

1 SAMUEL-

CHAPTER 11

LAST WEEK CHAPTER 10 ENDED WITH GOD GIVING ISRAEL THE KING THEY DEMANDED. 10:24 TELLS US THE PEOPLE SHOUTED, "LONG LIVE THE KING". THERE WAS ONE PROBLEM HOWEVER, IN THE EYES OF THE LORD, SAUL WAS DISQUALIFIED. THE PROPHETIC WORD OF JACOB WAS THAT THE SCEPTER (OF KINGSHIP) WOULD NOT DEPART FROM JUDAH. (GEN 49:10). THE PROMISED DYNASTY OF KINGS WHICH WOULD EVENTUALLY PRODUCE THE MESSIAH MUST ORIGINATE IN JUDAH. WHAT TRIBE WAS SAUL FROM? DID HE MEET THE PREREQUISITE OF LINEAGE. WHAT WERE THE PEOPLE LOOKING AT? LOOK AT 9:2 He had a son whose name was Saul, a choice and handsome *man*, and there was not a more handsome person than he among the sons of Israel; from his shoulders and up he was taller than any of the people. WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE JUDGE PEOPLE BY THEIR OUTWARD APPEARANCE? THE LORD CONDESCENDED TO REACH DOWN TO THEIR LEVEL OF UNBELIEF, AND HE GAVE THEM A KING THAT LOOKED LIKE A NATURAL WARRIOR. IN THIS GRACE THE LORD GAVE SAUL AN OPPORTUNITY TO PROVE HIMSELF AND CONSOLIDATE HIS AUTHORITY. LET'S SEE WHAT HAPPENS-

VS 1 WHAT HAPPENS? THE AMMONITES WERE DESCENDANTS OF ABRAHAM'S NEPHEW LOT AND THEREFORE RELATED TO THE JEWISH PEOPLE. THE CITY OF JABESH GILEAD WAS ABOUT 25 MILES SOUTH OF THE SEA OF GALILEE, EAST OF THE JORDAN RIVER. SAUL MAY HAVE HAD ANCESTRAL TIES WITH THIS COMMUNITY.

VS 2 RATHER THAN ENGAGE IN A LONG AND COSTLY SIEGE, NAHASH OFFERED TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE PEOPLE IN THE CITY AND LET THEM LIVE. WHAT WAS HIS DEMAND? HE WANTED THEM TO SUBMIT TO THE HUMILIATING AND CRIPPLING PUNISHMENT OF HAVING THEIR RIGHT EYES GOUGED OUT. ARCHERS AND SWORDSMEN WOULD BE HANDICAPPED IN BATTLE, AND EVERYBODY WOULD BE HUMILIATED AND MARKED AS DEFEATED PRISONERS OF WAR. IF THEY RESISTED, NAHASH WOULD PROBABLY KILL THEM.

VS 3 WHAT DID THE ELDERS OF JABESH WANT? NAHASH AGREED THINKING THAT WEAK ISRAEL COULDN'T MUSTER AN ARMY.

VS 4 HOW DO THE PEOPLE REACT? THE JEWS WERE NOTED FOR THEIR LOUD AND PASSIONATE EXPRESSIONS OF GRIEF AND WHEN SAUL HEARD THE PEOPLE WEEPING, HE ASKED THE CAUSE.

VS 5 WHAT HAD THE KING BEEN DOING?

VS 6 HOW DOES THE LORD EQUIP SAUL? HOW DOES SAUL REACT? HE WAS FILLED WITH RIGHTEOUS INDIGNATION THAT SUCH A THING SHOULD HAPPEN IN ISRAEL.

VS 7 WHAT DOES SAUL DO? DID IT WORK? WHAT WAS THE RESULT? NOTICE THAT SAUL IDENTIFIED HIMSELF WITH SAMUEL WHEN HE ISSUED THE CALL TO ARMS. FOR HE AND SAMUEL WERE WORKING TOGETHER.

VS 8 WHERE DO THEY MEET? BEZEK WAS ABOUT TWELVE MILES FROM JABESH GILEAD. WHAT WAS THE COUNT OF MEN? THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN ISRAEL AND JUDAH INDICATES THAT 1 SAMUEL WAS WRITTEN AFTER THE NATION WAS DIVIDED IN 931BC INTO THE NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN KINGDOMS. THE LORD WORKED ON SAUL'S BEHALF BY PUTTING FEAR IN THE HEARTS OF THE PEOPLE SO THEY GATHERED 330,000 MEN GATHERED FOR BATTLE.

VS 9 WHAT ARE THE PEOPLE OF JABASH-GILEAD TOLD?

VS 10 WHAT IS THE MESSAGE THEY SEND TO NAHASH? SHREWDLY, THE CITIZENS TOLD THE AMMONITES THAT THEY WOULD SURRENDER THE NEXT DAY, AND THIS GAVE NAHASH THE KIND OF FALSE CONFIDENCE THAT THREW THE ARMY OFF GUARD.

