

1 Samuel 7:2-17

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[0 : 00] 1st Samuel chapter 7, 1st Samuel chapter 7. We're going to be in the bulk of the chapter, but last time we were together we read the first verse because it has application to what goes before it.

So we'll actually be verses 2 through 17. We will set that scene in just a moment. We'll understand what the first verse is and why it's there. So 1st Samuel chapter 7 verses 2 through 17 will be our text this evening.

Let's go to the Lord in prayer. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you so much just for allowing us to gather together. We thank you for the gift of time. We thank you for the gift of place, Lord, and just the opportunity of fellowshiping with brothers and sisters in Christ, opportunity of coming and being encouraged and being challenged midweek.

We thank you for every chance we get to getting your word. And we'll pray as we open up the word of God that the word of God would open us up and it would speak to us. That the truth of it would resonate within our hearts and minds.

Lord, for all of the activities going on, Lord, it's exciting to see the children and the youth and leaders moving around. Lord, I pray you're leading and you're blessing on our awareness program, on our leaders, on the students and the kids going through it.

[1 : 23] We pray that these times would be of exalting Christ, that the verses that they memorize would be committed to their hearts and minds. We pray that you would help us to grow in Christlikeness, continue to shape and form us.

May you be glorified in all that takes place and we ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. If you remember, throughout 1 Samuel, we have come to really a time of preparation.

God has his man, his man is Samuel. Samuel is the bridge that's going to close the gap between the period of the judges to the period of the kings.

Samuel is the man who would be used of God to be the last judge and the first to hold the office of prophet. Many believe, historians and biblical scholars, that he started what is referred to as the school of the prophets.

We find that later on, those would just be establishments set up among the nation that would teach people not necessarily how to prophesy, but how to read and study the word of God. Because to this point, even though they're in the right place, they're in the promised land, they're the right people, they're there, they haven't been doing the right practices.

[2 : 38] Because if you remember the book of Judges, in those days there was no king in the land, and every man did what was right in his own eyes. And God was to be their king. They were to reign as a theophany.

But God can't be king if you don't know what God has said. So as they had not studied the word, they had not read the word, they had not instructed one another in the word, they had no idea how the king was leading them, so every man did what was right in his own eyes.

Every great movement, every great awakening comes from a return to the word of God, and Samuel is that man. He brings the nation back. He will be used of God to anoint the first two kings.

He anoints the people's kings, and then he anoints God's kings, Saul and then David. And then Samuel fades off the scene. He passes. We don't know anything else of him. But we're really at that point because the nation of Israel is still doing what they think is right.

They have a high priest, Eli. He has two sons, Hophni and Phinehas. They have a temple at Shiloh. They have the Ark of the Covenant.

[3 : 42] It's there. The Philistines are their enemies, so they have a battle to fight. They go to fight that battle, and they lose, and they decide the reason they lose the battle is because God wasn't with them in the battle.

So rather than seeking God's face and falling on their faces in repentance, they decide just to force God's hand, and they go get the Ark of the Covenant out of the temple at Shiloh, and they put it on the shoulders of two unfit men, Hophni and Phinehas, and tell them to carry it into battle.

God brings about what he had decreed, and in that day, Eli's two sons die. The Ark of the Covenant is carried away. Eli falls off his stool backwards, breaks his neck, and he dies.

God has all of a sudden removed the place of his manifested presence from his people. His daughter-in-law, Eli's daughter-in-law, as she is giving birth to a son, names that boy Ichabod, saying the glory has departed.

God has removed his glory from his people. We know as we read chapters 5, 6, and 7 that the Ark goes to the land of the Philistines, and God is not just passive.

[4 : 51] He is active, showing that they have not captured him. He has left his people. They send it back. It goes back. We remember the account, right? And two cows bring the Ark back on a cart, falls into the hands of the Israelites again.

