

Title: God's Powerful Spirit!

Scripture: 1 Samuel 11

Series: God, the True King!

1. Introduction:

- a. Last week, our chapter ended with the rejection of God's appointed king.
 - i. The bible tells that **worthless men despised** Saul.
 1. What made them **worthless** is that they rejected God by rejecting divinely appointed authority.
 - ii. They simply could not see how a Benjamite from the lowest clan could be the promised deliverer and Savior of God's people.
 - iii. These men showed their contempt by refusing to honor the king or bring him presents.
- b. Our sermon concluded with the understanding that men always reject authority, especially divinely appointed authority. Just like these men rejected Saul, the New Testament reveals the rejection of the kingship of Jesus Christ. Humanity, deep within, cannot see the inexpressible value of the Savior.
 - i. The beauty of Christ, we learned last week, is spiritually discerned, but yet man is naturally carnal.
- c. So our chapter ended with these **worthless men** asking the following question, "**How can this man save us?**"
- d. Today, in chapter 11 we see God's response to that very question. "**How can this man save us? Through the Power of the Holy Spirit.**"

2. Verses 1-3: The World's Hatred for God and His People:

Then Nahash the Ammonite went up and besieged Jabesh-Gilead, and all the men of Jabesh said to Nahash, "Make a treaty with us, and we will serve you." (2) But Nahash the Ammonite said to them, "On this condition, I will make a treaty with you, that I gouge out all your right eyes, and thus bring disgrace on all Israel." (3) The elders of Jabesh said to him, "Give us seven days respite that we may send messengers through all the territory of Israel. Then, if there is no one to **save us**, we will give ourselves up to you."

- a. Our passage begins with the people of God facing significant persecution. Nahash, the Ammonite king, was besieging Jabesh-Gilead.
- b. The men of Jabesh-Gilead, knowing their inability to defend themselves from such overwhelming odds, immediately asked for terms of peace. They intend to surrender to preserve their lives. They are willing to agree to be Nahash's servants.
- c. Beloved, look with what malice the world would treat the people of God. Nahash's condition for surrender was the gouging out of each man's right eye! This would mean never-ending servitude because it would make it impossible for the men ever to fight back. With the right eye gone, they could never be of military service.
 - i. But Nahash intended more than making the men unfit for military service. We read that Nahash's motive included, "...**bringing disgrace on all Israel.**"

- ii. Nahash wanted to humiliate God’s people, all of them! By doing so, he intended to heap scorn on God Himself.
 - 1. Nahash appears to be a type of Satan that would like nothing more than to neutralize God’s people and bring scorn upon the name of God.
- iii. When the men of Jabesh-Gilead ask for time to see if anyone within Israel would come to their rescue, the arrogant Nahash allows them seven days. Nahash is sure that Israel could never organize herself militarily. They hadn’t in years.
 - 1. Remember, up to this point, Israel had been a people who rarely trusted in God and therefore had suffered great military defeats. Nahash’s answer to the request was essentially, “Get help if you can find it!”
- d. Beloved, this arrogance, this hatred for God’s people has never ceased. The desire to destroy God’s people is always present in this world, and we have seen what harm has been done to the church of God throughout the ages by men like Nahash. The Spirit warns us in this regard:
 - i. **1 John 3:13** Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you.
 - 1. Of course, the world must hate the believer. The believer declares that the world system is corrupt, its methodology is evil, and allegiance to the world leads to eternal death.

ii. Scriptures teach that to be a friend of Jesus incurs the wrath of this world.

1. **John 15:14-15** You are my friends if you do what I command you. (15) No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.

a. What a wonderful blessing we have before us.

We, if we are in Christ, are friends of Christ.

b. Yet, this friendship with the Son always leads to worldly persecution.

2. **John 15:18-19** “If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. (19) If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

3. We read this same truth in the negative sense in **James 4:4** You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

a. We cannot have it both ways. We never could!

iii. Like Nahash, Satan hates God, and therefore he wages war on His people.

e. The people ask for a deliverer, but who will this deliverer be? It is certainly not Saul. Saul, on his own, is equally as helpless as the people. The deliverer is the Spirit of God.

