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1 Samuel 11

Saul is now King but still appears at his father's home tending to livestock. As Israel had never had a King it was doubtful that a lot of preparation had been done as to a Castle or home for the new King.

This town of Jabeshgilead sat east of the Jordan which made it vulnerable to attack from non-Israeli nations. The Ammonites were descendants of Lot (Genesis 19:38) They were a constant antagonist to Israel.

Both Moab and Ammon were the result of incest on the part of Lot and his two daughters.

Genesis 19: 30And Lot went up out of Zoar, and dwelt in the mountain, and his two daughters with him; for he feared to dwell in Zoar: and he dwelt in a cave, he and his two daughters.

Jump ahead to vs 36-38

Genesis 19: 36Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father. 37And the firstborn bare a son, and called his name Moab: the same is the father of the Moabites unto this day. 38And the younger, she also bare a son, and called his name Benammi: the same is the father of the children of Ammon unto this day.

Saul Defeats the Ammonites

1Then 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 had a sizable army that put the people of Jabesh in fear of their lives. They looked to negotiate rather than be annihilated. The initial offer from Jabesh to Nahash was to cut a deal where we will serve you in exchange for you not killing us.

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's counteroffer was extraordinary in violence and injury to the men of Jabesh. So, the elders of Jabesh asked for 7 days to ostensibly consider this vile offer of eye removal. In the back of their mind, they hoped they could find someone with all of Israel that would come to their aid.

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. 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.

It is apparent that Nahash did not believe that Israel as a Nation would rise up to save their brothers and sisters in this town east of the Jordan. So in a surprising tactical move he allows them to call for help.

A messenger was sent from Jabesh to Saul the new King of Israel in hopes he would come and save Jabesh. When the people of Israel heard about the predicament that Jabesh was in they wept.

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.

It is interesting that Saul had returned to working with his father and family on their farm. He is now King of Israel but still a common laborer in his family. The issue might be that he was not accepted widely by Israel at this point. Some of the larger tribes were disgruntled over the choice of Saul.

This being the first King of Israel, it is obvious that there was little done by all those in the land to accommodate their King as to living and commanding or training troops. It was like, we'll figure it out when something happens. Well, that moment has arrived, Israel is going to go to war with pitchforks and axes.

6And the Spirit of God came upon Saul when he heard those tidings, and his anger was kindled greatly.

Mankind is quite capable of indignation in an unrighteous manner. We get offended and we see today people offended over anything and everything. Most of this so-called offense is fake. However, there is such a Biblical thing as Righteous Indignation.

***Romans 12:19 never avenging yourselves, beloved;
instead give place to wrath, for it has been written:
"Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, says the Lord."***

In this case God's Spirit came upon Saul and anger was kindled in him. When God kindles the anger within a human it is always going to be "Righteous Anger". It will never be self-determined revenge which is what our flesh constantly calls for. Righteous Anger will be a source solely from God and will likely result in precise words given by the Holy Spirit to rebuke an evil doer.

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We see Saul react to God's Holy Spirit and the calling Saul to Righteous Indignation.

7And 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.

It is an interesting practice that one would cut up his own oxen and send the pieces out to the surrounding lands demanding a response from all the tribes of Israel. The threat attached to each piece of Saul's oxen was either respond or this will happen to all your livestock.

This harkens to two other events where evil men sought to commit evil vile sexual sin against a man who is a guest. One even was with Lot in Sodom and second was Judges 19 speaks of this type of event wherein the visitor's concubine was given to these evil men, and they abused and killed her. The man in question cut her up into 12 pieces and sent them throughout the tribes of Israel calling all the tribes to come together and destroy this evil. In this case the offense takes place in Gibeah the very place Saul calls home, but this is many years before Saul was king. In any case Saul uses the same method of calling all Israel together to defend a town of their own.

8And when he numbered them in Bezek, the children of Israel were three hundred thousand, and the men of Judah thirty thousand. 9And they said unto the messengers that came, Thus shall ye say unto the men of Jabeshgilead, Tomorrow, 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.

We are not told exactly how many days it took to assemble this force of over 60,000 men of war but it had to be within the 7 days granted Jabesh by Nahash. Saul sends word that by midday tomorrow the God of Israel will save you.

10Therefore the men of Jabesh said, Tomorrow we will come out unto you, and ye shall do with us all that seemeth good unto you.

So, the men of Jabesh send word out to their potential master the Amorites that tomorrow we will come out to them, and they can do as you please. The manner of surrender had already been tendered by the Amorites; the removal of an eye of each male as a sign to Israel that you don't mess with the Amorites.

11And 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.

It is likely the assault by Israel started in the morning and by mid-day the Amorites were crushed. Of those that remained of the Amorites no two men were together, indicating they ran off in every direction they could to survive the onslaught of Israel.

Saul Confirmed as King

12And 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. **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.

If you recall in Chapter 10 there were some dissenters as to Saul being king. It was more based on Saul being an unknown man from a small tribe and those of the larger tribes thought their princes should be king. The people of Israel remembered the dissent of those at Saul's christening and wanted them now killed for their rebellious hearts. The people were thinking in terms of the law in Deuteronomy.

Deuteronomy 17: But the man who acts presumptuously, refusing to listen either to the priest who stands there to serve the LORD your God, or to the judge, must be put to death. You must purge the evil from Israel.

Saul was now King and had led a great victory where the Glory was given to God. Saul took the authority to grant mercy to those who opposed him. A gesture that was received by those in jeopardy as well as the nation of Israel.

The victory and the gracious attitude of Saul towards his distractors brought Israel together.

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

Israel has shown its inability to agree on many things. Various tribes, usually the larger tribes seem to hold themselves in higher esteem due to their size. That seldom works out well for Israel as a whole. There were events in the history of Israel where the nation would come together and “renew” their allegiance to God and to one another.

Israel had grumbled against the Lord God during their 40 years in the desert. It was part of the reason they spent those 40 years wandering in the desert. Joshua was God’s chosen man to bring Israel into the Promised Land and they were united at least for a time in that effort.

Joshua 24: [14](#)Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD. [15](#)And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.

[16](#)And the people answered and said, God forbid that we should forsake the LORD, to serve other gods; [17](#)For the LORD our God, he it is that brought us up and our fathers out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and which did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the people through whom we passed: [18](#)And the LORD drave out from before us all the people, even the Amorites which dwelt in

the land: therefore will we also serve the LORD; for he is our God.

***19**And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve the LORD: for he is an holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins. **20**If ye forsake the LORD, and serve strange gods, then he will turn and do you hurt, and consume you, after that he hath done you good. **21**And the people said unto Joshua, Nay; but we will serve the LORD. **22**And Joshua said unto the people, Ye are witnesses against yourselves that ye have chosen you the LORD, to serve him. And they said, We are witnesses. **23**Now therefore put away, said he, the strange gods which are among you, and incline your heart unto the LORD God of Israel. **24**And the people said unto Joshua, The LORD our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey. **25**So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and set them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem. **26**And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God, and took a great stone, and set it up there under an oak, that was by the sanctuary of the LORD. **27**And Joshua said unto all the people, Behold, this stone shall be a witness unto us; for it hath heard all the words of the LORD which he spake unto us: it shall be therefore a witness unto you, lest ye deny your God. **28**So Joshua let the people depart, every man unto his inheritance.*

Ezekiel 36:26 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

***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 victory over the Amorites brought Israel together and the credit was given to God and to the man He named as King, Saul. And all of Israel rejoiced in unity.

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