



“Open Church – Open Bible”

Min. Marossa Davis



Sunday Church School

July 19, 2020

“Samuel’s Leadership Brings Victory - Part 1 ”
I Samuel 7: 1-12

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I Samuel 7: 1-12

- v. 1 “And the men of Kirjath–jearim came, and fetched up the ark of the Lord, and brought it into the house of Abinadab in the hill, and sanctified Eleazar his son to keep the ark of the Lord.
- v. 2 **And it came to pass, while the ark abode in Kirjath–jearim, that the time was long; for it was twenty years: and all the house of Israel lamented after the Lord.**
- v. 3 And Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, If ye do return unto the Lord with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only: and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines.”
- v. 4 **Then the children of Israel did put away Baalim and Ashtaroth, and served the Lord only.**

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I Samuel 7: 1-12

- v. 5 “And Samuel said, Gather all Israel to Mizpeh, and I will pray for you unto the Lord.
- v. 6 **And they gathered together to Mizpeh, and drew water, and poured it out before the Lord, and fasted on that day, and said there, We have sinned against the Lord. And Samuel judged the children of Israel in Mizpeh.**
- v.7 And when the Philistines heard that the children of Israel were gathered together to Mizpeh, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel. And when the children of Israel heard it, they were afraid of the Philistines.”
- v.8 **And the children of Israel 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.”**

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“Samuel’s Leadership Brings Victory - Part 1” I Samuel 7: 1-12

v. 9 “And Samuel took a sucking lamb, and offered it for a burnt offering wholly unto the Lord: and Samuel cried unto the Lord for Israel; and the Lord heard him.

v.10 And as Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel: but the Lord thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them; and they were smitten before Israel.”

v.11 And the men of Israel went out of Mizpeh, and pursued the Philistines, and smote them, until they came under Beth-car.

v.12 Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Eben-ezer, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.”

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“ Samuel’s Leadership Brings Victory - Part 1” Today’s Aim

Facts: to acknowledge that those who desire to be blessed by God must love and worship Him properly.

Principle: to realize that a cavalier attitude toward God or rejection of Him will bring His wrath.

Application: to remember that if we want God to bless us, then it is necessary to repent and acknowledge His total supremacy over our lives.

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“Samuel’s Leadership Brings Victory - Part 1”

Leadership is essential for any group, be it a nation, a family or a Church. All groups have leaders, but the kind of leadership exercised in these groups is critical to their success. Whether one considers ancient Israel or a nation of today, it is clear that both good and bad leaders greatly affect the people they rule over. Samuel is the last of the Judges and the first in a line of prophets. (Acts 3:24) Born to Elkanah and Hannah, Samuel was dedicated to God at birth (I Sam. 1) . He was taken to the tabernacle and raised by Eli the priest. At a young age, Samuel was called by God to his special ministry (chap 3).

The ark of the covenant was the most sacred object in the nation as it symbolized the very presence of God among them. **It’s capture** by the Philistines was seen as a great tragedy and **it’s return** a great blessing. The ark was taken to the home of Abinadab and his son Eleazar was consecrated

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to be the ark’s caretaker. His business was to guard the ark, not only from being seized by malicious Philistines but also from being touched by curious Israelites. Already in Kirjath-jearim for 20 years , the ark would remain there until the time of David when he brought it to Jerusalem which he made the capital. The people **lamented** after the Lord. This means they mourned and sought Him. They longed for Him and wanted to rededicate themselves back to Him.

Israel called to repent. True repentance does not just include sorrow for sin, though that is an essential part (II Cor. 7: 9-10). It also means that people live differently and forsake sin. (Isa. 55:6-7) True repentance begins in mourning after the Lord. Samuel’s message was simple. If they truly wanted to return to the Lord that meant the removal of the ‘ strange gods’ among them. These deities of the nations around them were a source of temptation to them.

Israel turns from false gods (I Sam.4) Baalim and Ashtaroth were the most popular false gods and were the premier fertility gods of that region. If the people were really going to return to the Lord, they must serve Him only as they

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had been directed in the 10 commandments. False gods must be put away or completely removed. If they did this, Samuel promised that God would deliver them from the Philistines. **Israel took Samuel’s exhortation seriously** and complied with his request. But as history reveals this was not permanent and they backslid many times. Even today, believers must be on **constant guard** against slipping back into sin. Hebrews 3:12 reminds us to “Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.”

Confession: Mizpeh (Mizpah) means lookout or watchtower. This particular place was a frequent gathering place for Israel. Samuel summoned the people here for a time of **spiritual renewal** and promised that he would intercede for them at that time. The pouring of water was symbolic of their repentance and

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cleansing. Fasting from food was frequently practiced during times of national repentance. On the Day of Atonement, when blood was sprinkled on the lid of the ark of the covenant, the entire nation was required to fast. Important during any time of spiritual restoration is an acknowledgment of guilt. In verse 6 the people said “...We have sinned against the Lord.” To a large degree many people do not like to admit their personal sinfulness, yet this is the first step toward receiving forgiveness from God. The fact that Samuel **‘judged the children of Israel’** meant that he led them. He was both a spiritual and military leader.

When the Philistines heard that there was a large gathering of Israelites at Mizpeh, they saw a prime opportunity to attack them all at once. This struck fear in the hearts of the Israelites because the Philistines were superior to them militarily and had dominated them for a long time. Instead of despairing in fear,

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the people called on Samuel to pray to God for them, and to keep on praying!

