

16.02 Saul Fights Ammonites; Hagrites; Confirmed King (1 Samuel 11:1-15; 1 Chron 5:18-22)

✓ “*Check*” it out; opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows

[. . .] indicates a remark to the teacher that usually should not be read. It also indicates answers to questions.

Visuals and Tools:

- Pictures and other visuals found at the end of this lesson. Please give credit to the sources of pictures.
- Check “Activities” and “Handwork” found below for additional materials.
- A poster board crown with small pictures to indicate Samuel's warnings about the demands of a king

Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach: Vocabulary words are enlarged for flashcards at the end of this lesson. Print, cut out, and glue to card stock, or just print on colorful cardstock.

- (None for this lesson)

Scripture: (ESV)

1 Samuel 11:1 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.” 4 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.

12 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.” 14 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.

1 Chron 5:18 The Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh had valiant men who carried shield and sword, and drew the bow, expert in war, 44,760, able to go to war. 19 They waged war against the Hagrites, Jetur, Naphish, and Nodab. 20 And when they prevailed over them, the Hagrites and all who were with them were given into their hands, for they cried out to God in the battle, and he granted their urgent plea because they trusted in him. 21 They carried off their livestock: 50,000 of their camels, 250,000 sheep, 2,000 donkeys, and 100,000 men alive. 22 For many fell, because the war was of God. And they lived in their place until the exile.

Introduction/Review:

Saul was chosen by God to be Israel's first king. How tall was he? [Head and shoulders taller than everyone else.] How handsome was he? [More handsome than any other man in Israel.] When Saul became king, did the people immediately build him a palace? No. He went back home to Gibeah of Benjamin [locate], which was five to six miles north of Jerusalem. (Gibeah is the same city where wicked men were the cause for the civil war against Benjamin.)

Story:

Did everyone like Saul, handsome and tall as he was? No. Some, whom God had touched, respected Saul and went with him to Gibeah. Others, called "sons of Belial," said, "How shall this man save us?" They despised him and gave him no presents, which the others apparently did.

Jabesh Gilead's danger

Jabesh Gilead [locate east of Jordan in Gilead], the town where 400 maidens had become wives for the men of Benjamin who survived the civil war, was about to be attacked. King Nahash of the Ammonites, descendants of Lot, intended to slay the people of this city. How could the Jabesh Gileadites avert sure destruction? By making peace—fast! They offered a deal: "Make a covenant/peace treaty with us, and we will be your servants." They probably thought that being living servants, even to an enemy, would be better than being dead.

"Okay," answered Nahash, the Ammonite enemy. "We will make a covenant with you on one condition."

"What is that condition?"

"That we will put out all your right eyes so that all Israel will look like weaklings!" In those days, shields covered the left eye. If a man had no right eye, he could not see to fight and therefore could not be a soldier [unknown source].

The men of Jabesh answered, "Give us seven days to send messengers throughout Israel to see if anyone will help save us from you. If no one comes to save us, we will do as you say."

Seven days. Would that be enough time to cross the Jordan, get to the tribes, have them decide to come, and get back to fight? Maybe not. What could they do? Aha! The new king! They would send a message to the new king and see what he would do.

Saul's preparation

Saul was coming in from the field, bringing his herd of cattle, when he heard people crying and wailing. (Even though he had been anointed king, he was still taking care of his own cattle.)

"What's wrong with the people that they are crying?" he asked.

"Messengers from Jabesh have told us Nahash of Ammon will put out their right eyes and make them his servants if they don't get help from Israel."

The Bible says the Spirit of God came upon Saul when he heard this news, and he became very angry for the sake of the lives of those in Jabesh Gilead. He cut up two oxen and sent messengers with the pieces to all Israel with this message: "If you don't come with Saul and Samuel, your oxen will look like this."

That was a serious threat, and the men of war came! Three hundred thousand from most of Israel and 30,000 from Judah came because "the fear of the Lord fell on the people." They all gathered in Bezek and sent messengers back to Jabesh, saying, "Tomorrow by the time the sun is hot, you will have help."