Men look into it. A bunch of men fall dead, because God will not be mocked. He does not bypass his holiness. So finally, even though it's back in the land, they reach out to some people of Kirith-Jerim and say, hey, the Ark is back.

So they go get it. They sanctify a house. They anoint a priest. And there sits the Ark. It's in the land. There's no longer a temple.

You need to understand this. When the Ark was captured, the Philistines, apparently from Scripture, though we don't have it clearly saying it, it seems to imply it in other books of Scripture, the book of Psalms, and in one of the minor prophets, that when the Ark was captured, the Philistines pushed on in and also destroyed Shiloh.

So the temple is destroyed. There is no longer a temple. The priests are dispersed because the descendants of Eli end up living at Nob. We know that because David goes there and finds the priest at Nob and gets the sword that he took from Goliath.

[6 : 08] So everything is disrupted. God has disrupted his people because they had God in a corner, literally. They had him in a box.

They had him in a temple inside a curtain, and then they just decided to live however they wanted to live, and God said he's not content with that. He has disrupted his people.

He has created a chaos, and now all of a sudden he has come back, and he's going to give his people time to hit the bottom, and then he's going to restore what he's built down. There is this great line in the book of the prophets.

I believe it's in Lamentations. You may have to check that. It may be in Ezekiel, but I know it's in either Ezekiel or Lamentations. It has always struck with me, stuck with me.

It says that while striking yet healing, God often strikes his people in order to heal his people. That's exactly what we see going on here.

[7 : 14] He creates pain and a disruption so that he could bring restoration, and that's where we pick it up because the ark is now in a house with a priest residing over that house.

It's going to stay there nearly a century, nearly 100 years before David brings it back, but it's going to stay there, but we don't have to wait that long to see what happens. Now, all of this time, Samuel has been silent because no one has sought the word because if you remember at the end of chapter 3, it says the Lord appeared again at Shiloh because the Lord revealed himself to Samuel at Shiloh by the word of the Lord, and in the verse of chapter 4, it says the word of Samuel came to all Israel.

So Samuel had been known to all the land, but while all that happened, we know nothing of Samuel. Twenty years go by, and Samuel was silent, and this is where we pick it up, starting in verse 2 of the 7th chapter.

From the day the ark remained at Kirith-Jerim, the time was long, for it was twenty years, and all the house of Israel lamented after the Lord.

Then Samuel spoke to all the house of Israel, saying, If you return to the Lord with all your heart, remove the foreign gods and the Ashereth from among you, and direct your hearts to the Lord, and serve him alone, and he will deliver you from the hand of the Philistines.

[8 : 39] So the sons of Israel removed the Baals and the Ashereth, and served the Lord alone. Then Samuel said, Gather all Israel to Mizpah, and I will pray to the Lord for you.

They gathered to Mizpah, 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 sons of Israel at Mizpah.

Now when the Philistines heard that the sons of Israel had gathered at Mizpah, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel. And when the sons of Israel heard it, they were afraid of the Philistines. Then the sons of Israel said to Samuel, Do not cease to cry to the Lord our God for us, that he may save us from the hand of the Philistines.

And Samuel took a suckling lamb, and offered it for a whole burnt offering to the Lord. And Samuel cried to the Lord for Israel, and the Lord answered him. Now Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, and the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel.

But the Lord thundered with a great thunder on that day against the Philistines, and confused them, so that they were routed before Israel. The men of Israel went out of Mizpah, and pursued the Philistines, and struck them down as far as below Beth-kar.

[9 : 53] Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpah and Shin, and named it Ebenezer, saying, Thus far the Lord has helped us. So the Philistines were subdued, and they did not come anymore within the border of Israel.

And the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel. The cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron even to Gath, and Israel delivered their territory from the hand of the Philistines.

So there was peace between Israel and the Amorites. Now Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life, and he used to go annually on circuit to Bethel and Gilgal and Mizpah, and he judged Israel in all these places.