Samuel took a lamb and offered it as a sacrifice to the Lord. The purpose of the burnt offering was to make atonement for sin. While he was preparing, the Philistines drew near to attack the Israelites. God responded by sending a **thunderous** noise that sent the Philistines into a **mass state of confusion**. The text says they were discomfited which means they were panic stricken and confused. The tables turned instantly as Israel counter attacked and pursued the Philistines. The Philistines were subdued and verse 13 tells us that they came no more into the coast of Israel and the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines **all the days of Samuel**. Were it not for Samuel’s leadership, this victory would never have been accomplished. Of course, apart from God’s help, no victory would have been possible, even with Samuel’s excellent leadership.

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As a memorial of their victory, Samuel set up an altar between the towns of Mizpeh and Shen and named it Ebenezer (*stone of help*) This is significant because they had suffered defeat at the hands of the Philistines years before because Israel had not trusted the Lord but had relied on their own strength. The new Ebenezer, however, marked the place where the Lord heard their cry and delivered them from the Philistines.

Good leaders not only take us into the future, but also help us remember and celebrate the past. Samuel was such a leader. The people of Israel were blessed when they repented and turned to the Lord.

What we must realize is that the Lord is with us. Having helped us in the past, He will do so in the future. We may not experience instant victories over fears, foes and failures but we can be certain that one day the forces of evil will be crushed.

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Jewish sages describe Samuel as the equivalent of Moses and Aaron combined. Jews consider him to be one of the most important prophets in Jewish History. Like Samson, Samuel was a Nazarite, but he lived a life of obedience. Although imperfect, Samuel tried from an early age to serve God with obedience and sacrifice. As Christians, we are called to do the same from whatever age we were called and came to know the Lord by faith in Christ. Remember that God calls **ordinary people to do extraordinary things**. It is He who does the **equipping** for whatever task He calls us to do.

All Samuel’s life he judged Israel. The settlement of legal aspects was only one aspect of his leadership. Samuel was anointed and appointed to keep Israel in right relationship with their Lord God, and depend on his resources in all their undertakings to live and work to His glory.

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In the days when every man did that which was right in their own eyes, God called a man named Samuel to judge Israel. From the tribe of Levi, he would be the last judge over Israel before they demanded a king. He would be a faithful prophet of God to lead Israel forward. As we saw in today’s lesson, Samuel served as Judge, Prophet and Priest. Leadership is about guidance and direction. It requires many spiritual virtues. Samuel possessed the qualities needed for such a task. He had the wisdom to make right decisions. He knew the answer to every situation Israel faced was obedience to God. Only then could they expect deliverance and victory.

1. Samuel prayed with a sincere heart (I Samuel 7:1-6) Samuel was able to lead the people because he trusted God to lead him. Every good leader is accountable to someone higher in authority. We know that God Almighty is the highest authority. Samuel knew this as well. Samuel prayed to the Lord in all

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sincerity. He confessed Israel’s sins and acknowledged God’s righteousness. This is what God requires of anyone. Romans 10:9, “If thou shalt confess with their mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. God will always hear the prayer of a sincere heart. It does not matter what our wrong actions have been, if we are willing to turn from them, confess that we did wrong, and turn to God for help and healing.

2. The Lord answered Samuel’s sincere prayer. When Samuel prayed to God on behalf of Israel, God heard his prayer. As a leader Samuel set the example. He was genuinely devoted to the encouragement and supervision of God’s people and the people recognized and accepted His authority. Now, the Holy Spirit that dwells in every believer **leads and guides us**. Through the Spirit of God, we receive guidance and direction for every situation.

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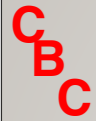
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The Israelites are an example to us of the importance of worshipping God and God alone. There are many distractions in our lives that vie for our attention, but God will not take second place! If we want to receive His blessings, we must devote ourselves entirely to Him. He does not want His people to worship Him and anything else at the same time.

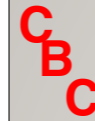
Samuel was a child of prayer and he was a man of prayer. Psalms 62:8 reads: “ Trust in Him at all times, ye people; pour out your heart before him. God is a refuge for us. Selah”. There is a song by Joseph Hart that includes the lines. “ We will praise Him for all that is past and we will trust Him for all that’s to come “. Our opening song today was “ **Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing**” by Robert Robinson. It is based on I Samuel 7: 12. Verse two reads “ Here I raise my Ebenezer, hither by Thy help I’m come. And I hope by Thy good pleasure safely to arrive at home”.



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Practical Points

1. God has prepared a plan that restores our broken fellowship with Him **(I Samuel 7: 1,2).**
2. We are to worship the Lord, and He is the only one we are to serve **(vs. 3,4).**
3. True repentance prepares the heart to return to the Lord and obey His Word **(vs. 5,6).**
4. Satan will attack believers during times when they are most vulnerable **(vs. 7,8).**
5. God delivers His people, but we should not take His goodness and grace for granted **(vs. 9,10).**
6. We should keep memories of God’s mercies alive and fresh **(vs.11,12).**



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For Further Reflection

1. Why is it necessary for believers to have leadership that stays faithful to the Lord? I Samuel 7:1
2. What do believers do that makes them feel God has abandoned them? v. 2
3. Why is it important that spiritual leaders pray unceasingly for believers? v. 5
4. Why is Church - led intercessory prayer needed for the saved and unsaved today? vss. 6-9
5. When God answered your prayer requests in the past, what did you do?

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