"Yippee!" or "Praise the Lord!" the men of Jabesh might have said. The Bible tells us they were glad. They went to meet Nahash, saying, "Tomorrow we will come out to you, and you shall do what seems right to you." They meant that Israel would come out and fight, but Nahash thought, "We will make these men our servants tomorrow by taking out their right eyes."

Ammonites' defeat

Meanwhile, Saul and the 330,000 Israelites were marching sixty miles to the Jordan River, crossing the Jordan, and dividing into three groups so that they could surround the enemy that had surrounded Jabesh. The Israelites arrived sometime between 2:00 a.m. and sunrise and began their attack. They continued until the day got hot, but by that time, the Ammonites were so defeated that you couldn't find even two of them together. Each one that survived ran away by himself.

What a great victory for Israel! What a great king they had in Saul. He had proved himself to be a great leader!

Now where were those men of Belial who didn't appreciate Saul? "Let's put them to death," shouted the people.

But Saul responded, "No one will be put to death today, for today the Lord has saved Israel."

Wasn't that good of Saul? Wasn't it great of God to give such a wonderful victory?

Saul's coronation

After this battle, Samuel rallied the people, saying, "Come, let us go to Gilgal and there renew the kingdom." So all the people went to Gilgal, and there they confirmed Saul to be king. The coronation ceremony before the LORD in Gilgal included sacrificing peace offerings to the LORD. Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly.

Two and one-half tribes' victory

After this event, another battle took place near this same place, but we don't read that Saul led the armed forces this time. The Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh—the tribes east of the Jordan—had expert soldiers. They could fight with shield and sword and with bow and arrow. The number of these valiant men was 44,760.

Perhaps they had been encouraged to be brave because of the Lord's victory at Jabesh, for they waged war against a people called the Hagarites [locate on second map found below], who lived east of the two and one-half tribes. In this war, these tribes also had full victory over their enemies, the Hagarites, for "they cried out to God in the battle, and He granted their urgent plea because they trusted in him." Israel's spoil from this war was 50,000 camels, 250,000 sheep, 2,000 donkeys, and 100,000 men. God won this war, as He had so many others, and He gave great wealth to the people.

Lessons from this lesson:

- We see Jesus:

The Spirit of God came upon Saul so that he could do the work God had for him. Sadly, the Spirit later departed from Saul. On the other hand, the Spirit never departed from Jesus Christ. He *always* worked, being led by the Holy Spirit: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed" (Luke 4:18).

Activities:

- Play dough: oxen (perhaps cut up); sword; shield; bow; arrows
- Snack: Fruits like strawberries, blueberries, orange sections, *etc.*, that can be skewered with plastic sword toothpicks.
- Discuss Saul's anger upon hearing of the Jabesh predicament. Why was it not sinful anger? (1) The Spirit of God came upon him; the Spirit doesn't sin. (2) He was angry for righteousness, not selfishness.
- Review questions: (Game: Use the seven day numbers as they were used in Lesson 16.01.)
 1. Who besieged Jabesh Gilead? [Nahash, the king of the Ammonites.]

