

June 10, 2001

(Continued on 1sam7\_7ff. which has not yet been used, so no date on it yet)

## 1 Samuel 7

Vv. 3-6

In this section through the end of the chapter.

1) v. 2, the people were distressed because of the hard oppression of the enemy. God brings distressing circumstances into our lives to get our attention.

2) v. 2, the people cry out to the man of God, "What shall we do?" The Lord alone can stir us to be distressed about our sin and our lack of His power and presence. He alone can stir us to cry out to Him with a sincere heart to know and do His will.

3) v. 3, the man of God told them what to do - put away their false gods, and serve God truly and with their whole heart. The man of God must also pray that the Lord will make His words effectual. Though the man of God uses the word of God, it is the Spirit of God who must move, or the hearers will remain unaffected.

4) v. 7, when we determine to deal with sin and serve the Lord only, we can depend upon sin to raise its nasty head again, seeking to bring us back under its control. But the grace and power of God is stronger than all our sin combined, and our victory is in Christ's victory over sin and death.

5) v. 8, the people realized their distress as sin sought to retain its hold, and cried out to the man of God to pray for them. We need to pray one for another that the Spirit of God would keep them faithful to their profession, and would supply all their needs as they face the daily attacks of sin.

6) v. 8, we have a Great High Priest who has passed into the heavens, Jesus Christ, the righteous. He continually makes intercession with the Father for His people.

7) v. 10, the enemy was subdued by the Lord, for the battle is the Lord's.

8) v. 12, a special marker was set up to commemorate the victory the Lord gave to His people.

We should have dates written in our Bibles commemorating special times when we were about to perish, and the Lord moved in a special way.

9) v. 15, as we serve the Lord, the enemy is subdued, but given the slightest opportunity, he will rise and take control again. That fountain of sin is not removed by the blood of Christ; it is simply controlled by the Spirit.

### **1) The people were distressed because of the hard oppression of the enemy. God brings distressing circumstances into our lives to get our attention.**

In v. 2, we saw that the men of Kirjath jearim welcomed the presence of the Lord among them, and they sat apart Eleazar to care for the ark. Meanwhile, all of the house of Israel *lamented after the Lord* of the ark.

Where was Samuel from chapter 4:1 to this point? The ark had been captured, returned to Bethshemesh, and then to Kirjathjearim. We do not hear of him until the people *lament after the Lord*. When the people lament after the Lord, Samuel shows up.

*Lament* means to mourn, or sorrow, grief - "the people followed after God with lamentation for his departure

There is not much a man of God can do until people realize they need help.

CHARLES AND SHERRY WHICHTRACK

Evidently, the people were fed up with their servitude to the Philistines. They realized the reason why they were in servitude, and they decided to start serving the Lord again. The reason they were going to serve God was because life had become so difficult for them.

Most of us are hard headed and hard hearted and it is not until we get pretty distressed that we decide that it is time to get right with the Lord. It is not until people get distressed or in a tight place that they realize their condition before God, then they can be helped. Notice what the men of Acts 2 said after Peter preached his first sermon:

*Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? (Acts 2:37)*

*They were pricked* (an emotion of sorrow) **in their heart...** The Spirit of God must stir the heart. He works through the emotions, and the emotion we need is distress over sin. We need to pray that He will stir our hearts, and the hearts of those about whom we are concerned.

3) The man of God told them what to do, to put away their false gods, and serve God truly and with their whole hearts. The man of **God must also pray that the Lord will make his words** effectual. Though the man of God uses the word of God, it is the Spirit of God who must move, or the hearers will remain unaffected.

V. 3 *If ye do return unto the Lord with all your hearts...* Put away the strange gods...

Samuel warns them against half-hearted, hypocritical service to the Lord. If we expect the Lord to work in our midst, our sincere cry must be for Him to reveal our sin, and our turn to Him cannot be half-hearted nor hypocritical.

