

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, May 30, 2010

Passage: 1 Samuel 11

Memory Passage: Proverbs 21:31

TODAY: *From your study this past week, what is one thing that impressed you that can be of help in your life?*

DAY 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read 1 Samuel 11:1-4.** Who are the Ammonites according to Genesis 19:36–38? So what would their relationship be to Israel? Nahash means “snake” or “serpent”. What would an Israelite who was familiar with Genesis 3 think of such a name? Do you think an Israelite would ever name a child “snake”? What does this tell us about the Ammonites’ belief in the God of Israel?

(b) What was the requirement that Nahash put on the surrender of Jabesh-gilead? Why would he poke out the right eye of everyone? What military and financial advantage would this give them? What had God promised about protecting Israel (Joshua 23:6-10)? How does the fact that Jabesh-gilead is willing to surrender to the Ammonites show a lack of faith?

For Discussion: *(Leaders read the passage for the day and summarize what you learned from the previous questions)*

(c) Often times we can feel a lot like the people of Jabesh-gilead, surrounded, pinned in and asking to compromise for freedom. What does God want us to do when we find ourselves in situations like them? Why is it so hard?

(d) What would have been the long-term affects if Jabesh-gilead had succumbed to Nahash? How can sin have similar affects on us? Read 1 Corinthians 10:13. Can you think of any other verses that are helpful when you are feeling attacked and isolated by sin?

(e) **Family:** Read 1 Samuel 11:1-4. What would have happened if the people of Jabesh had given into Nahash? How is this similar to what happens when we give in to sin? Can sin have long lasting affects in our lives? How should we respond when we feel attacked by sin (1 Corinthians 10:13; Proverbs 3:5-6)?

DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read 1 Samuel 11:5-8.** Why would Nahash allow the messengers (v. 3-4) to be sent? What does he probably think about the likelihood that someone will come and rescue them? What do we find Saul still doing in verse 5? What had Saul been commissioned to do in the previous chapter?

(b) What is the reaction of Saul when he hears the news concerning Jabesh-gilead? Why would this news be particularly grievous to him (Judges 21:6-12)? What would have Saul’s relationship been with the people of Jabesh-gilead?

For Discussion:

(c) Should it surprise us that Saul is still farming when we encounter him in verse 5? How do his actions continue the trends that we read about in chapters 9 and 10? How does God use the Holy Spirit in this passage?

(d) How is the role of the Holy Spirit different here in 1 Samuel than in Acts and the New Testament? Is the Spirit of God something that is upon a person permanently in the Old Testament? How is it different in the New Testament (Acts 1:8, Romans 8:9-11)? What role should the Holy Spirit play in your life (Romans 8:4-6; Galatians 5:16-18)? What role does He play?

(e) **Family:** 1 Samuel 11:5-8. The Holy Spirit moved Saul to action in this story. What does Jesus say about the Holy Spirit in Acts 1:8? How does this verse give you the courage to be a witness for Christ?

DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read 1 Samuel 11:9-11.** What is Saul’s response once the Spirit of the Lord comes upon him in verse 7? What time does he indicate by his message that he will attack the Ammonites? What do the people of Jabesh-gilead tell the Ammonites once they receive Saul’s message?

For Discussion:

(b) Read verse 10 in either the NKJV, NASB, or NET. According to this translation, are the men of Jabesh lying to the Ammonites? Why or why not? How would their response affect the attitude of the Ammonites?

(c) What is the purpose of splitting the army into three companies (Judges 7:16; 9:36-37)? How effective was this strategy? Was Saul’s use of strategy looked down upon? Who got the credit for the victory in verse 13?

(d) What does Proverbs 21:31 say about planning and preparing? How should this principal apply to our lives? to our opportunities for evangelism? to our church? to our finances?

(e) *Family*: 1 Samuel 11:9-11. Saul has a plan for taking out the Ammonites. Why is it important to plan? Does planning take anything away from God? What do we need to remember from Proverbs 21:31 about preparing and planning? Why is this so important?

DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read 1 Samuel 11:12-14.** How complete were the Israelites victory? What does this victory do to confirm Saul's leadership ability? How do we know this? How does Saul respond to this enthusiasm?

(b) What does Samuel suggest to the people? Why would a renewal of Samuel's kingship be needed or beneficial? What does it say about the beginning of his reign?

For Discussion:

(c) God seems to use a crisis situation to confirm to Saul and the people his ability to lead them as their king. Share a specific time that God has used a crisis to get your attention or to get you to do something that He has called you to do. Why is it that God puts us in such crisis to teach us such lessons?

DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read quickly through 1 Samuel 11 and Judges 19-21.** As you are reading, ask yourself what parallels are their between this story in Judges and our passage from the week? What connections are there between Saul and his actions in rescuing the people of Jabesh-gilead?

For Discussion:

(b) Why would God have Saul, a Benjamite, to save Jabesh-gilead in such a similar manner? How does this event show the great difference that has been made in the attitude of the Israelites?

(c) In the story in Judges, Israel unites against itself. In 1 Samuel, Saul unites Israel to save it's own. The story of Judges ends with the statement that there was no king in Israel. We are left here in this pivotal chapter with the view that there is now a king in Israel, that there will be no vengeance upon other tribes, and that this a blessing from the Lord. The presence of a king, at the moment, is a very good thing.

DAY 6 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

Think back through what you have learned each day this week. The passage this week is an apt picture of how God can use crisis to spur us on toward His will. Hopefully, we don't need a crisis to motivate us to follow after God? Is there anything in your life that you are not willing to trust God with? What have you been ignoring or pushing aside in hopes that it might go away? The Lord is faithful to bless those who trust in Him. What is the next step of faith that you need to take?

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The Call of Crisis
"the Lord has worked"