

1 Samuel 7

Ebenezer: Stone of Help

1. 1 Samuel Context

- a. Ch 1-7 form a unit about Samuel: making of a prophet (next, 8-15 is Saul)
- b. (1-3) Samuel's rise, Eli's fall. (4-6) The glory departs in disbelief, now...
- c. 6:21-7:1 - The LORD returns the ark - resting it in Kirjath-Jearim of Judah
- d. Formerly, Kirjath-Baal - Josh 15:60, SW border of Benjamin.
- e. Kept by Eleazer means God (El) has helped (azer) - Eben (stone) ezer (help)

2. 7:2-6 - Israel Returns to the LORD

- a. 2 - Israel Laments - 20 yrs later (a new generation?) mourned/cried out for LORD
- b. 3 - Israel Repents - First, a prophet calls them to it - "*Samuel spake...*"
 - i. "*with all your hearts*" - lament, crying, wailing just noise w/o heart change
 - ii. "*if you do return ... then put away*" = Proof of heart change (1st law) 2Chr 7:14
 - iii. "*prepare your hearts*" with the word of the Lord - Deu 6:4-5
 - iv. "*he will deliver you*" - A promise right out of the law - Deu 6:13-15
- c. 4 - "*put away Baalim and Ashtaroth*" - plural gods, they served many years - Jdg 2:13
 - i. Female goddesses - Astarte (Gr.), "queen of heaven", consort of Baal/Dagon
 - ii. Men create 'gods' to get what they want and explain what they don't know.
 - iii. Serving other gods is piety w/o truth. It changes "the God" to "my god".
 - iv. Men serve other gods when the desire for help exceeds their ability to hear
- d. "*served the LORD only*" - 'jealous' demands zeal for purity/integrity/faithfulness.
 - i. It matters not only that you serve, but how pure your service - 2 Ki 15:34-35
 - ii. A pure service aligns to the word of truth - 2 Tim 2:5-16
- e. 5 - "*Gather... and I will pray for you*" - This intercession is a priestly activity.
 - i. Mizpeh → defined in Gen 31:49 as where the LORD watches (watchtower)
- f. 6 - "*drew water, and poured it out*" - Symbol of lives/souls/hearts poured out - 1:15
- g. "*We have sinned against the LORD*" - Confession and works meet for repentance.
- h. "*Samuel judged the children of Israel in Mizpeh*" - The last of the Judges.

3. 7:7-12 - A Stone of Help

- a. 7 - The Philistines attack again bringing fear, but this time...
- b. 8 - "*Cease not to cry unto the LORD our God for us*" - They turn to God for help.
- c. 9 - Samuel intercedes for Israel w/confessions, prayers, pleading, offering - Psa 99:6
- d. 10-11 - "*the LORD thundered*" - Exo 9:23, Josh 10:10, Judges 4:14,5:4,21, 1 Sam 2:10
 - i. God's voice compared to thunder - Ps 18:13, 29:3, 104:7, Job 40:9, Rev 16:18
- e. 12 - Ebenezer - Ruined by Dickens' myth (a spiritist screed against being too pure)
 - i. Truth: Christians argued Christmas not in the Bible, Paul - 2 Cor 5:16
 - ii. Truth: Samuel's stone of testimony to God's underserving help and salvation
 - iii. It marks humble repentance and return to pure worship of the 'LORD only'
 - iv. It reminds of the thunderous power of the LORD against the wicked and sin.
- f. David wrote Psalm 18 about the Rock of the LORD's help - 2 Sam 22:1-14, 26-33, 47

4. 7:13-17 - Peace in Israel Restored

- a. 13 - *"came no more into the coast of Israel"* - God secures the land for Israel.
- b. 14 - *"cities...restored to Israel"* - God restores the promised land and brings peace.
- c. 15 - *"Samuel judged"* - all the days of his life 1 Sam 25 (Christ will live forever)
- d. 16 - *"went from year to year"* - A circuit judge, ruling the people from these places.
 - i. *"for there was his house"* - His parents, marriage, children, home, altar. 1:19
- e. The course of the events in 1 Sam 7 not unlike what Peter spoke of - Acts 3:24
- f. Israel sinned, God's glory left, sometime later the LORD returns with his ark, judges Israel in unbelief, they repent, and through the intercession of his anointed God saves and restores Israel to peace in the land, dwelling in their homes - Isa 4:4-6