

Ministry on David

Part 1

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[00:00:01] Let us turn to the same book of Samuel, 1st Samuel, to chapter 7, 1st Samuel 7 And the men of Kirgeth-Jerim came, and fetched up the ark of the LORD, and brought it into the house of Abinadab in the hill, and sanctified Eliezer his son to keep the ark of the LORD.

And it came to pass, while the ark abode in Kirgeth-Jerim, that the time was long, for it was twenty years, and all the house of Israel lamented after the LORD. And Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, 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, [00:01:03] and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines. Then the children of Israel did put away Balaam and Ashtaroth, and served the LORD only.

And Samuel said, Gather all Israel to Mizpah, and I will pray for you unto the LORD.

And they gathered together 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 children of Israel in Mizpah. And when the Philistines heard that the children of Israel were gathered together to Mizpah, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel. And when the children of Israel heard it, they were afraid of the Philistines.

And the children of Israel said unto Samuel, [00:02:02] Cease not to cry unto the LORD our God for us, that he will save us out of the hand of the Philistines.

And Samuel took a sucking lamb, and offered it for a burnt offering wholly unto the LORD. And Samuel cried unto the LORD for Israel, and the LORD heard him.

And as Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel. But the LORD thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them, and they were smitten before Israel.

And the men of Israel went out of Mizpah and pursued the Philistines, and smote them until they came unto Bethkar.

Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpah and Shem, and called the name of it Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the LORD helped us.

[00:03:03] Now here we have, historically, something that took place some little time before the chapter that our brother has just referred to. And what we have here, of course, follows what is recorded in the previous chapters.

We know that in the days of Eli, the Philistines came to fight against Israel, and the people of Israel had grievously departed from the LORD.

And the LORD allowed their enemies to come and fight them as a kind of, we might say, as a chastisement upon them. And they thought, well, if we can take the ark out into the battle, the ark would be, apparently they regarded the ark as it would be a kind of a symbol of victory for Israel.

[00:04:04] So they took the ark out into the battle.

And we know what happened, the LORD allowed the ark to be taken, allowed the Philistines to take the ark. And Samuel's sons were killed, these men who were the priests and who were acting very wickedly, he allowed them to be killed in the battle. When old Eli got the news, he fell back and broke his neck, and he died, and so Israel was in a very troubled state.

Well, but the Philistines, they set up the ark, they put the ark in the house of their god.

And while the LORD allowed the ark to be taken, because Israel were just trusting in an outward symbol and not in the one whom it represented, that is in the LORD himself, [00:05:02] yet the LORD was not going to allow his name to be sullied before the Philistines.

So he causes this idol the Philistines were working, this fish god, Dagon, which was part man and part fish, he caused this idol to fall over.

They set it up again and it fell down again. This was a lesson to the Philistines that the LORD was superior to their god.

And then he plagued the Philistines, as we know, they apparently got a kind of a bubonic plague among them, and in the end they send the ark back to the land of Israel.

And it's very interesting to read there how they put this ark with an offering that they made, a trespass offering to the LORD, they put this ark on a cart with two cows that had calves, [00:06:03] two milk cows that had calves, and they said, now we'll shut up the calves at home. And if these cows will take this thing back to the land of the Philistines, we'll know that this is of God.

Because that would be absolutely contrary to nature, for those cows to go away. If any of you have had anything to do with cattle, you'll know that a cow with a calf will never go away, the opposite way, and leave its calf. And so, but these two cows, they actually went right back into the land of Israel with that cart.

And they came to Kirgis-Jerim, the men of Kirgis-Jerim were reaping their harvest in the valley when they saw these cows drawing this cart.

And it says, they went down the road, lowing as they went. That is, they were lowing, they were bellowing for their calves, and yet they were forced by the Spirit of God to take that cart back to the

land of Israel. [00:07:03] And this was a lesson to the Philistines, of course, that this was the ark of the God of Israel, the ark of Jehovah.

And then, the men of, without going into the details there, I'll just say that the Lord finally caused the ark to come to rest there in the house of Minadab.

And there the ark is kept there, I think it is, doesn't it say?

Oh, it was in the field of Joshua there. And there the ark stays.

And it was taken up later to the house of Minadab.

But in the meantime, the ark is not in its place in Israel.