3. Verses 4-11: God's Enabling Spirit: When the messengers came to Gibeah of Saul, they reported the matter in the ears of the people, and all the people wept aloud. (5) Now, behold, Saul was coming from the field behind the oxen. And Saul said, "What is wrong with the people, that they are weeping?" So they told him the news of the men of Jabesh. (6) And the Spirit of God rushed upon Saul when he heard these words, and his anger was greatly kindled. (7) He took a yoke of oxen and cut them in pieces and sent them throughout all the territory of Israel by the hand of the messengers, saying, "Whoever does not come out after Saul and Samuel, so shall it be done to his oxen!" Then the dread of the LORD fell upon the people, and they came out as one man. (8) When he mustered them at Bezek, the people of Israel were three hundred thousand, and the men of Judah thirty thousand. (9) And they said to the messengers who had come, "Thus shall you say to the men of Jabesh-Gilead: 'Tomorrow, by the time the sun is hot, you shall have salvation.'" When the messengers came and told the men of Jabesh, they were glad. (10) Therefore the men of Jabesh said, "Tomorrow we will give ourselves up to you, and you may do to us whatever seems good to you." (11) And the next day Saul put the people in three companies. And they came into the midst of the camp in

the morning watch and struck down the Ammonites until the heat of the day. And those who survived were scattered, so that no two of them were left together.

a. So the message goes out throughout Israel and arrives at the tribe of Benjamin. Notice the reaction of the people as they realize the danger presented at Jabesh-Gilead. This danger is compounded by the sad fact that Israel was, at this point, unable to muster themselves into a united army. The tears of hopelessness begin to flow. What can Israel do against such a formidable host? Nothing!

i. This passage points to our natural weakness and impotence.

ii. Remember the truth of **John 15:5** I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

b. But we start to see God's deliverance in verses 5-6. We read that Saul came in from his work. When Saul heard the awful news, "**the Spirit of God rushed upon Saul,**" and beloved, this truth makes all the difference in the world.

i. Saul, because of the Spirit, calls the people to battle under the penalty of death.

1. **The dread of the Lord fell upon the people (not the fear of Saul), and they came out as one man.** Already we see the power of God's Spirit at work. What they could not do in a lifetime, God accomplishes in a matter of hours. The people are

suddenly and inexplicably united to do God's work. They **come out as one man**.

- a. Therefore, we see a new standing militia of 300,000 Israelites and 30,000 men from Judah. Only God can move hearts in this manner.
- ii. Saul's newly formed militia marches all night to help the people.
 1. Again, we see the Spirit calling, equipping, and empowering men to do God's will. May that same Spirit be upon us today and always.
- iii. Saul's forces arrive at Nahash's camp between 2:00 to 6:00 am. They route the enemy that just hours before seemed so formidable, and caused such great weeping. How can a new and untrained militia so easily defeat a vastly superior and trained foe? They can't. The battle should have gone the other way. Israel should have suffered a crushing defeat. But God's Spirit is in the business of using weak and unable people, like you and me and imbue them with His power to accomplish Kingdom work.
 1. This is not a story of a great military victory. This is a story of a great Holy Spirit-fought battle. It is one story in so many in which we see God fighting for His people!
 - a. **Zechariah 4:6** Then he said to me, "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the LORD of hosts.

2. Oh, that we would all learn this truth today. It is my prayer that we would learn to lean upon that same Spirit for spiritual success.
 3. **Commentary:** Israel cannot afford to miss the point: Salvation came not because Israel had a king but because that king had Yahweh's Spirit; it is not the institution of kingship but the power of the Spirit that brings deliverance. Nor can the church afford to miss this point. It is simply Christ's Old Testament way of saying, "Without me, you can do nothing."
- iv. Beloved, notice what God has done. Our story began with this destroying and evil king, Nahash but ends with the delivering king smashing the kingdom of darkness and bringing forth the light of salvation's new day.
1. All might appear dark today as this world persecutes and troubles God's people, but our deliver, Jesus Christ, is on His way to rescue us at the dawning of the new day. Like Saul, he is traveling all night to get to us. He will usher in the day of the Lord. Just like Saul sent messengers to Jabesh-Gilead with the message of his imminent arrival, so has Christ sent us this truth through His Word. Christ is coming to fight for us and deliver us from our greatest foe. Just like the men of Jabesh-Gilead were encouraged by the news of the coming king so that fear fled them, so should we trust in God's words and cast

away all doubt. King Jesus is coming to deliver His people.