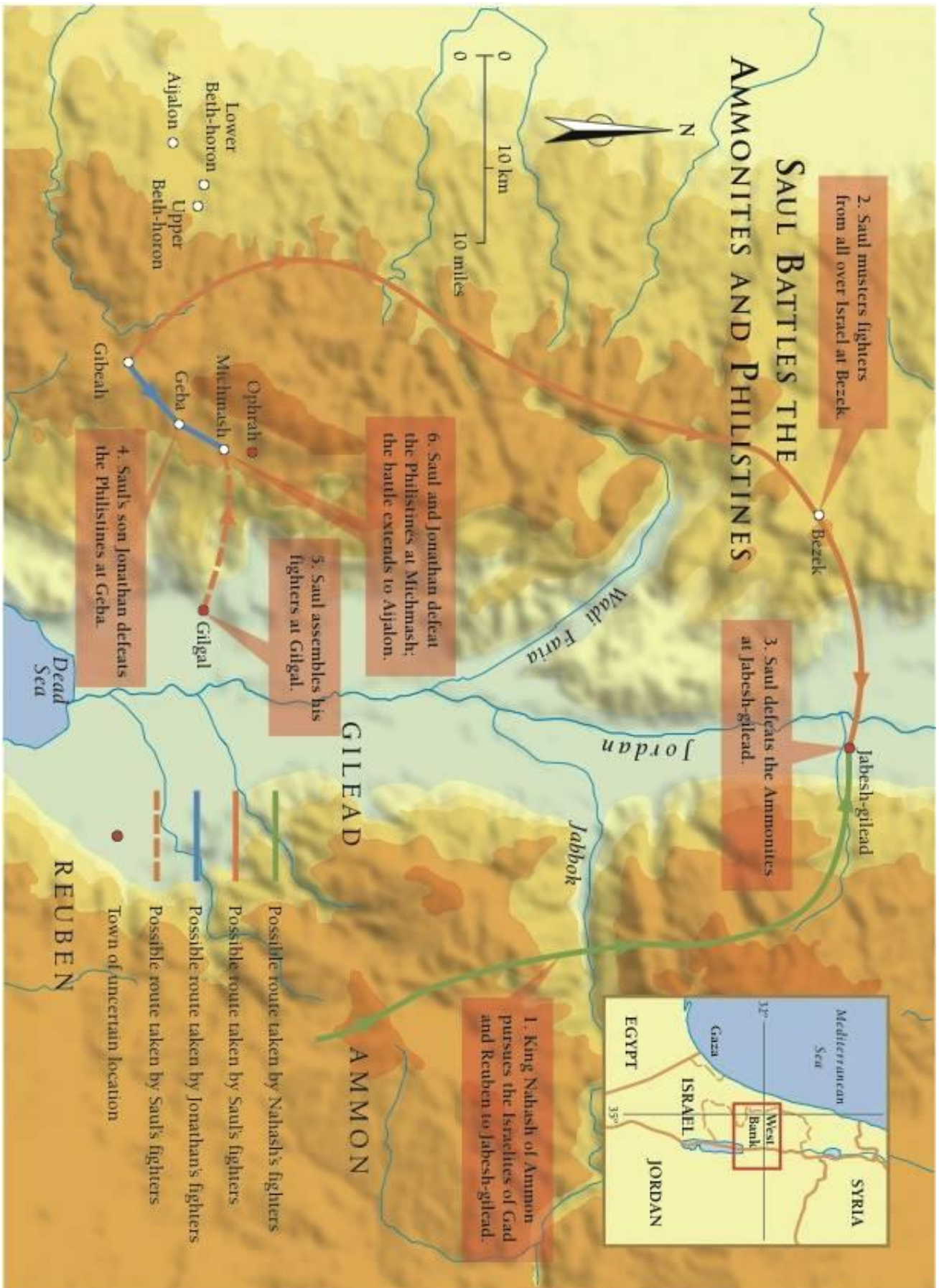
2. What was the condition Nahash required if Jabesh was to make a covenant with them? [To gouge out the right eyes of all the men of Jabesh.]
3. Why did the men of Jabesh ask for seven days before making the covenant? [To call upon all Israel for help.]
4. How did Saul recruit soldiers to go to Jabesh? [He cut a yoke of oxen in pieces and sent them throughout all Israel, saying, “Whoever does not come out after Saul and Samuel, so shall it be done to his oxen!”]
5. [This question is optional.] How many Israelites showed up to fight? [330,000.]
6. Who won the battle, Israel or Ammon? [Israel.]
7. What did Saul say when men wanted to slay those who had spoken against him? [“Not a man shall be put to death this day, for today the LORD has worked salvation in Israel.”]
8. What did all Israel do at Gilgal? Tell one thing. [They made Saul king before the LORD; they sacrificed peace offerings before the LORD; Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly.]

Memory Verse[s]:

- 1 Samuel 12:24: Only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider what great things he has done for you.

Handwork:

- For King Saul, use a drawing of one of the wise men found at [Children Biblical Centre - CBC: CBC Lesson from the 23rd to 29th December \(ukcbc.blogspot.com\)](http://ukcbc.blogspot.com). Color and cut out the parts. Glue the feet to the hem of the robe and glue the crown to the head. Place arms at shoulders. Snap sewing snaps at the shoulder joints.





<http://deeperchristian.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/2Samuel11-1.jpg>