VS 11 SAUL DIVIDED THE PEOPLE INTO THREE COMPANIES AND CAME INTO THE CAMP AT NIGHT. THE MORNING WATCH WAS FROM TWO TO SIX A.M. SO HE CAUGHT THE ENEMY BY SURPRISE AND COMPLETELY SCATTERED THEM. HOW SCATTERED WERE THEY? WHEN SAUL WON THIS GREAT VICTORY, HE GAINED STATURE BEFORE THE PEOPLE. WHAT DOES THIS STATEMENT MEAN TO YOU? "THE WILL OF GOD WILL NEVER LEAD US WHERE THE GRACE OF GOD CAN'T KEEP US AND USE US". NOW THE QUESTION WAS, WOULD ISRAEL SEE THIS VICTORY AS EVIDENCE OF GOD'S BLESSING AND GIVE HIM THE GLORY, OR WOULD THEY INTERPRET IT AS A HUMAN ACHIEVEMENT? LET'S SEE...

VS 12 WHAT DO THE PEOPLE WANT TO DO?

VS 13 HOW DOES SAUL REACT?

VS 14-15 HOW DOES SAMUEL REACT?

CHAPTER 12

VS 1-3 A CRITICAL POINT HAD BEEN REACHED IN ISRAEL'S HISTORY. THE PEOPLE HAD DEMANDED AND HAD BEEN GIVEN A KING, CONTRARY TO THE PRECISE PURPOSES AND WILL OF GOD. AND THAT KING HAD LEAD THEM TO A GLORIOUS VICTORY IN HIS VERY FIRST CAMPAIGN. SAMUEL SOUGHT TO DIRECT THE PEOPLE TO A FRESH RECOGNITION OF THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD AND THE NEED TO WORSHIP AND PRAISE HIM AS THE SOURCE OF ALL THEIR BLESSINGS. WOULD ISRAEL SEE THIS VICTORY AS EVIDENCE OF GOD'S BLESSING AND GIVE HIM THE GLORY OR WOULD THEY INTERPRET IT AS A HUMAN ACHIEVEMENT DEVOID OF DIVINE ENABLEMENT. HOW DID SAMUEL DO THIS? FIRST HE CHALLENGED THEM TO **REMEMBER:**

VS 1 WHAT?

VS 2-5 WHAT DOES SAMUEL ASK THEM? IT SEEMS THAT SAMUEL NEEDS TO ESTABLISH HIS CREDIBILITY AMONG THE PEOPLE. HOW DO THEY ANSWER? WHY DO YOU THINK SAMUEL WOULD ASK THEM THESE QUESTIONS? IT SEEMS THAT SAMUEL'S INTENT WAS TO SHOW THAT JUST AS HE COULD BE TRUSTED IN THE PAST SO HIS WORD FOR PRESENT AND THE FUTURE COULD ALSO BE ACCEPTED WITH CONFIDENCE.

THIS WAS MORE THAN A LECTURE ON HISTORY; IT WAS ALSO A COURT TRIAL! SAMUEL'S WORDS IN VERSE 7 HAVE A JUDICIAL FLAVOR: TAKE YOUR STAND "STAND UP" CARRIES THE IDEA OF "STAND UP, COURT IS IN SESSION!" AND "PLEAD" MEANS TO DECIDE A CASE OF LITIGATION". SAMUEL WAS GOING TO PROVE TO THE PEOPLE THAT THE LORD HAD BEEN RIGHTEOUS AND FAITHFUL IN ALL HIS DEALINGS WITH ISRAEL, BUT THAT THE JEWS HAD BEEN FAITHLESS AND DISOBEDIENT. THESE BLESSINGS INCLUDED LIVING IN THE PROMISED LAND, BEING PROTECTED FROM THEIR ENEMIES, AND HAVING FRUITFUL FIELDS, FLOCKS AND HERDS, AND FAMILIES.

VS 6-8 **REMEMBER:** WHAT DOES HE WANT THEM TO REMEMBER? IS THIS IMPORTANT FOR US TO REMEMBER? WHY?

VS 9-11 **REMEMBER:** RECOUNTED THEIR DISOBEDIENCE UNDER THE JUDGES.

VS 9 HERE SAMUEL GIVES THEM A **WARNING**. WHAT DOES HE TELL THEM? WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE FORGET GOD?

VS 10 **CONFESS AND SEEK THE LORD:** WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE CONFESS OUR SINS? SAMUEL SOUGHT TO DIRECT THE PEOPLE TO A FRESH RECOGNITION OF THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD AND TO THE NEED TO WORSHIP AND PRAISE HIM AS THE SOURCE OF ALL BLESSINGS..

VS 12-13 **REMEMBER:** RECOUNTED THE AMMONITE MENACE THAT HAD PROMPTED THEM TO SEEK A HUMAN KING. IN ASKING FOR A HUMAN KING WHAT WERE THEY DOING?