4. Verses 12 and 13: Grace toward Sinners: Then the people said to Samuel, “Who is it that said, ‘Shall Saul reign over us?’ Bring the men, that we may put them to death.” (13) But Saul said, “Not a man shall be put to death this day, for today the LORD has worked salvation in Israel.”
- a. After the victory, the people recognize the anointing of God upon Saul. They must have reasoned that such a victory was impossible without God’s Spirit. Those that had rejected the king now have their eyes open to their terrible sinfulness. He whom they had rejected was indeed God’s king and Savior. The king will always be vindicated!
 - i. So the people demand that those who rejected the king (as men do today) be put to death. This was and continues to be a just punishment for rejecting God’s King.
 1. We know that God, in His mercy, has sent to us a deliverer, one to save us from our sin and bring us into the eternal kingdom. What should be done with the **worthless people** that reject so great an act of love, mercy, and grace? Death seems fitting and promised to those that reject the true King.
 - ii. But I was hoping you could notice the mercy and grace of the king. As God’s anointed, Saul does not immediately act against these men but allows them to

live. The miraculous victory and the grace demonstrated was enough grace to melt these hardened hearts so that they, too, joined the rest of Israel and honored God's king.

1. Is this not the same work of God's Spirit in our lives? Did you not often and sinfully reject Christ? It is a wonder that God does not execute all of us as **worthless individuals**. Instead, God holds his peace and grants us new eyes to see Christ as the deliverer and Savior that He truly is. Then, by grace extended, when we recognize the depth of our Sin against Christ's kingship, God forgives us and causes us to join His people. Our Sin against King Jesus is forgiven, and we are now to rejoice with joy inexpressible. Oh, the incredible merciful nature of our God.

2. King Saul's mercy and grace are rooted in God. Notice his words at the end of verse 13, "**for today the LORD has worked salvation in Israel.**" God had saved Israel and not Saul. God had been merciful to His people. Could Saul show any less mercy to those men around him?

5. Verses 14 and 15: Renewing the Kingdom: Then Samuel said to the people, "Come, let us go to Gilgal and there renew the kingdom." (15) So all the people went to Gilgal, and there they made Saul king before the LORD in Gilgal. There they sacrificed peace offerings before the LORD, and there Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly.

- a. Many scholars believe that the renewal of the kingdom refers first and foremost to God’s Kingdom. The people now unanimously accepted God’s anointed, and then **they offered peace offerings before the Lord**. The people are asking to be reconciled to such a great God of mercy and Grace. They had understood their sin against God in trying to substitute a man for His Divine rule. Despite their Sin, God the Holy Spirit had delivered them. Even through their weakness and sinfulness, God had saved them.
- i. Israel had, so many times in the past, forgotten their God. They became loyal to other things and other people, committing the sin of idolatry.
 - ii. But God will be a God of mercy. Through Samuel, God calls them to confess their sin and submit in allegiance to His kindly rule. Here, we see these wayward people returning to their first and best love.
 - iii. **Commentary**: Christians today face the same demand that Samuel placed upon Israel. Again and again, we are to “**renew our allegiance to the kingdom.**”
 1. We are prone to wander.
 2. Yet, Jesus continually calls us to Himself.
 - a. **Matthew 6:33** But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.
 - b. The Christian life should be a life of continual repentance, ever in need of renewing its

allegiance to the rule of God through His appointed One, King Jesus.

6. Benediction:

- a. **Revelation 19:16** On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.

**Public Reading of the Scripture
Revelation 19:11-16**