



# *Sowing the Word*

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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. 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. 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. 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. 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. And the Spirit of God came upon Saul when he heard those tidings, and his anger was kindled greatly. 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. And when he numbered them in Bezek, the children of Israel were three hundred thousand, and the men of Judah thirty thousand. 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. 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. 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. 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. And Saul said, There shall not a man be put to death this day: for to day the Lord hath wrought salvation in Israel. Then said Samuel to the people, Come, and let us go to Gilgal, and renew the kingdom there. 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 offering before the Lord: and there Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly.

## **1 Samuel 11**

**January 31st - February 6 2013**

*So they read distinctly from the book, in the Law of God;  
and they gave the sense, and  
helped them to understand the reading.  
(Nehemiah 8:8)*

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## Online Helpful Sources:

**Precept Austin** - Amazing Online Resource with many commentaries and helps: Including David Guzik, Chuck Smith, John MacArther, Ray Steadman CH Spurgeon, John Piper and many more!

<http://preceptaustin.org/1 samuel commentaries.htm>

**You Version** - with multiple translations

You can get this online or with a mobile device.

They even have audio files you can listen to of the Bible

<http://www.youversion.com/>

Calvary Roswell - Previous messages and overview studies by Pastor Jim

<http://www.calvaryroswell.com/biblestudies/WednesdayBibleStudies/1 Samuel/Index.htm>

# Outline

## **I. Samuel (1 Sam. 1-7)**

1. Birth and childhood (1-2)
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## Study Questions

for

### 1 Samuel 11

1. The reason King Nahash would mutilate the Israelites by gouging out their right eye was so that the disfigured soldiers would have lost all depth perception, and would decrease the chances of a revolt. Can you think of a time when you felt a sin weakened you to rebelling against God? What role did God's strength play in that situation?
2. In verse 5, Saul had been out plowing his fields. Even though he was anointed as king, he was still humble enough to continue taking care of his flocks, along with his servants. This is a picture of how Jesus, being the King of Kings, still continues to care for His flock. How is this meek nature reflected in your life? In what way does that glorify God?

3. What was Saul's reaction when he heard the message from the men of Jabesh? What was the significance of "the Spirit of the Lord" coming upon him? What significance does that have in your life as you recall "bad news" that has come to you? How has that enabled you to let God rule the situation?
4. Verse 15 ends the chapter with a solemn ceremony before the Lord, which acknowledged Saul's sovereignty as king while affirming that the Lord was Israel's true King. Along with the victory, they were now a nation that is united. How do you rejoice over the victories God has given you? How do these victories bring you closer to God?

# With the Word Bible Commentary

It is one thing to have authority and ability, but quite something else to prove yourself a leader. People respond to a crisis in different ways: some give in (vv. 1–3), but others give up (v. 4). Saul responded with anger and action and rallied the troops for battle.

God empowered Saul to fight the battle and win (v. 6). He had stature as well as authority; he had proved himself a leader. But it can be as dangerous after the victory as it is during the battle, for Saul was tempted to get rid of his critics (vv. 12–13; see also 1 Sam. 10:27). He gave God the glory and did not use his authority and success as weapons to attack his own people.

Samuel had the right idea: it was time to renew their covenant with the Lord; and again, the nation met at historic Gilgal. Do the crises God permits in your life strengthen your faith? Do you use the victories He gives to glorify Him and help others?

Wiersbe, W. W. (1991). *With the Word Bible Commentary* (1 Sa 11:1).  
Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

## Matthew Henry

In this chapter we have the first-fruits of Saul's government, in the glorious rescue of Jabesh-Gilead out of the hands of the Ammonites. Let not Israel thence infer that therefore they did well to ask a king (God could and would have saved them without one); but let them admire God's goodness, that he did not reject them when they rejected him, and acknowledge his wisdom in the choice of the person whom, if he did not find fit, yet he made fit, for the great trust he called him to, and enabled, in some measure, to merit the crown by his public services, before it was fixed on his head by the public approbation. Here is, I. The great extremity to which the city of Jabesh-Gilead, on the other side of Jordan, was reduced by the Ammonites (v. 1–3). II. Saul's great readiness to come to their relief, whereby he signalized himself (v. 4–10). III. The good success of his attempt, by which God signalized him (v. 11). IV. Saul's tenderness, notwithstanding this, towards those that had opposed him (v. 12, 13). V. The public confirmation and recognition of his election to the government (v. 14, 15). The Ammonites were bad neighbours to those tribes of Israel that lay next them, though descendants from just Lot, and, for that reason, dealt civilly with by Israel. See Deu. 2:19. Jephthah, in his time, had humbled them, but now the sin of Israel had put them into a capacity to make head again, and avenge that quarrel. The city of Jabesh-Gilead had been, some ages ago, destroyed by Israel's sword of justice, for not appearing against the wickedness of Gibeah (Judges 21:10); and now being replenished again, probably by the posterity of those that then escaped the sword, it is in danger of being destroyed by the Ammonites, as if some bad fate attended the place. Nahash, king of Ammon (1 Chr. 19:1) laid siege to it. "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.