VS 14-15 **WARNING:** HOW ARE THEY TO FOLLOW THE LORD? HOW DO WE FOLLOW THE LORD?

VS 16-17 FINALLY SAMUEL APPEALED TO THE LORD TO SEND A SIGN FROM HEAVEN BOTH TO AUTHENTICATE HIS OWN WARNINGS OF JUDGMENT AND TO CAUSE THE PEOPLE TO REVERE THE GOD WHO HAD CALLED THEM AND WHO DESIRED TO BLESS THEM AND USE THEM. WHAT GREAT WICKEDNESS HAD THEY DONE IN GOD'S SIGHT? THE LORD REMINDED THEM THAT THEIR INSISTENT DEMAND FOR A KING, THOUGH HE WOULD GRANT IT, WAS STILL AN EVIL REQUEST BECAUSE IT WAS PREMATURE AND WRONGLY MOTIVATED. VS 17 WHAT SIGN DID SAMUEL ASK OF THE LORD? THUNDER AND RAIN WAS A PHENOMENON UNHEARD OF IN EARLY SUMMER, THE TIME OF THE WHEAT HARVEST. WHAT WAS THIS PHENOMENON'S PURPOSE? WHY WAS IT WRONG TO ASK FOR A KING?

VS 18 WHAT HAPPENS? "FEARED" IN THIS VERSE CAN MEAN; AFRAID, STAND IN AWE OR. TERRIFYING. WHICH DO YOU THINK FITS IN THIS VERSE? SAMUEL DEMONSTRATED THE AWESOME POWER OF THE LORD BY "PRAYING UP A STORM" DURING THE DRY SEASON OF THE WHEAT HARVEST. WHAT DO YOU THINK SAMUEL WAS TRYING TO SHOW THE PEOPLE ABOUT THE LORD?

VS 19 **CONFESSION**: WHAT IS THEIR CONFESSION?

VS 20 HOW DOES SAMUEL RESPOND TO THEIR CONFESSION? THE PAST COULD NOT BE UNDONE BUT THEIR FUTURE WAS UNTAINTED AND COULD BE DEVOTED TO THE LORD. HOW ARE WE TO SERVE THE LORD?

VS 21 **WARNING** WHAT DOES SAMUEL WARN THEM ABOUT? HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE "FUTILE THINGS"? HOW MANY TIMES IN OUR OWN LIVES DO WE GET WHAT WE ASKED FOR AND THEN WISH WE DIDN'T HAVE IT!

VS 22 **REMEMBER** SAMUEL GIVES TWO REASON WHY THE LORD WILL NOT ABANDON HIS PEOPLE. WHAT ARE THEY?

VS 23 WHAT DID SAMUEL CONSIDER A SIN AGAINST GOD? WHY DO YOU THINK SAMUEL FELT THIS WAY? WHAT DOES SAMUEL PROMISE THEM? SAMUEL, AS A TRUE MEDIATOR, PLEDGED TO KEEP PRAYING FOR THE PEOPLE. CENTURIES LATER, JEREMIAH SPOKE OF SAMUEL AS A GREAT MAN OF PRAYER. (JER. 15:1). IS THIS AN EXAMPLE FOR US?

VS 24 WHAT DOES SAMUEL ENCOURAGE THE PEOPLE TO DO? _____
WHAT DO YOU THINK THIS MEANS? WHAT ELSE DOES SAMUEL ENCOURAGE THE PEOPLE TO DO? _____ HOW? WHY?

VS 25 **WARNING** WHAT IS THE WARNING? SAMUEL MAY HAVE BEEN REFERRING ESPECIALLY TO THE WARNING GIVEN BY MOSES IN DEUTERONOMY 28:36, WRITTEN INTO THE COVENANT CENTURIES BEFORE ISRAEL HAD A KING: "THE LORD WILL DRIVE YOU AND THE KING YOU SET OVER YOU TO A NATION UNKNOWN TO YOU AND YOUR FATHERS". DID THIS HAPPEN? ISRAEL DID DISOBEY THE TERMS OF THE COVENANT, AND GOD HAD TO SEND THEM IN EXILE TO BABYLON. WHAT DOES THIS SHOW US ABOUT OUR LORD?

IT HAS OFTEN BEEN SAID THAT THE ONE THING WE LEARN FROM HISTORY IS THAT WE DON'T LEARN FROM HISTORY, AND SAMUEL DIDN'T WANT HIS PEOPLE TO MAKE THAT MISTAKE. COULD THIS BE TRUE IN OUR LIVES?

WHEN WE CONSIDER THE GREAT THINGS GOD HAS DONE FOR US, HOW COULD WE DO OTHER THAN FEAR HIM, THANK HIM, AND SERVE HIM IN TRUTH ALL THE DAYS OF OUR LIVES.