

1 Samuel 11

King James Version (KJV)

11 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. (Nahash = snake or serpent) (The Ammonites were descendants of Lot – Abraham's nephew. These were Adamic people, like Israel)

(Jabeshgilead was on the east side of the Jordan)

²And 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 wanted to pluck out the right eye of every man in Jabeshgilead. The right eye was the aiming eye of an archer)

NOTE: (Hunderds of years earlier, Ammon lost this land to the Amorites – a Canaanitish tribe. When Israel arrived, they defeated the Amorites and took the land. Now, Ammon told Israel that it was their land and they need to return it. Israel responded that they took the land from the Amorites, not from Ammon; and that they intended to keep it. This may be the reason that Nahash was now attacking. He was trying to get that land back for Ammon)

³And 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. (Nahash probably agreed because he believed that no one would come to help the people of Jabeshgilead. He could then take the city without having to fight a battle)

⁴Then 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. (They need action, not weeping)

⁵And, 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. (Saul was still a humble man. After the coronation, he went back home and resumed working in the field)

⁶And the Spirit of God came upon Saul when he heard those tidings, and his anger was kindled greatly. (God inspired Saul to start acting like a king)

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. (Now they are beginning to see the result of wanting a man king. They are being conscripted into Saul's army. They have already lost some of their freedoms)

NOTE: (In the past, Israel had a volunteer army, led by God. They were always victorious when they lived by God's laws and avoided idolatry. They never needed a man king. God was the best King that they could ever hope for)

⁸ And when he numbered them in Bezek, the children of Israel were three hundred thousand, and the men of Judah thirty thousand. (Long before the division of the tribes, they were already thinking separately - Israel vs. Judah. Judah did not number their men with the other tribes. This was a sign of things to come, after King Solomon)

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 shewed it to the men of Jabesh; and they were glad. (The other tribes are coming to help them)

(In previous years, Jabeshgilead was the city that refused to avenge the rape and murder of a woman in Gibeah, a town in Benjamin. When Benjamin sided with Gibeah <the rapists>, the other tribes attacked them and almost wiped them out. After Israel had almost wiped out Benjamin, they went to Jabeshgilead and wiped out almost every man there; for refusing to help them against Benjamin) See Judges-20

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. (They are now ready to answer King Nahash of Ammon. They are lulling him into a false victory over them)

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. (The morning watch = 3-6 AM)

(There was no chance for the Ammonites to re-group. Their army was wiped out, almost to the last man)

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. (They are referring to those that didn't want Saul to be king. These people are ready to kill each other over words) see Chapter-10:27

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. (Saul was wise, in those days. He is giving the nay-sayers time to accept him as their king. He is also giving God the credit for the victory; not himself)

NOTE: (A good leader unites the people; a bad leader divides them)

¹⁴ Then said Samuel to the people, Come, and let us go to Gilgal, and renew the kingdom there. (Gilgal was the location of the first place of encampment in the Promised Land; after Israel crossed over the Jordan. They piled 12 stones there at that time) see Joshua-3

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. (Peace offerings were also called thank offerings. The offerings were followed by a communal meal of the offerers with God)

(People wanted a man king, instead of God. So God chose Saul to be the first king of Israel)