecting God as their King, doesn't deserve to be helped out in any way...but God really is, compassionate, longsuffering and so gracious to us.

There's probably some men weeping, but mainly, women and children – either they're gonna die, or they're gonna lose an eye, and as they cry, Saul, comes in from the field, he's been plowing – and he's moved with compassion, he asks, "What troubles the people that they weep?"

I love fact that cared that they cried. And here we see a couple of cool characteristics, that kings and leaders should have.

1. Calloused hands
2. A soft heart

Hard workers who really care; how cool it is when the king, the leader, the pastor, the dad is a sensitive-servant; Saul apparently started off that way.

We read next in v. 6:

V. 6

One version says, "When Saul heard their words, the Spirit of God came upon him in power, and he burned with anger."

I think we know how vital the Spirit of God is for us to empowered, but I wonder if we know how vital the anger of the LORD is to be aroused. "Nahash wants to do **what** to the people?"

And he **burned** with anger.

According to the Scriptures, it's way okay to be angry at sin; God at times get's angry. We read that:

The LORD was angry with Moses (Deuteronomy 4:21)

The LORD was angry with Solomon (1 Kings 11:9)

The LORD was angry with Judah (2 Chronicles 28:9)

In Psalm 7:11 we read that, "...God is angry with the wicked every day."

We read about Jesus' anger in Mark 3:5.

You see, Saul was filled with the Spirit, and this brought about the anger of the LORD, in and out, cause it's good to be angry at sin; kind of like a holy Hulk 😊

But always remember, it needs to be a ***holy*** anger.

And I need to say that because I can already hear someone say - "See, that's me; the reason I'm ticked off, and out of control is cause I'm filled with the Spirit."

No... it's good to be angry at sin, but it's not good to be angry ***and*** sin.

Psalm 4:4, quoted in Ephesians 4:26, "Be angry and do not sin..."

Having said that, I do hope and pray that we are angry at sin and injustice! It's a sign of being filled with the Spirit, as Saul was; and sometimes it's necessary to get us off the couch, out of our comfort zones and into the battle, cause people are crying, so many people are dying and the enemy wants to bring reproach upon the people of God, upon His fame, upon His name.

III. ALL ISRAEL (V. 7)

V. 7

Saul wastes no time, he kills and cuts up the yoke of oxen into pieces that he sends throughout all the territory of Israel, and sends a message with it as well, "We're gonna do the same to your oxen, if you don't stand up and fight for what's right."

And the thing that's so cool to see is that the people didn't fear Saul, we read here in verse 7 that the fear of the ***LORD*** fell on the people.

How important it is when we have a healthy fear of the LORD.

You see, God loves me, so if I get out of line, or don't get in line, He'll chasten me, I'll forfeit the blessing, I might lose my family, I might lose the ministry, I might lose my oxen, my job, my possessions, if I don't learn those lessons, cause God does not mess around.

It's interesting, the phrase, "the fear of the LORD," is found 27 times in the Bible, and this is the first time we find it.

To fear God is basic, fundamental, core Christianity, we read in Proverbs 9:10, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom..."

The fear of the Lord for all the churches is essential in order to reach the lost. We read in Acts 9:31, "Then the churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were multiplied."

Here we read that the fear of the LORD fell on the people, "and they came out with one consent."

The Hebrew word translated "consent" is usually translated "man" (0376 iysh eesh). It literally says they came out as one man.

How important it is to be one, to be united; husbands and wives, all of our lives, families, ministries, case in point, a king and his troops.

Proverbs 30:29-31 says, "There are three things which are majestic in pace, Yes, four which are stately in walk: a lion, which is mighty among beasts and does not turn away from any; a greyhound, a male goat also, and **a king whose troops are with him.**"

May the fear of the LORD fall on us all, as we're sent, to come out, with one consent; as one man, with a healthy fear of God, knowing how much He hates division. And may we answer the call to fight the good fight, God help us to face and embrace more of the war.

IV. BEZEK (V. 8) (20 miles from Jabesh Gilead)

V. 8

This is the last time we read of this place called Bezek (which means lightning); this was where the book of Judges began, with victories (Judges 1:4-7).

And with 330,000 committed soldiers Saul sends the message; he's on a mission.

V. JABESH GILEAD (V. 9-13)

V. 9-11

The message was that by time the sun would be hot (some translations say 12 noon) help would be arrive; the people of Jabesh Gilead were pretty happy about that.

But what we find is that they actually attacked early in the morning (probably between 2 and 6 am) - and they conquered and killed Ammonites until the heat of the day. It was a great victory!

Saul's strategy was a surprise attack; another element of his strategy was to split into 3 companies, and God gave him the victory.

And when I read this I just think, "Man, Saul started off so good!"

Here he is filled with the Spirit, angry at sin;

He rallies the soldiers and leads them to victory, even using strategy; clearly Saul was both affirmed and confirmed the king of Israel.

So much so, that we read:

V. 12-13

Remember what some of the rebels said back in 1 Samuel 10:27 (read)

Here the people acknowledge God's sovereign selection of Saul as king, and therefore want to kill Saul's resistors. But Saul doesn't let them do such a thing; he shows them grace, and gives God glory.

"Not a man shall be put to death this day, for today the LORD has accomplished salvation in Israel."

Is anyone impressed with Saul yet?

VI. GILGAL (V. 14)

V. 14

To renew the kingdom in Gilgal would bring to mind and heart the early days of Israel (Joshua 4:9-10; 5:9) when God rolled away the reproach in Gilgal (Gilgal means, "rolled away"). This was the place they started as a nation, this was where **Joshua** had led them - in the spring of their country, in the beginning of their country, when God brought them out of bondage, and out of the wilderness...Gilgal was special, Gilgal was significant.

And Samuel saw what time it was, it was time for renewal, it was the time for the restoration of the nation.

The Hebrew word (02318 chadash khaw-dash) translated renew, can also be translated "repair," or "restored." (2 Chronicles 15:8; 24:4, 12; repaired and restored, altars, and even the house of the LORD)

And there are some things about the past that we should forget finally and forever. But there are probably some things about the past, when it was all brand new, that first love, when we came to Christ that might be good to return to, and to never leave.

It happened to David after he fell; he uses the same Hebrew word in Psalm 51:10, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and **renew** a steadfast spirit within me."

It was the prayer of Jeremiah for the nation of Israel, again using the same Hebrew word in Lamentations 5:21, "Turn us back to you, O LORD, and we will be restored; **renew** our days as of old."

Let's go to Gilgal

V. 15

This is basically the last time we will see the beauty of this kingdom, under the king named Saul. Tragically it wouldn't be long before he changed - once he became king, he changed.

It almost brings me to tears when I read of Saul and the men of Israel rejoicing greatly - O what could have been!

NET, "So all the people went to Gilgal, where they established Saul as king in the Lord's presence. They offered up peace offerings there in the Lord's presence. Saul and all the Israelites were very happy."

NIV, "So all the people went to Gilgal and confirmed Saul as king in the presence of the Lord. There they sacrificed fellowship offerings before the Lord, and Saul and all the Israelites held a great celebration."

How we need to finish well (Paul, Jesus)

It's good to get off to a good start, but it's better to stay on with a good heart; may God help us to get in line, and stay in line, all the way to the finish line.

"We must be as watchful after the victory as before the battle." – Andrew Bonar