

Commentary on 1st Samuel Chapters 7 and 8, by Chuck Smith 7.28.21

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**Reminder: Back to School sales are great places to stock upon stuff
for shoe boxes**

July memory verse, Exodus 14:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ The LORD will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace."

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Chapter 7

And so the men of Kirjathjearim came, and they took the ark of the Lord; and they brought it to the house of Abinadab on the hill, and sanctified Eleazar the son to keep the ark of the Lord. And it came to pass, while the ark was there at Kirjathjearim, it was there for a long time; for twenty years: and all the house of Israel lamented after the Lord. And Samuel spake to all the house of Israel, saying, If you do return unto the Lord with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth [Now Ashtaroth was the goddess of sexual love, and the fertility goddess, and they were, the children of Israel worshipping Ashtaroth, and he said, "Put away the gods and Ashtaroth,"] from among you, and prepare your hearts to the Lord, serve him only: and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines. So the children of Israel put away Baalim and Ashtaroth, and they served the Lord only. And Samuel said, Gather all Israel to Mizpeh, and I will pray for you unto the Lord. And so they gathered together at Mizpeh, and they drew water, and poured it out before the Lord, and he fasted on that day, and said, We have sinned against the Lord. And Samuel judged the children of Israel in Mizpeh. Now when the Philistines heard that they had gathered to Mizpeh, they set up the army against them. And the children of Israel were afraid of the Philistines. And they said to Samuel, Cease not to cry unto the Lord our God for us, that he will save us out of the hand of the Philistines. And Samuel took a suckling lamb, and offered it as a burnt offering wholly unto the Lord: and Samuel cried unto the Lord for Israel; and the Lord heard him. [Now Samuel beginning to exercise his ministry of intercessory prayer.] And as Samuel was offering up the

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burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel: but the Lord thundered with a great thunder on that day on the Philistines, and discomfited them; and they were smitten before Israel. And the men of Israel went out of Mizpeh, and pursued the Philistines, and smote them, until they came to Bethcar. And then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called it Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us ([1Sa 7:1-12](#)).

The Ebenezer stone. The word means "the stone of help". Now we sing the song, "Come the fount of every blessing to my heart to sing thy praise. Streams of mercy never ceasing, call for songs of loudest praise." Second verse, "Here I raise mine Ebenezer", and you've probably been singing that all your life. What in the world are you raising? "Here I raise mine Ebenezer, hither by Thy help that comes." Actually, it's a stone of memorial, it's a memory kind of a stone. Here I set the stone. God has helped me thus far. God has brought me this far along.

Now actually that's something we can set up every day. You set up Ebenezer, "Well, God brought me this far." Now in that there is always encouragement and hope. For God brought me this far not to dump me. If He wanted to dump me, He would've dumped me a long time ago. Hitherto hath the Lord helped me. The help of the Lord in the past is a prophecy of the help of the Lord in the future. The fact that God has helped me up to this point, gives me assurance He's gonna see me all the way. For the Lord will complete that which concerns you, having begun a good work in your life, He is going to finish it, He's going to complete it. So it is healthy sometimes to set up that memorial "Well God has brought me this far, surely He's not gonna leave me now. He's not gonna forsake me now. Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

So this was the beginning of the turn of the tide against the Philistines. Up to this point the Philistines had been beating them at every turn, every battle. Now this is the first turn of the tide against the Philistines, and as they came out he set up that stone, he said, "All right the Lord has helped us this far." The first of the beginning of God's work in bringing them victory over their enemies.

So as God brings victories in your lives, set up your Ebenezer stone, "Well, praise the Lord He helped me this far." Stones that mark the places of victory and God's work in my life.

So the Philistines were subdued, they came no more into the coast of Israel: during all the days of Samuel. And the cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored, from Ekron even to Gath; there was peace between Israel and the Amorites. And Samuel judged all the days of his life, judged Israel. And then he went from year to year in a circuit [So he was sort of a circuit prophet.]

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and he would go from Bethel, to Gilgal, to Mizpeh, and then return to his home in Ramah ([1Sa 7:13-17](#));

Which is the modern city of Ram Allah just north of Israel.

Chapter 8

Now it came to pass, when Samuel was old, he made his sons the judges over Israel. And the name of his firstborn was Joel; the second was Abiah: and they were judges in Beersheba. [Which is in the south.] But his sons did not walk in his ways, but they turned aside after lucre, they took bribes, and perverted judgment ([1Sa 8:1-3](#)).

So here's an unfortunate thing. A godly man Samuel, and yet his sons were crooked. These guys were taking bribes, they had coveted after money, they would pervert judgment for bribes.

So all the elders of Israel came to Samuel there at Ramah, And they said, Behold, you are old, but your sons are not walking in your ways: so make us a king to judge us like all the nations. [So now the demand of all of the elders of Israel in order that they might have a king like the rest of the nations.] The thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the Lord. The Lord said to Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people: for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me, from being king over them ([1Sa 8:4-7](#)).

Now a nation that is governed by God is a theocracy. These people were rejecting now a theocratic form of government and they were demanding now a monarchy. "We want a king like the other nations." It is a sad step down in their history when they rejected God from being king. However it was because God was not being faithfully represented to them by their rulers, that they were demanding a king like the other nations. The Lord said, "You tell them what a monarchy is going to entail."

So Samuel told the people all the words of the Lord. When you have a king that reign over you: He's gonna take your sons, he's gonna draft them, and appoint them for himself, and for his chariots, that they might be his horsemen; some shall run before his chariots. He's gonna appoint captains over the thousands, and over the fifties; and he will set them to ear his ground, or to till his soil, to reap his harvest, to make him instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots. And he will take your daughters that they might be his bakers, and cooks, and confectionaries. And he will take your fields, your vineyards, your oliveyards, and the best of them, and he will give them to his servants. You'll have to start paying

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taxes of ten percent. [They had it pretty good.] And he will take your menservants, and your maidservants, and your finest young men, your donkeys, and put them to his work. And he'll take a tenth of your sheep: you'll be his servants. And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen; and the Lord will not hear you in that day. Nevertheless the people said, Fine we want a king that we might be like all the nations; that our king might judge us, go out before us, and fight our battles. So Samuel heard the people, he went back and he said, Lord they still want a king. So the Lord said, Hearken to their voice, and make them a king. And Samuel said to the men of Israel, Go your way every man to his own city ([1Sa 8:10-22](#)).