

~NAHASH 1 (230)
(Na'hash) [Serpent]

- King of the Ammonites at the time Saul began his reign. **Nahash** brought his army against Jabesh in Gilead. The account reads; At that all the men of Jabesh said to Nahash; Conclude a covenant with us that we may serve you.
- Then **Nahash** the Ammonite said to them; On this condition I shall conclude it with you, on the condition of boring out every right eye of yours, and I must put it as a reproach upon all Israel.
- In turn the older men of Jabesh said to him; Give us seven days time, and we will send messengers into all the territory of Israel and, if there is no savior of us, we must then go out to you.
- Israel rallied around Saul, went to Jabesh, and defeated Nahash. Only a few of **Nahash's** army escaped alive.
- And **Nahash** the Ammonite proceeded to go up and camp against Jabesh in Gilead. At that all the men of Jabesh said to **Nahash**; Conclude a covenant with us that we may serve you. (**1 Samuel 11:1**)
- Then **Nahash** the Ammonite said to them; On this condition I shall conclude it with you, on the condition of boring out every right eye of yours, and I must put it as a reproach upon all Israel. (**1 Samuel 11:2**)
- In turn the older men of Jabesh said to him; Give us seven days time, and we will send messengers into all the territory of Israel and, if there is no savior of us, we must then go out to you. (**1 Samuel 11:3**)
- In time the messengers came to Gibeah of Saul and spoke the words in the ears of the people, and all the people began raising their voice and weeping. (**1 Samuel 11:4**)
- But here is Saul coming after the herd from the field, and Saul proceeded to say; What is the matter with the people, that they should weep? And they began relating to him the words of the men of Jabesh. (**1 Samuel 11:5**)

- **And the spirit of God became operative upon Saul on his hearing these words, and his anger got very hot. (1 Samuel 11:6)**
- **So he took a pair of bulls and cut them in pieces and sent these into all the territory of Israel by the hand of the messengers, saying; Whoever of us is not going out as a follower of Saul and of Samuel, this is the way it will be done to his cattle! And the dread of Yehowah began to fall upon the people so that they came out as one man. (1 Samuel 11:7)**
- **Then he took the sum of them in Bezek, and the sons of Israel amounted to three hundred thousand, and the men of Judah thirty thousand. (1 Samuel 11:8)**
- **They now said to the messengers that had come; This is what you will say to the men of Jabesh in Gilead, Tomorrow salvation will take place for you when the sun gets hot. With that the messengers came and told the men of Jabesh, and they gave way to rejoicing. (1 Samuel 11:9)**
- **Accordingly the men of Jabesh said; Tomorrow we shall come out to you people, and you must do to us in harmony with all that is good in your eyes. (1 Samuel 11:10)**
- **And it came about on the next day that Saul proceeded to put the people into three bands, and they made their way into the middle of the camp during the morning watch and went striking down the Ammonites till the day grew hot. When there proved to be some that were left over, then they were sent scattering and there were not left over among them two together. (1 Samuel 11:11)**
- **And Yehowah proceeded to send Jerubbaal and Bedan and Jephthah and Samuel and deliver you out of the hand of your enemies all around, that you might dwell in security. (1 Samuel 12:11)**
- **When you saw that **Nahash** the king of the sons of Ammon had come against you, you kept saying to me, No, but a king is what should reign over us! All the while Yehowah your God being your King. (1 Samuel 12:12)**

- In a Dead Sea scroll, designated 4QSam^a and believed to be from the First Century B.C.E, the following information is inserted just before,
- And **Nahash** the Ammonite proceeded to go up and camp against Jabesh in Gilead. At that all the men of Jabesh said to **Nahash**; Conclude a covenant with us that we may serve you. (1 Samuel 11:1)
- **Nahash**, king of the children of Ammon, sorely oppressed the children of Gad and the children of Reuben, and he gouged out all their right eyes and struck terror and dread in Israel. There was not left one among the children of Israel beyond the Jordan whose right eye was not put out by **Nahash** king of the children of Ammon, except that seven thousand men fled from the children of Ammon and entered Jabesh-Gilead.
- About a month later [Bible Review, 1985, Vol. 1, No. 3, p. 28] Basically the same information is given by Josephus. [Jewish Antiquities, VI, 68-70, v, 1]
- According to Josephus [Jewish Antiquities, VI, 79, v, 3], this **Nahash** was killed in the battle by Saul's forces. If Josephus information is correct, then the Nahash that extended kindness to David some years later must have been a son and successor to the **Nahash** defeated by Saul.
- In such a case, the name **Nahash** may have been a title bestowed on a series of persons, like the titles, **Abimelech**, **Pharaoh**, and **Jabin**. When this second-named **Nahash** died, David sent ambassadors to his son Hanun, who misunderstood David's honorable intentions and greatly humiliated his representatives.
- This, in turn, triggered a series of developments that eventually left the Ammonites defeated at the hands of David.
- And it came about afterward that the king of the sons of Ammon came to die, and Hanun his son began to reign instead of him. (2 Samuel 10:1)
- At this David said; I shall exercise loving-kindness toward Hanun the son of **Nahash**, just as his father exercised loving-kindness toward me. Accordingly David sent by means of his servants to comfort him over his father, and the servants of David proceeded to come into the land of the sons of Ammon. (2 Samuel 10:2)

