

Wednesday June 24, 2020 ▫ Read 1Samuel 11

Questions from the Scripture text: Who encamps against whom in v1? How do the men of Jabesh respond? What “condition” does Nahash propose (v2)? What do the elders of Jabesh request in v3? What in particular are they looking for? To where do the people come in v4? And how do those people respond? Who else hears in v5? What does he ask? What happens to him in v6? What effect does the Spirit have upon him? What does he send and say to Israel in v7? With what result? What does he do to them in Bezek (v8)? How many are there? What word do they send to Jabesh (v9)? What do they, therefore, say to Nahash (v10)? How does the battle go in v11? What do the people say to Samuel in v12? What do they want to do? Why doesn’t Saul think this is a good idea (v13)? What does Samuel suggest instead? Where do they go, and what do they do to Saul before Whom (v15)? What else do they do before Yahweh?

This is a chapter of reversals. Yes, we see Nahash’s violence return upon his own head, but if we’ve been paying attention through Judges and 1Samuel, we see the great difference that the Spirit of God (v6) makes. Saul becomes the anti-Saul. Gibeah becomes the anti-Gibeah. And a nation of those who, for generations, each did what was right in his own eyes, is invited back to Gilgal to roll away their reproach once more.

Saul becomes the anti-Saul. The man who was last seen emerging from his hiding spot among the baggage (cf. 10:22) is now cutting two oxen into pieces and threatening all of Israel to do the same to theirs if they don’t show up to battle (v7). He’s taking charge, dividing the people into three companies in v11 and overruling the united voice of the people in v12–13.

Gibeah becomes the anti-Gibeah. What had been Sodom-in-Israel in Judges 19–21 is now called “Gibeah of Saul in v4, a place from which righteousness and deliverance come, rather than wickedness and curse.

And a people who had been wandering spiritually and morally for generations, came back to the place where they had repented after the generation of wandering in the wilderness (cf. Josh 5:1–12). **Gilgal had gotten its name for the “rolling away” of the reproach of God’s people in circumcision, and now God’s prophet calls them back there to renew the kingdom (v14–15).**

What filled the Israelites with the fear of Yahweh (v7), so that they might see the salvation of Yahweh (v13), and rejoice before Yahweh with His appointed sacrifices (v15)? What anti-Sauled Saul and anti-Gibeahed Gibeah? “The Spirit of God rushed [lit.] upon Saul” (v6).

And so it must be with us. Believers are no longer in Adam but in Christ, but we need to be conformed to the image of the new Man, the last Adam. **How do we become anti-us, by comparison to what we were? The Spirit** lusts against the flesh. It is the Holy Spirit of God, who accomplishes the work of God, giving us the fear of God, and the deliverance of God, and the joy of God! (cf. Gal 5:16–25)

What work do we need the Spirit to do in us? By what means does the Spirit work?
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Suggested songs: ARP51B “From My Sins, O Hide Your Face” or TPH400 “Gracious Spirit, Dwell with Me”