

1 Samuel 11:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the elders of Jabesh said unto him, Give us seven days' respite, that we may send messengers unto all the coasts of Israel: and then, if there be no man to save us, we will come out to thee.

Analysis

And the elders of Jabesh said unto him, Give us seven days' respite, that we may send messengers unto all the coasts of Israel: and then, if there be no man to save us, we will come out to thee.

The elders' request for seven days reveals both their desperate straits and, remarkably, Nahash's overconfidence. That he grants this respite suggests his certainty that no help would come - a miscalculation rooted in his underestimation of Israel's God. The appeal to 'all the coasts of Israel' represents a final desperate hope that the scattered tribes might unite. This moment exposes the fundamental weakness of the pre-monarchical period: no central authority existed to coordinate national defense.

Historical Context

The seven-day period allowed messengers to travel throughout Israel. The fragmented nature of the tribal confederation meant military response required voluntary cooperation. The period of judges had seen repeated failures of inter-tribal unity (Judges 5:15-17).

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 – God is love

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does God sometimes use desperate situations to accomplish His purposes?
2. When has an enemy's overconfidence led to their downfall in your experience?

Interlinear Text

ל	נו	בְּרִאָה	יְבִשָּׁה	יְהִי	אֶל	יְאִמָּר	וְ
said	H413	And the elders	of Jabesh	respite	H0		
H559		H2205	H3003	H7503			
unto him	Give us seven	days	that we may send	messengers	H3605		
H7651		H3117	H7971	H4397			
unto all the coasts	of Israel	H518	H369	and then if there be no man to save	H3467		
H1366	H3478						
אתנו	וְאֶלְכָּה	אֶלְכָּה	אֶלְכָּה	אֶלְכָּה	אֶלְכָּה	אֶלְכָּה	אֶלְכָּה
H853	us we will come out	H413					
	H3318						