Then his return was to Ramah, for his house was there. And there he judged Israel, and he built there an altar to the Lord. 1 Samuel 7, verses 2 through 17.

We sing the song, Here I raise mine Ebenezer. And this is where the text is found, and this is the scriptural meaning behind that raising of an Ebenezer. We see here a cry of return.

[11 : 04] A cry of return. God has created a great chaos among his people. He has removed his presence from them, though he has come back. The ark is back. The presence of God has been demonstrated in his holiness.

He has ascribed to himself the holiness that is due. That is, don't look into the ark, right? Don't dig any further than you should. So there's a reverence for him, but his presence hasn't been manifested among them.

The Shekinah glory of God will not be manifested again until Solomon's temple. And Solomon prays and dedicates the temple, and the glory fills the temple such that the priest could not even go within it.

That's the next time we see the Shekinah glory filling the place and really residing there. But God has at least created enough chaos now that after 20 years of silence, as Warren Wearsby said, another generation came up, another group of people.

And after 20 years, there's no practice, there's no sacrifices, there's no high priest. Eli is gone. His sons are gone. The priests are outcasts. God had declared that he would pronounce judgment upon the household of Eli.

[12 : 12] There would not be an old man. And even those that did live would cry out to Samuel and say, please make us a priest that we may have a piece of bread. Remember that? That's the first word he gave to Samuel.

All of this is taken. So there's no one to go to to go through the motions anymore. The temple is gone. There's no place that's shallow. Everything is vacant. So now you can't even go through the motions and just go through the rest of your day.

Right? You can't just show up, do what you're supposed to, and then go on and live however you want to. God has removed all of that. God has created a chaotic situation, and he's created a crisis.

And he created a crisis to bring his people to a cry. And it says that there is a cry of return because it declares for us there that after 20 years, the house of Israel lamented after the Lord.

The word lament means to mourn and cry out in anguish. They are mourning and crying over their personal circumstances to the Lord.

[13 : 10] They are coming out of the period of the judges where you could go through all the right practice and then go do whatever was right in your own eyes. Now they've come to a place because God has created such an environment that the people are mourning and weeping and lamenting to the Lord.

God did not create that environment until he had his person. Make no mistake about it. God can cause chaos in our life anytime he wants to.

God can disrupt our circumstances. He can disrupt our peace. He can disrupt... God can create chaos anytime he wants to. The mercy and grace of God is distributed in the reality that he did not do it until he had his man in place, that is Samuel.

Now that the word of God has went to all of Israel because Samuel is speaking to all of Israel. Now that there's no longer just a local worship but it's a national worship.

Now that God has his man, he creates chaos and then he waits. He says for 20 years he waited. And we see this cry of return being played out in a number of ways.

[14 : 27] The first thing is it comes with a time of testing. Time of testing. It says for 20 years. 20 years passes in a couple of words in scripture.

There's 20 years between verse 1 and verse 2 of the 7th chapter. 20 years. God did nothing. His man was there and he was waiting on his people.

But when his people lamented to the Lord were mourning and breaking and crying for return. Notice what the very next verse says. Then Samuel spoke.

Then Samuel spoke. Then Samuel spoke. Samuel had been confirmed as a prophet many years prior to this.

God had declared the validity of Samuel's word many years prior to this. Samuel had spoken to all of Israel many years prior to this. But we don't hear or see a record of Samuel saying anything until God has his people mourning.

[15 : 34] Then Samuel spoke. Because a prophet doesn't have a right just to speak whenever he wants to speak. A prophet can only speak when the Lord tells him to speak. It says, It's not just enough to desire it.

It's not enough to cry over it because now Samuel brings this reckoning. Right? He's going to test their cry. It's a time of testing. Look at what it says. If you return.

If you return to the Lord with all your heart. You almost see the genuineness of this. We have a hard time with this. At least in our modern day culture.

