

Rallying Under Humble Leadership

In 1st Samuel 11, we see a pivotal moment when Israel, threatened by the Ammonites, is delivered by a leader God raised from unexpected beginnings. After Saul—once hidden and unassuming—is called forth and anointed as king, his true test comes when the Ammonite king demands an outrageous tribute: that the men of Jabesh-Gilead pluck out their right eyes as a sign of submission.

Saul's response is nothing short of bold. Instead of yielding to fear or humiliation, he cuts up the oxen he was plowing with and sends the pieces throughout Israel, declaring, ***“So shall the man's oxen be cut up who does not come with me!”*** This call to arms stirred the people—three hundred thousand from Israel and thirty thousand from Judah gathered to fight. In a dramatic battle, Saul led them to a resounding victory, decimating the enemy until not two were left together (1st Samuel 11:1–11, NKJV).

What strikes me most is not only the military triumph but also the character displayed by Saul at this early stage. Despite being chosen to lead, Saul never boasted about his anointing or his royal appointment. When his own family joked about his journey—claiming they “got lost” and that Samuel only mentioned the return of the donkeys—Saul simply accepted the message without self-promotion. His humility shone through, even as those who opposed his kingship, the so-called “children of Belial,” stirred dissent. Yet Saul's response was marked by grace: he insisted, ***“God has wrought salvation for Israel today,”*** urging unity and discouraging recrimination among his people (1st Samuel 11:12–13, NKJV).

Reflecting on this passage, I'm reminded of several personal lessons:

- **Embrace Humility in Leadership:**
Like Saul at the beginning, true leadership isn't about self-promotion or pride—it's about serving God and the people with a humble heart. Even when God elevates us for a purpose, we are called to remain modest and to give all glory to Him.
- **Respond Boldly in the Face of Adversity:**
When confronted with impossible challenges, it can be tempting to back down or settle for less. Saul's decisive action—symbolized by his dramatic call to battle—reminds me that God often equips us with the strength to overcome the giants in our lives when we trust in His plan.
- **Unity Over Division:**
Despite opposition from dissenters, Saul's focus was on rallying the nation to trust in God's deliverance. In our own lives, unity—whether in family, church, or community—is essential. When we come together under God's guidance, even the most daunting challenges can be met with confidence and hope.
- **Remember Past Victories:**
Just as the people of Israel celebrated their victory by reaffirming Saul's kingship, I'm encouraged to remember and celebrate the ways God has delivered me in the past. These

07-Bible Reading Study Notes

1st Samuel Chapter 11

“Ebenezer moments” serve as powerful reminders that if God has brought me this far, He will continue to lead me through every challenge.

As we face our own battles—be they personal struggles, relational conflicts, or professional challenges—may we learn from Saul’s early example: to trust in God’s power, to lead with humility, and to rally those around us for the common good. Let’s hold fast to the truth that God works through our willingness to step forward, unafraid to embrace the calling He places on our lives.

Let us rejoice in His salvation each day, echoing the cry, “God save the King,” not as a self-glorification, but as a celebration of the One who saves us all.