Samuel said *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 (THEN) he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines.*

Sad to say, many people who name the name of Christ would rather be under the control of the false gods around them and have their good times and "freedom" from the supposed restrictions of God's word than sanctify themselves -that is, put away their strange gods and serve the Lord only.

V. 28, too bad the king of Assyria did not call for a prophet to go teach the people about the Lord. Evidently, they took one of the false priests because he settled in Bethel rather than in Jerusalem. Bethel was one of the homes of Jeroboam's calves.

Whether this priest taught the people from tradition or from God's law, we don't know. All we see here is that he only taught the people enough to keep the lions away, but they still remained in captivity.

It seems as though many Christians today only serve God enough to ease their conscience, but not enough to change anything.

Samuel told the people that if they wanted the Lord to be on their side, they had to return to the Lord with their whole heart.

1 Samuel 7:4

Then the children of Israel **did put away** Baalim and Ashtaroth, and served the LORD only.

**4) When we determine to deal with sin and serve the Lord only, we can depend upon sin raise up its nasty head again, seeking to bring us back under its control. But the grace and power of God is stronger than all our sin combined. and the victory is in Christ's victory over sin and death.**

These false gods have passed off the scene, but there have been plenty to take their place. The false gods include anything that hinder our faithfulness to the requirements of our Lord, as outlined in His word.

Baalim and Ashtraoth represent all of the false gods and sins that so easily beset us.

Hebrews 12:1 *1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us with patience run the race that is set before us, 2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 For*

*consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.*

**Cloud of witnesses...** The context implies that these are probably the saints who have gone before us. But this **cloud of witnesses** could be those around us and those who know and watch us in our daily activity.

Steve Covington has been working on his dad to get him to come to church. But some Christian boys did some very unchristian acts in front of his house, and you can imagine what he now says about church.

**THE sin which doth so easily beset us...** We are surrounded by sin, as well as sin swelling up from the inside like a fountain.

James gives this picture:

James 3:10 *Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. 11 Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?*

So not only does sin make its offer from every place around us, but it is continually swelling up from within, as an artesian well flows continually, inviting us to drink from it.

I OPERATED A DOZER FOR A LAND DEVELOPER in Carmel, on 119<sup>th</sup> st. Just down the road from where we were working, was an artesian well. The water was good, and very inviting on the hot summer days. It was not unusual to see several people lined up waiting to get water.

Sin is like that artesian well. It is flowing all the time from within, seeking to gain its hold upon us:

Galatians 1:1 *Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;) 2 And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia: 3 Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, 4 **Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father: S To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.***

Romans 6:14 *For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.*

1 Samuel 7:5, God's man gathered all of the people, and prayed for them.

Preachers must pray that the word of God will be effectual in the hearts of the hearers. Note that facts will not change a sinner, nor bring repentance. Only God's spirit can and will do that.

V. 6, **they drew water...** The Chaldee reads, *They poured out their hearts in repentance before the Lord.* They wept rivers of tears, and sorrowed after a godly sort, for it was before the Lord and with an eye to him. (MH)

Or it could simply mean that this expressed their willingness to deal with their sin, and turn from it. They made public profession, saying, **We have sinned**

*And Aaron said unto Moses, Alas, my lord, I beseech thee, lay not the sin upon us, wherein we have done foolishly, and wherein we have sinned. (Numbers 12:11.)*

V. 6, **Samuel judged** them.

Samuel assures them, in God's name, that upon their repentance and turning from sin, their sin is forgiven.

Or Samuel may have received information against those who did not turn from their idols, and enforced the law against them.

Or Samuel now begins to act as a magistrate, passing the proper sentence upon those who serve the false gods.

*27 Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. 28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. 29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself,*

*not discerning the Lord's body. 30 For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. 31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. (1 Cor. 11:27.)*

Note: Either we will own up to our sins, where we have departed from God's word, or He will deal with us accordingly.

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