And it says, the people, the men of Kurgis-Jerim came and fetched the ark of the Lord and brought it into the house of Minadab in the hill [00:08:01] and sanctified Eliezer, his son, to keep the ark of the Lord. It's finally brought up there, and this man sanctifies his son to look after it.

But it says, the people mourned after the Lord.

It's a long time, it's 20 years.

The symbol of God's presence is not in the place where it should be.

Why did God allow the symbol of His presence with His people not to be there? Well, it was because of the departure in the hearts of the people. And here we have a very important lesson for us, beloved brethren. That is, the Lord will not bless us with the realization of His presence among us as His people unless we're in the spiritual state that He can act among us.

That was the lesson that He had to teach Israel. [00:09:02] Just to have a symbol of His presence, such as the ark was, without the reality, would just be a formalism and nothing else.

So the Lord allows them to have their place of worship there with no ark to remind them that the Lord has a lesson to teach them.

And it's really good to see that it does say that the men of Israel, it came to pass that the House of Israel lamented after the Lord.

It says in the second verse. They lamented. They knew that the ark was out of its place. They knew that the Lord had something to say to them, that there was not the manifestation of His presence. So they began to get exercise. And what I see in this portion is that we have certain steps in restoration that the Lord gives His people in this portion. [00:10:01] There's certain steps in restoration. And the first thing is that they lamented.

The first thing is that there was a spirit of repentance on the part of the people of Israel. They realized that they'd made a mistake.

Well, you know, sometimes we come to the point where we wonder, why is the Lord not working

among us?

Why don't we see the manifestation of His presence like we should? Why do we not see more exercise among the Lord's people?

I think this is even true sometimes with regard to taking part in meetings. Sometimes, why is it that there's not more exercise to take part?

We should ask ourselves the question why it is. Am I not free to take part in the meeting because of something wrong that's hindering me, that's holding me back from taking part? [00:11:02] Or is it because there's some bad state in the meeting that the Spirit isn't free to use us, whether it be in worship or whether it be in service? These things should exercise us. This was something that exercised Israel. The Lord was not manifestly in their presence as He used to be. And the real reason was that the people in heart had departed from the Lord. So this is the first step in recovery. They lamented. They said, well, now what's wrong? There's some reason for this. And so we should ask ourselves the question, is there some reason for something that's happening? They lamented after the Lord. Then Samuel spake to them. Now this is the first recorded public ministry of Samuel.

We have Samuel's birth given us in the beginning of this book. We have how Samuel was asked for by his mother, Hannah, who had no children.

[00:12:01] And the Lord gave her this boy. And Samuel means asked of the Lord.

And she gave Samuel back to the Lord. And we know the story how Samuel was there with Eli and how the Lord revealed certain things to Samuel. But this is the first time that Samuel's ministry publicly is mentioned. Now as we go further on in the chapter that our brother Gary read, then we have some further ministry of Samuel. And he had a long and useful life because he not only was the one that was chosen of the Lord to point out Saul as the king of the people's choice, but he was afterwards sent to anoint David as the man of God's choice. And so Samuel comes here and he speaks to them.

Verse 3.

Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, 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, [00:13:04] and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines. You see, the Philistines had won a victory. When the ark was taken, the Philistines really won the battle.

They conquered the people of Israel on that particular day.

And they were subservient to them.

And the Lord allowed that to teach them a lesson. So now Samuel comes and he says, Well, if you really are lamenting after the Lord, if this sorrow that you're professing to have because the ark isn't in your midst as it used to be, if this is real, well, now there's something you've got to do. You've got to prove by your acts that it is real.

You've allowed the idols to be set up in your homes.

And so he says, Put away the strange gods.

[00:14:03] If ye do return unto the Lord with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth.

Ashtaroth was a goddess.

They worshipped gods and they worshipped goddesses.

And this was all of these various idol systems that they had in those days were all part of the Babylonian worship that was set up by Nimrod and that still exists in many parts of the world. It's sad to say it even came into Christendom. And the worship of the god and the goddess.

And this had come in in Israel.

They had copied the habits of the nations around them.

