

# Samuel Leads A Revival

I Samuel 7:1-17

Introduction:

- The men of Kirjath Jearim: They treated the Ark of the Covenant with respect and honor, yet they did not take it to the tabernacle. Instead of resting at the house of God, it was brought into the house of Abinadab.
- Consecrated Eleazar his son: We don't know if Eleazar was of the proper priestly lineage, or if his consecration ceremony was legitimate according to Exodus 29. At least this reflected a desire to do the right thing.

## I. **REVIVAL, TWENTY YEARS IN THE MAKING-** v. 1-6

- a. V. 2 The time was long: Israel had the ark back but things were not really set right. Israel found they were no more right with God just because they had the Ark of the Covenant again. Instead, all the house of Israel lamented after the Lord.
  - i. Twenty years- America has gone much longer than that without seeing corporate revival. Many Christians have never even experienced personal revival!
  - ii. Ps 119:126- It is time for thee, LORD, to work: for they have made void thy law.
  - iii. Hos 10:12- Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: **for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come** and rain righteousness upon you.
  - iv. God's presence makes a big difference in our lives, as we shall see in this chapter!
- b. They had good reason to lament. Their cities were in ruins, their armies were defeated, and they were under Philistine domination – all because they were not right with God.
- c. V. 3- We see Samuel, whom we haven't heard from in a while- since 4:1. He is not mentioned during the whole Ark fiasco- "It may very naturally be asked, 'Where was Samuel all that time?' I know not what he was doing during those twenty years; but I have a suspicion, I may say, I have a firm persuasion, that he was going from place to place, preaching in quiet spots wherever he could gather an audience; warning the

people of their sin, and stirring them up to seek Jehovah, thus endeavouring to infuse some spirituality into their national life.” (Spurgeon)

- d. Samuel calls on the nation to repent- v. 3-6
  - i. V.3-4- Genuine repentance is inward and outward (prepare your hearts)
  - ii. The inward had to come first. That is why Samuel first called Israel to return with all your hearts, then told them to put away the foreign gods.
  - iii. Baal, god of fertility and the storm, was believed to be the son of Dagon, god of grain. Ashtoroth, goddess of love and fertility. The association of Baal, and Ashtoreth with fertility, was expressed in depraved sexual ritual at Canaanite shrines, which made them especially abominable in the Lord’s eyes.”
  - iv. True repentance is like true faith- it always leads to outward action- so they put away their idols
  - v. V. 4 And serve the Lord only: Israel’s sin was not a complete rejection of God (they may have even justified this). They simply added the worship of other gods to their worship of the Lord. Samuel called on Israel to turn their backs on these other gods and serve Him only.
    - 1. Many Christians today are guilty of the same crime- mixing worldiness with our faith. We haven’t rejected God, but we have added things in our life that take a place only God should have! (money, ye cannot serve God and mammon!)
    - 2. Failure to separate!
  - vi. V. 6- Drew water, and poured it out before the Lord: In this context a ceremonial pouring of water demonstrated the soul poured out before the Lord. It was an expression of emptiness and need.
  - vii. Lam. 2:19- Arise, cry out in the night: in the beginning of the watches pour out thine heart like water before the face of the Lord: lift up thy hands toward him for the life of thy young children, that faint for hunger in the top of every street.
  - viii. Israel also expressed their sorrow over their sin by fasting (a message that nothing else really mattered except getting right with God) and by confession (a simple claim of guilt and responsibility).
    - 1. I John 1:5-10 is clear that this is a vital part of our relationship with God.
    - 2. We must get right in order to have right fellowship with God.

II. **ISRAEL'S EBENEZER**- v. 7-14

- a. The Philistines launch an attack on Mizpeh- v. 7
- b. V. 8- The power of intercessory prayer.
  - i. Samuel is remembered as great prayer warrior- Ps. 99:6- Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his name; they called upon the LORD, and he answered them.
  - ii. We must intercede on behalf of the wicked around us!
- c. V. 8- No longer trusting in the Ark, but in God! "He will save us"
  - i. The sharp contrast between ch. 4 and ch. 7
    - 1. "smitten" (4:3,10/7:10)
    - 2. Manipulation vs. repentance- Let it save vs. Let Him save (4:3/7:8)
    - 3. Result: Ichabod vs. Ebenezer
  - ii. God delivered them and gave them the victory over there foes
  - iii. Revival=refocus
- d. V. 12- a monument to remember God's help. Ebenezer means stone of help. We need to establish "Ebenezers" along life's way!
- e. Hitherto- up to this point. This implies a motivation to continue trusting!
- f. V. 13-14- Revival and repentance is a reclaiming of lost ground!
  - i. Take back your joy, passion for God, desire to pray and read the word, desire to serve and be faithful to church!
  - ii. Take back opportunities to nurture the faith of our children
  - iii. Subdue the enemy so that we may walk in victory!

III. **SUMMARY OF SAMUEL'S MINISTRY**- v. 15-17

- a. V. 6- Samuel's role as a Judge was more spiritual than military
- b. He went from year to year on a circuit... and judged Israel in all those places: Samuel worked hard in his service of the Lord. Every year, Samuel worked hard to go all about Israel to help settle disputes and promote righteousness. He also probably was preaching and rebuking and warning!
- c. Israel finally got to the point where they said, "God, we need you!"