We are confused and sometimes convinced that if we set the standard low enough we will attract more people. You know, history and science has shown that the churches that do the greatest amount of work are the churches with the highest standard.

You can read it throughout church history. You can read it throughout. And I don't mean legalism.

[16 : 44] There's a difference between standards of holiness and legalism. I don't mean legalism. I mean a standard of genuineness. And he says, If you return to the Lord with all your heart then here's the testing.

He gives them three things. He says, Number one, Remove the foreign gods. God is a jealous God. For the Lord our God is a jealous God. He is a consuming fire.

Deuteronomy 4.24 God said, You shall have no other gods before me. First commandment. First thing he tests them, Remove the foreign gods.

And the asher is from among you. In other words, I want to know if you're going to be sold out to just him. God tests you first and foremost. To see your singularity of worship.

God does not want to be numbered among the other gods. God does not want to be counted among one of many. God does not want to just join in the rank and file of people's commitment and worship and dedication.

[17 : 46] God wants to be the singular focus. Now, in those days they were wrestling with wooden, stone, and silver images. In our days, those idols looked something totally different.

But whatever pulls us away from total devotion to the Lord God is an idol. That's just a reality. Whatever it is, an object, or a thought, an ideology, a pursuit, a passion, whatever it is, it takes the place that God has of singular focus.

Because look, he says, if you return to the Lord with all your heart, first thing is, remove the foreign gods. Second thing is, direct your hearts to the Lord. It's not just enough to get rid of the idols.

You have to focus the heart. Jesus told a parable. Remember that parable? He said there was a man that had a demon in him and a demon was cast out of him. But when that demon was cast out of him and that demon went to and fro looking around where he may go and when he came back he found this man's heart all cleaned up, swept up, and empty.

And so he went and got other demons and said, come back where I used to live. There's more room there. There's more of us. So the last state of the man was worse than the former state of the man. Even though the demons had been cast out of him because though he had removed the presence of demons he had not directed the heart.

[19 : 07] You know the reality. Nature abhors a vacuum but so does your heart. Your heart will worship something. That's what Samuel's telling him. It's not just enough to get rid of it. You also have to direct the heart. And he tests them in a third way and he says, and serve him.

Alone. Move it from the heart to the hands, right? He says, get rid of the foreign gods, direct your hearts to the Lord and serve him alone. And he says, and he will deliver you from the hand of the Philistines.

It's a time of testing. They were crying. They were in a chaos but God brought them to a time of testing. He wanted to see the validity of their cry. And it says in verse 4, so the sons of Israel removed the Baals and the Asher and served the Lord alone.

So they passed the test. They passed the test. Idolatry is something that runs rapid throughout the nation of Israel until the Babylonian captivity.

They come out of the Babylonian captivity very monotheistic. That is one God. But the whole time, God is just bringing them to this period of testing, this cry that they have that's coming out of their mouth.

[20 : 08] This lamenting is met with a test. Okay, let's see how serious you are about it. Because you and I both know I've seen people who are broken over consequences of matters but they're not willing to walk through the test to see the seriousness of it.

Because it's sacrificial. So it's a time of testing. The second thing is that we notice in this, it's a time of transparency. After they get rid of all the idols and after they get rid of all the Asherah and the bells and they serve the Lord God alone, then he says, okay, everybody come to Mizpah.

Mizpah is going to play a very important role through the book of 1 Samuel, especially in the life of Saul. We'll read it later. He says, everybody come to Mizpah. So he calls them to Mizpah, right? So now everybody's there. It's a whole nation of Israel to gather together.

I don't know if we can count every single person, but at least all the elders and all the leaders are represented. So he's calling them to a time of transparency. They've been tested. They've passed the test. Now we're going to be transparent.

So he's gathering everybody together. He says, then they draw water and they pour the water out and then they fast. Both of those are signs of emptying yourself, of just being completely broken.

[21 : 25] The drawing of the water and pouring out the water was as much as the fasting. Christ himself went to one of those festivals where they poured the water out. It's where Jesus says, I am the water.

