

1 Samuel Lesson 15 Saul Defeats The Ammonites and Is Confirmed as King

Key Themes in 1 Samuel :

- The connection between our obedience and our relationship to God
- God opposes the proud and exalts the humble
- Despite human evil, God is working out His purposes in history
- Kingship in Israel and God's plan to one day raise up an anointed divine king

Background:

The Spirit of the Lord: In 1 Samuel 11 the Spirit of the Lord again comes upon Saul, enabling him to call up an army. In a tribal society with no centralized government it was difficult to get other tribes to support one of their number that might be facing problems. In Israel, the ability of a leader to call up troops from the various tribes to support another was seen as a mark of the authority of Yahweh. This had been one of the distinguishing features of the judges of Israel.

Ammonites: A Transjordanian people related to Abraham's nephew Lot. From the time of the exodus until the time of David, who conquered them, they were enemies of Israel. They were a savage people (Amos 1:13)

gouging out the right eye: The gouging out of the eyes of people who were conquered was practiced by many of the pagan nations that surrounded Israel. It was meant to humiliate and incapacitate the captives. In the context of 1 Samuel 11 it appears to have been threatened as a sign of reproach.

Key Word:

deliver: Strong's: H5337 "natsal" deliver, pluck, preserve, recover, rescue

Read 1 Samuel 11:1-15

1. According to 1 Samuel 11:1-2 what did the men of Jabesh-gilead want to do when besieged by the Ammonites? What did Nahash offer as terms and why?

2. The elders of Jabesh-gilead sent messengers to Saul's hometown, Gibeah, asking for someone to deliver them. Compare the people's response in 11:4 to that of Saul's in 11:6? What made the difference?

Application: From what we have seen of Saul so far, he did not possess the natural temperament of a strong leader. However, under the influence of the Holy Spirit he was able to conquer a strong enemy. As Christians, we are constantly facing spiritual battles and they can be overwhelming. What does Paul tell us to do in Ephesians 6:10-13 in order to be prepared for spiritual battle? Why is this important in light of our weaknesses and who we are battling?

3. In 1 Samuel 11:7-11 what evidences do you see of the power of God's Spirit coming on Saul? What was the response of the people in 11:7 and why?

Application: Influenced by the power of the Holy Spirit, Saul was confident of victory. According to John 16:33, 1 John 4:4, and 1 John 5:4 upon what basis can believers who have the indwelling Holy Spirit be confident of victory in our battles?

4. According to 1 Samuel 11:12-13 how did Saul show grace to his enemies and who did Saul give credit to for the victory? Saul reacted well after His victory. What are some temptations we can fall into after a victory?

5. Under Samuel's leadership, what did the people do in Gilgal in 11:14-15? Outwardly, Saul was off to a good start. How he continues to exercise his role as king will give evidence of his heart. How can the way we conduct our God given ministries reveal our heart for the Lord?