The besieged desire, and obtain, seven days' time to consider of this proposal, v. 3. If Nahash had not granted them this respite, we may suppose the horror of the proposal would have made them desperate, and they would rather have died with their swords in their hands than have surrendered to such merciless enemies: therefore Nahash, not imagining it possible that, in so short a time, they should have relief, and being very secure of the advantages he thought he had against them, in a bravado gave them seven days, that the reproach upon Israel, for not rescuing them, might be the greater, and his triumphs the more illustrious. But there was a providence in it, that his security might be his infatuation and ruin. Notice is sent of this to Gibeah. They said they would send messengers to all the coasts of Israel (v. 3), which made Nahash the more secure, for that, he thought, would be a work of time, and none would be forward to appear if they had not one common head; and perhaps Nahash had not yet heard of the new-elected king. But the messengers, either of their own accord or by order from their masters, went straight to Gibeah, and, not finding Saul within, told their news to the people, who fell a weeping upon hearing it, v. 4. They would sooner lament their brethren's misery and danger than think of helping them, shed their tears for them than shed their blood. They wept, as despairing to help the men of Jabesh-Gilead, and fearing lest, if that frontier-city should be lost, the enemy would penetrate into the very bowels of their country, which now appeared in great hazard. What is here related turns very much to the honour of Saul, and shows the happy fruits of that other spirit with which he was endued. Observe here, (1.) His humility. Though he was anointed king, and accepted by his people, yet he did not think it below him to know the state of his own flocks, but went himself to see them, and came in the evening, with his servants, after the herd out of the field, v. 5. This was an evidence that he was not puffed up with his advancement, as those are most apt to be that are raised from a mean estate. Providence had not yet found him business as a king; he left all to Samuel; and therefore, rather than be idle, he would, for the present, apply himself to his country business again.

(2). His concern for his neighbours. When he perceived them in tears, he asked, "What ails the people that they weep? Let me know, that, if it be a grievance which can be redressed, I may help them, and that, if not, I may weep with them.'" Good magistrates are in pain if their subjects are in tears. (3). His zeal for the safety and honour of Israel. When he heard of the insolence of the Ammonites, and the distress of a city, a mother in Israel, the Spirit of God came upon him, and put great thoughts into his mind, and his anger was kindled greatly, v. 6. He was angry at the insolence of the Ammonites, angry at the mean and sneaking spirit of the men of Jabesh-Gilead, angry that they had not sent him notice sooner of the Ammonites' descent and the extremity they were likely to be reduced to. He was angry to see his neighbours weeping, when it was fitter for them to be preparing for war. It was a brave and generous fire that was now kindled in the breast of Saul, and such as became his high station. Lastly, to complete his honour, God crowned all these virtues with success. Jabesh-Gilead was rescued, and the Ammonites were totally routed; he had now the day before him to complete his victory in, and so complete a victory it was that those who remained, after a great slaughter, were scattered so that two of them were not left together to encourage or help one another, v. 11. We may suppose that Saul was the more vigorous in this matter, 1). Because there was some alliance between the tribe of Benjamin and the city of Jabesh-Gilead. That city had declined joining with the rest of the Israelites to destroy Gibeah, which was then punished as their crime, but perhaps was now remembered as their kindness, when Saul of Gibeah came with so much readiness and resolution to relieve Jabesh-Gilead. Yet that was not all; two-thirds of the Benjamites that then remained were provided with wives from that city (Jdg. 21:14), so that most of the mothers of Benjamin were daughters of Jabesh-Gilead, for which city Saul, being a Benjamite, had therefore a particular kindness; and we find they returned his kindness, ch. 31:11,12. 2). Because it was the Ammonites' invasion that induced the people to desire a king (so Samuel says, ch.12:12), so that if he had not done his part, in this expedition, he would have disappointed their expectations, and for ever forfeited their respect.

Henry, M. (1994). Matthew Henry's commentary on the whole Bible: Complete and unabridged in one volume (1 Sa 11:5–11). Peabody: Hendrickson.