

## 1 Samuel 11 – Saul’s Finest Hour

March 27, 2022

### 1. Background

### 2. There was a crisis in Jabesh-gilead.

*Then Nahash the Ammonite went up and besieged Jabesh-gilead,...*  
1 Samuel 11:1 (ESV)

*“No Ammonite or Moabite may enter the assembly of the Lord. Even to the tenth generation, none of them may enter the assembly of the Lord forever, because they did not meet you with bread and with water on the way, when you came out of Egypt, and because they hired against you Balaam the son of Beor from Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse you. Deuteronomy 23:3–4 (ESV)*

*...and all the men of Jabesh said to Nahash, “Make a treaty with us, and we will serve you.”* 1 Samuel 11:1 (ESV)

*Nahash, king of the Ammonites, was oppressing the Gadites and Reubenites severely, and he was boring out every right eye, allowing no one to save Israel. There was no one left among the Israelites across the Jordan whose right eye Nahash, king of the Ammonites, had not bored out. Seven thousand men had escaped from the power of the Ammonites, however, and had come to Jabesh Gilead. 1 Samuel 10 — Dead Sea Scrolls Cave 4.*

*But Nahash the Ammonite said to them, “On this condition I will make a treaty with you, that I gouge out all your right eyes, and thus bring disgrace on all Israel.”*  
1 Samuel 11:2 (ESV)

*The elders of Jabesh said to him, "Give us seven days' respite that we may send messengers through all the territory of Israel. Then, if there is no one to save us, we will give ourselves up to you." 1 Samuel 11:3 (ESV)*

### **3. An unexpected savior came from Gibeah.**

*When the messengers came to Gibeah of Saul, they reported the matter in the ears of the people, and all the people wept aloud. 1 Samuel 11:4 (ESV)*

*Now, behold, Saul was coming from the field behind the oxen. And Saul said, "What is wrong with the people, that they are weeping?" So they told him the news of the men of Jabesh. 1 Samuel 11:5 (ESV)*

*And the Spirit of God rushed upon Saul when he heard these words, and his anger was greatly kindled. 1 Samuel 11:6 (ESV)*

*He took a yoke of oxen and cut them in pieces and sent them throughout all the territory of Israel by the hand of the messengers, saying, "Whoever does not come out after Saul and Samuel, so shall it be done to his oxen!" Then the dread of the LORD fell upon the people, and they came out as one man. 1 Samuel 11:7 (ESV)*

### **4. Rescue came from Bezek.**

*When he mustered them at Bezek, the people of Israel were three hundred thousand, and the men of Judah thirty thousand. 1 Samuel 11:8 (ESV)*

*And they said to the messengers who had come, "Thus shall you say to the men of Jabesh-gilead: 'Tomorrow, by the time the sun is hot, you shall have salvation.' " When the messengers came and told the men of Jabesh, they were glad. 1 Samuel 11:9 (ESV)*

*Therefore the men of Jabesh said, "Tomorrow we will give ourselves up to you, and you may do to us whatever seems good to you." 1 Samuel 11:10 (ESV)*

*And the next day Saul put the people in three companies. And they came into the midst of the camp in the morning watch and struck down the Ammonites until the heat of the day. And those who survived were scattered, so that no two of them were left together. 1 Samuel 11:11 (ESV)*

- The Holy Spirit changes lives. The victory came not because Saul was a naturally gifted leader or a military genius. He was a shy farmer. What changed was the Holy Spirit empowered him and gifted him to accomplish the job God gave him to do.
- The Holy Spirit empowers the underqualified. (Saul, the apostles, Amos).

*Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus. Acts 4:13 (ESV)*

- The Holy Spirit brings humility and compassion to the overqualified. (Jesus, Paul)

## 5. The Kingdom Renewed

*Then the people said to Samuel, "Who is it that said, 'Shall Saul reign over us?' Bring the men, that we may put them to death." 1 Samuel 11:12 (ESV)*

*But Saul said, "Not a man shall be put to death this day, for today the LORD has worked salvation in Israel." 1 Samuel 11:13 (ESV)*

*Then Samuel said to the people, "Come, let us go to Gilgal and there renew the kingdom." 1 Samuel 11:14 (ESV)*

*So all the people went to Gilgal, and there they made Saul king before the LORD in Gilgal. There they sacrificed peace offerings before the LORD, and there Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly. 1 Samuel 11:15 (ESV)*

## Application

- The Holy Spirit is essential for spiritual leadership. Saul's leadership abilities did not come from his natural gifts. It was when the Holy Spirit came upon him that he was transformed into the leader the nation desperately needed. It is only when I am living in step with the Holy Spirit that I will become the man or woman God wants me to be.

## How do I rely on the Holy Spirit to guide me today?

### 1. Become a Christian

*And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:38 (ESV)*

**2. Make regular time to read the Bible asking the Holy Spirit to speak to you through God's Word.**

*It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. John 6:63 (ESV)*

**3. Follow the conviction of the Holy Spirit in your heart.**

*For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. Romans 8:5 (ESV)*

*If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.*  
Galatians 5:25 (ESV)

*But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.*  
Galatians 5:16 (ESV)

**4. Don't rebel against the Holy Spirit.**

*Do not quench the Spirit... Abstain from every form of evil.*  
1 Thessalonians 5:19–22 (ESV)

*And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Ephesians 4:30 (ESV)*

## Life Group Questions

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1. What did you learn in this week's lesson that you did not know? What questions do you have?
2. Sometimes pastors or churches substitute business techniques for the power of the Spirit. Are there ways we can avoid that danger?
3. At Gilgal, God's people repented of rejecting God as their king. They renewed their commitment to God. Have I drifted away from Jesus as my king? If so, what is keeping me from stopping this very minute to repent and renew my commitment to Him?
4. How do modern tyrants compare to Nahash the Ammonite? Are we more civilized today?
5. Relying on the Holy Spirit is essential for the Christian life. What do these verses teach us about what the Holy Spirit does in our life that we can not do on our own? **See Romans 8:16, 2 Corinthians 5:5, Romans 5:5, Romans 8:26, 1 Corinthians 12:7.**
6. The Bible frequently talks about the importance of making choices to live in step with the Holy Spirit. What do these verses teach us about what kind of choices we need to make to walk in step with the Holy Spirit? **See Galatians 5:16-17, Colossians 3:5-14.**