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Lesson 61

Ebenezer

- Text: 1 Samuel 7:1-17
- Setting: approx. 1100 B.C. in Mizpeh
- Main Characters: God and Samuel
- **Plot:** Samuel leads Israel into a time of spiritual revival and relative peace.

Repentance and Revival

- to Samuel, Cease not to cry unto the
- 1) (vv 1-2) For years, the people of Israel neglected the LORD (vs. 2). The people began to "lament after the LORD." This was probably because of Samuel's preaching.
 - a) Samuel must've operated in the fashion of an ______ preacher because he is described in verse 3 as speaking to "all the house of Israel."
 - b) Samuel's preaching had two emphases:
 - i) The need to repent of
 - ii) The need to serve God
- 2) (vv 5-6) Samuel summoned the Hebrews to Mizpeh for a time of prayer and sacrifice. Mizpeh was a city in Benjamin not far from Kirjath-jearim.
 - a) Water was drawn and poured out. This was symbolic of and renewal. In verse 6, they confessed, "We have sinned against the Lord." The sacred act of pouring out water before the LORD was repeated by David in 2 Sam. 23:16.
 - b) The day was also a day of fasting, which is an expression of repentance from sin and _____ on God's grace, mercy, and strength.

Interruption and Intercession

- 3) (vv 7-8) When the Philistines heard of the Hebrew assembly at Mizpeh, they saw an opportunity for an . As the Philistine army approached, the Hebrews pleaded with Samuel to intercede for them. Samuel took a lamb and sacrificed it as a burnt offering to the LORD and then cried out unto the LORD.
- 4) (vv 9-11) The LORD intervened by coming against the Philistines with great that threw them into a panic. The Hebrews easily vanguished the invaders with God's help.

Praise and Peace

- 5) (vv 12-14) As a memorial of their God-sent victory, Samuel set up a stone and called it "Ebenezer," which means "
- 6) (vv 15-16) Samuel rode a circuit between Ramah, Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpeh. During his leadership of Israel, the Philistines and the ______ kept their distance.
- 7) (v 17) During Samuel's ministry, ______ was the epicenter of Israel's spiritual life. It was here that Samuel made his home and established an altar.

- Key word(s): "
- Climax: "And the children of Israel said Lord our God for us, that he will save us out of the hand of the Philistines." 7:8

Application

- 8) Twenty years after the men of Bethshemesh were smitten for unlawfully peering into the ark, the children of Israel lamented after the LORD. Matthew Henry notes, "It was better with the Israelites when they wanted the ark, and were lamenting after it, than when they had the ark, and were prying into it, or priding themselves in it. Better see people longing in the ______ of the means of grace than loathing in the abundance of them."¹
- 9) Samuel's building an altar at Ramah illustrates how vital it that we walk with the LORD even when it seems difficult or inconvenient. With the ark separated from the ______, the average man would've found excuse for slacking in his worship, but Samuel's heart was for God - no matter where the ark was.
- 10) Samuel said the reason for the Ebenezer memorial was because "hitherto hath the Lord helped us," meaning that all their successes was because God had been gracious and merciful. We likewise should remember that the LORD has brought us to our blessings and successes, not the least of which is salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ who is our perfect ______ and Judge.

Answer Key

Key words "Ebeneezer" | 1) twenty; a) itinerant; b) i) idolatry; ii) alone | 2) a) repentance; b) dependence | 3) ambush | 4) thundering | 5) Stone of Help | 6) Amorites | 7) Ramah | scarcity | 9) tabernacle | 10 Prophet

¹ Henry, Matthew. Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994. Print.