You know, that's where he spoke of being living water was at that festival. But what that is, is when they would pour the water out, this water is necessary. We need it. It's a necessity for our life and we're going to sacrifice that and pour it out, pour our entire life out, especially in that culture where clean water is a big deal.

We take it for granted, right? I get thirsty. I go back there and I grab a bottle of water and I have one sitting here anytime I need it. But to have clean, fresh water and something to drink and they pour it out, it's a sacrificial thing.

Fasting, they're giving up the food. Both of those are just making themselves vulnerable and open. And then we read there, it says, and they cried out to God after doing that, we have sinned against the Lord.

This is something totally new. We haven't seen this. Throughout the book of Judges, no one confesses a sin. Up to this point, there's been no, just wholesale confession.

[22 : 34] The nations cried out. They've been tested. They've said, okay, we'll get rid of all that. Now they come to this place of transparency and they just declare, we have sinned before the Lord.

They're becoming transparent for what they've done, for how they've behaved and who they are. In the very next sentence, it says, so Samuel judged the sons of Israel at Mizpah.

And Samuel judged the sons of Israel at Mizpah. Think about this. Let's just put it in context. We say, oh, he became a judge there. No, that's not what it says. It says, they confessed the fact that they were sins and then Samuel judged them.

To be judged is to be vulnerable. We've said it before. We like to sin in retail and confess in wholesale.

That means we sin specifically and say, Lord, forgive me for all the bad things I did. The people come. They say, we have sinned and Samuel says, you're right. Now we're going to talk about all the sins you've committed as everybody's gathered together.

[23 : 41] It becomes a time of transparency because they're seeking God. They're lamenting and they're mourning. This is what it takes for the nation to get back.

He's tested them to see if they're really just saying they're giving lip service or they really want to do it. Now they're going to be transparent and Samuel judges them. He says, oh, we're not supposed to judge.

It goes, that's a two-edged sword. I know. I'll often get in trouble because for every verse that you come up with that says you shouldn't judge, I can come up with one that says we ought to judge one another.

I don't mean judge by like condemnation. Be careful and what word you use judge? I have no right condemning you and you have no right condemning me to eternity. That's not our place. We're not judged. When the Bible says you shall not judge for there is one that is your judge that declares there is one that can declare us our eternity.

So we have no place. But Paul says, what have I to do with judging the world? Am I not called to judge the believers? That judgment is not a condemnation judgment. That judgment is a transparency judgment that you look at me and I look at you and say, hey, wait, this is where I look at you and say I have fallen short and you have the bonus to come back to me and go, yes, pastor, you have and this is where you've fallen short and all of a sudden we become transparent.

[24 : 55] And you can say, I've seen those and you're not saying it in a condemning way but you're saying it in a transparent way and in a loving way because Samuel here is restoring the people. He's not belittling them.

We understand it makes us uncomfortable. It makes us transparent. That's why it makes us uncomfortable. We don't want to be seen that way but it's vital. And they come to this time of transparency.

The third thing you see is it's a time of trials. It's a time of trials. Maybe you haven't noticed this but I've seen it in my own life and I see it in scripture.

Look at what it says. Now when the Philistines heard that the sons of Israel had gathered at Mizpah. Now who commanded them to gather at Mizpah? Samuel.

Samuel is speaking a word from God, right? So we can say God called his people together at Mizpah. God brought them to Mizpah. Just go ahead and wrap that in your mind.

[25 : 56] When they get to where God wants them to be, and they have went through this time of testing, they went through this time of transparency, they're confessing, we can say they're broken because the Bible says they are lamenting and they are where God wants, we would put it this way, they are smack dab in the center of the will of God.

When they come to this place, the Philistines hear about it too. Look at what it says. And the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel. You know one thing I've noticed in scripture, is that quite often God has his people where he wants them and the enemy still attacks.