- **However, the princes of the sons of Ammon said to Hanun their lord; Is David honoring your father in your eyes in that he has sent to you comforters? Is it not for the sake of searching through the city and to spy it out and to overthrow it that David has sent his servants to you? (2 Samuel 10:3)**
- **So Hanun took the servants of David and shaved off half their beards and cut their garments in half to their buttocks and sent them away. (2 Samuel 10:4)**
- **Later people reported it to David, and he at once sent to meet them, because the men had come to feeling very humiliated, and the king went on to say; Dwell in Jericho until your beards grow abundantly. Then you must return. (2 Samuel 10:5)**
- **And it came about at the return of the year, at the time that kings sally forth, that David proceeded to send Joab and his servants with him and all Israel, that they might bring the sons of Ammon to ruin and lay siege to Rabbah, while David was dwelling in Jerusalem. (2 Samuel 11:1)**
- **And Joab continued to fight against Rabbah of the sons of Ammon and got to capture the city of the kingdom. (2 Samuel 12:26)**
- **So Joab sent messengers to David and said; I have fought against Rabbah. I have also captured the city of waters. (2 Samuel 12:27)**
- **And now gather the rest of the people and encamp against the city, and capture it, that I myself may not be the one to capture the city, and my name should not have to be called upon it. (2 Samuel 12:28)**
- **Accordingly David gathered all the people and went to Rabbah and fought against it and captured it. (2 Samuel 12:29)**
- **And he got to take the crown of Malcam off its head, the weight of which was a talent of gold, along with precious stones, and it came to be upon David's head. And the spoil of the city that he brought out was very much. (2 Samuel 12:30)**
- **And the people that were in it, he brought out that he might put**

them at sawing stones and at sharp instruments of iron and at axes of iron, and he made them serve at brickmaking. And that was the way he proceeded to do to all the cities of the sons of Ammon. Finally David and all the people returned to Jerusalem. (2 Samuel 12:31)

- And it came about afterward that **Nahash** the king of the sons of Ammon came to die, and his son began to reign in place of him. (1 Chronicles 19:1)
- At that David said; I shall exercise loving-kindness toward Hanun the son of **Nahash**, because his father exercised loving-kindness toward me. Accordingly David sent messengers to comfort him over his father, and the servants of David proceeded to come into the land of the sons of Ammon to Hanun to comfort him. (1 Chronicles 19:2)
- However, the princes of the sons of Ammon said to Hanun; Is David honoring your father in your eyes in that he has sent comforters to you? Is it not for the sake of making a thorough search and causing an overthrow and for spying out the land that his servants have come in to you? (1 Chronicles 19:3)
- So Hanun took the servants of David and shaved them and cut their garments in half to their buttocks and sent them away. (1 Chronicles 19:4)
- Later people went and told David about the men, and he at once sent to meet them, because they had become men very much humiliated, and the king went on to say; Dwell in Jericho until your beards grow abundantly. Then you must return. (1 Chronicles 19:5)
- And it came about at the time of the years return, at the time that kings sally forth, that Joab proceeded to lead the combat force of the army and lay the land of the sons of Ammon in ruin and to come and besiege Rabbah, while David was dwelling in Jerusalem, and Joab went on to strike Rabbah and throw it down. (1 Chronicles 20:1)
- But David took the crown of Malcam off its head, and found it to be a talent of gold in weight, and in it there were precious stones, and it came to be on David's head. And the spoil of the city that he brought out was very much. (1 Chronicles 20:2)

- **And the people that were in it he brought out, and he kept them employed at sawing stones and at sharp instruments of iron and at axes, and that was the way David proceeded to do to all the cities of the sons of Ammon. Finally David and all the people returned to Jerusalem. (1 Chronicles 20:3)**