It was Jesus who put the disciples in the boat and stayed on the shore when the storm came. It was Jesus who got in the boat with his disciples and fell asleep in the bow when the storm came. All of these things, it was Jesus who took them to the Garden of Gethsemane and in the Roman soldiers came.

All of these instances remind us, even in scripture, that quite often the greatest trials we face are in the moments when we're drawing closest in vulnerability and in person to the Lord.

Because the enemy leaves you alone when he has you where he wants you. But he fights hard when you get closer to where you need to be.

[27 : 27] When they were at Mizpah, the Philistines said, we've got them all in one place. From the enemy's position, that looks great. We've got everybody gathered together.

From the enemy's position, that's ideal. We don't have to go through all the land of Israel. We can just go to this one town. And so they said, let's attack now. Here is a time of trial. Now in the past, if we go to the fifth chapter, the Philistines attack in the fifth chapter and it says, and the sons of Israel drew up in battle of Rae.

And the sons of Israel over here and the Philistines over here and they went out to fight one another and the sons of Israel died. Some of them died. So they went back and they said, well, we messed up. Let's go get the ark. So they went and got the ark.

They had this great shout and they drew up in battle of Rae and they fought. No mentioning there in the fifth chapter, no mentioning, or fourth chapter into the fifth chapter, no mentioning of there being any request of what God wants them to do.

But now that they have been tested and they have been transparent and now they're broken before the Lord, now that Samuel has entered into a judging of them in a good, beneficial way, now that they're being restored and now that they're lamenting and they're just mourning over God, now when the enemy attacks, notice what they do different.

[28 : 45] Then the sons of Israel said to Samuel, Samuel's been there the whole time. He was there when the Philistines came the first time. Nobody said anything to him.

Twenty years later, the same enemy comes back hoping to get the same outcome. But now we have a different people because it says the sons of Israel said to Samuel, do not cease to cry to the Lord, notice this, to the Lord, our God, to the Lord, our God, for us, that he may save us from the hand of the Philistines.

No longer is there any self-confidence, no longer is there any self-assurance, now there is this total dependence upon, they know that the man of God is there and they go to Samuel and say, do not cease to cry to the Lord, our God.

They are identifying themselves with him that he, not that we would be able to deliver ourselves but that he would deliver us from the hand of the Philistines and when we read the rest of the account you need to pay attention to this little subtle picture, we've missed it if we're not careful.

It says that when Samuel went and he took the suckling lamb, the lamb only has to be eight days old to be worthy of a sacrifice, takes a very young lamb, lays it down as a whole burnt offering and he's crying out to the Lord God and it says, and the Lord God struck an awesome thunderclap, literally, over the Philistine battle and created a great confusion and destroyed them.

[30 : 09] You know what's so amazing about that? The Philistines served the God of Baal. Baal is considered the weather God. God used the weather to destroy them that showed them I overrule your God.

Dagon has fallen on his face, cut his head and hand off. Now Baal can't do anything about God's thunder. God overrules the lowercase g God of the Philistines with one single clap of thunder.

Their weather God isn't strong enough to help them when God decides to send the thunder and he creates a great confusion among them. It says, so the Philistines were defeated.

See, God may let the trial come but it's because God's got an answer to the trial in your time of crying out to him. A time of trial which leads us to the fourth and final thing a time of triumph.

They've been tested, they've been transparent, they've been in this trial. Now they end up in triumph because it says God claps this thunder. They go out and they begin to fight and they defeat the Philistines.

[31 : 21] It says they were defeated before them. It says, the men of Israel went out of Mizpah and pursued the Philistines and struck them down as far as below Beth-kar. Verse 12 is so important.

Then Samuel took a stone and set it between Mizpah and Shin and named it Ebenezer saying, thus far the Lord has helped us. Here is a physical reminder of a spiritual victory.

They are broken people who are establishing reminders of God's faithfulness. Establishing a reminder of God's faithfulness. someone said that Hudson Taylor who was the founder of China Inland Missions every one of his offices because he moved around throughout China he kept a plaque on his wall it said Ebenezer Jehovah Jireh.

Thus far the Lord has helped and he will continue to provide because Jehovah Jireh means the Lord is my provider. When we raise in Ebenezer we are reminding ourselves this far it is not saying this is as far as God will be it is saying he helped me here so he will help me there.

Those stones that were set up in Joshua they were setting them up as they crossed the Jordan it would say he helped us cross the Jordan now he will help us fight Jericho and they could look back at the rubble of Jericho and say he helped us fight Jericho he can help us defeat Ai.

[32 : 47] Now they messed up at Ai because sin was in the camp of Achan so that sin was dealt with and they covered Achan with stones so then they could look back and say there is the stones over Achan so we know our sin is dealt with so now we can defeat Ai.

When they defeated Ai the king fell so they piled another heap of stones over the king and they moved to the next city and said God helped us at Ai because we were redeemed and forgiven for our failures now he will help us again. Then there was a group of five kings that was defeated and they put another pile of stones over so he helped us there see the Ebenezer isn't there to stop us the Ebenezer is there to continue moving us.

If he's helped us this far he'll help us farther down the road. One of the grand problems I think with us as the people of God now is we don't raise enough Ebenezers we don't testify and we don't set up things in our life that remind us God has helped us this far that far he will help us as we continue to move forward.

I just think we need to start finding big rocks and putting them up somewhere I don't know I got a bunch at my place we can go get them and just start setting them up right here he's helped me this far and it's a reminder because it is a reminder of the triumph listen our enemy works really hard to remind us of our failures I believe it is time that we stand up things that remind us of our victories you know Satan does a good enough job standing on our shoulders reminding us how much we failed I don't need anybody to remind me of that I have a conscience within me I have the spirit that convicts me I have an enemy that throws fiery darts at me there's a reason why it's the helmet of salvation I need to be reminded of my salvation it's the breastplate of righteousness to protect my heart and a shield of faith right I need the protection of the Lord to help me with those things in the armor of God I need to be reminded of those things but I need to set up some Ebenezers to remind me that by faith through Christ I have triumphed there

I have triumphed there there's a victory there there's a victory there because those triumphs changed the name of places and they begin to change not how we look at our past but how we see the God of our past so that it will help us in our future and we see this here they start raising them up and then they didn't have any problem with the Philistines the rest of the time Samuel was judging not only that they didn't have any problems with the Philistines that's an external foe so the enemy wasn't messing with them from the outside but they had a peace covenant evidently with the Amorites which is an internal foe so now they no longer had any problems from the outside nor the inside because God was bringing them to a place of triumph and then it tells us that now Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life and he used to go annually in a circuit this is his national circuit he would go from Bethel to Gilgal to Mizpah and he judged Israel in all these places he would go around he would just set his judge and prophet and then his return he would come back to Ramah for that's where his house was and he judged

[35 : 42] Israel from there notice this last line and he built there an altar to the Lord see Shiloh had been destroyed we're no longer worshiping just a box the box is still over there in Kirith Jerem it's going to hang out in the house for a long more time but there's an altar now there's an altar and that's a triumph because now we're back to restored worship there's an altar the people had a cry of return and God brought them back they're going to fail again they're going to ask for man they're going to get Saul they're going to kind of want to push Samuel aside but now they're in a place of peace and consistency and victory because God is working he's got his man he's got his people where he wants them now he will eventually bring David David will bring it all back full circle right he'll provide for the building of the tabernacle or the temple he'll bring the ark of the covenant back it'll be all these things but now the people have a desire for God that wasn't there before to have a desire and God's using that desire to bring them victory over their tragedies and over their chaos 1st Samuel 7 verses 2 through 17 thank you my brothers so

Thank you.

Thank you.