You know, this is always something that we notice in the Old Testament time and again that the people of Israel were not satisfied to have the Lord as their god. [00:15:04] They got their eyes on the nations round about them and they wanted to be like them. They wanted to have a king like them as we've seen. And as they saw these people worshipping these various idols, they wanted to worship the idols. Because if they really weren't, if they didn't have their hearts set to worship the Lord, then they had to worship something else and they had to worship an idol. And in those days, idolatry was the popular thing. And you know, beloved, we might say today, we might say, well, of course, we wouldn't do that. We wouldn't leave the Lord and go and worship idols like those idols that they worshipped. Well, we might do exactly the same thing in another way. They worshipped, when they turned away in their hearts from the Lord, they turned to idolatry because idolatry was the popular thing in the world of that day. And if we turn away from the Lord, what are we going to do? We're going to take up with what's the popular thing in the world of our day. [00:16:02] And that's what we find so many people doing. People are turning away from the Lord today. You take so many people in the world today that are turning away from Christianity altogether. What are they taking up with? They're taking up with materialism. They're taking up with these Eastern religions and all that kind of thing. People are taking up with the things that are becoming popular with the world. That's what they take up with. And so we've got to be careful. We must have our hearts set on the Lord.

The Lord must be the one that's before us. And what he tells us in his precious word that we should do, that's what we've got to do. The Lord has revealed much precious truth to us. He's shown us the truth of gathering to his precious name. He's shown us the truth of the assembly. How much do we value the assembly of God's people? How much do we value the meetings of the assembly? Are we always exercised to be at the meeting? I believe it's through the assembly and the assembly meetings that the Lord ministers his precious word to us. [00:17:07] In fact, we could take up a study on this, and I have had this on my mind sometimes to take up, but the Lord doesn't seem to be leading that way this afternoon. But I'll just mention this. This has been pointed out before, that in the Acts, we have three definite assembly meetings mentioned. In the 11th chapter, we have Paul and Barnabas assembling, gathering themselves together. And if you look it up in Mr. Darby's translation, it's even plainer than it is in the authorized version. They gathered themselves with the assembly and taught much people. So we would expect that in the meeting of the assembly for the ministry of the word, that there the Lord would be pleased to minister. And he ministered there through Barnabas

and Saul. And we learned from the 13th chapter that there were three others that the Lord also ministered his word through. In that assembly, there were five brothers, apparently, that are called prophets and teachers, [00:18:05] through whom he ministered the word.

And when the Lord ministers through those in that way that he's gifted to give ministry, that doesn't rule out either ministry that the Lord gives through others. Because Paul even says that he'd even rather speak five words with his understanding that others could receive edification. And we should be willing to receive ministry that the Lord might give us through whosoever he will when we come together. And I believe that the Bible readings also fit into this category.

That there, as we study the word together, and as each one contributes, whether it be in statements or in questions, his part, that the Lord brings out his precious truth. But it's the thought is we are gathered together in the assembly. You know, we talk about an assembly. We thank God for the assembly. [00:19:01] But the assembly must convene as an assembly.

Now, everyone's not able to be at every meeting of the assembly. There are many different circumstances that come in to hinder this one and that one from being there. But I believe that if we can be there, we should be there.

And I don't believe that any other service that we might have for the Lord should take the precedence over a meeting of the assembly.

If I'm doing some other work for the Lord and I find that that clashes with my being present at the regular assembly meeting, I should say no.

The meeting of the saints together comes first. Because the Lord expects me to be there and my brethren look for me to be there. Supposing now that I'm very busy sending out books in the publishing work, which is the Lord's work, and I thank God for the privilege of being in it. But if I allowed myself to be so occupied with that, [00:20:05] and even though it's the Lord's work, that I could not come along to the assembly meeting, I think I'd be doing wrong. There'll be plenty of time to do that work.

But not to let it clash with being present at the prayer meeting, or the Bible reading, or the breaking of bread, or whatever other meeting. Now when we come to the 12th chapter of Acts, we have there an assembly prayer meeting. Brother Fiedler read that portion out to us Wednesday night, because we were feeling in need of very special prayer for our dear brother Abe. And so there we have a meeting of the saints, and a meeting of the assembly for prayer. They were gathered together praying in the house of John Mark's mother, Mary, the mother of Mark. And so it uses the same expression, that the assembly, prayer was made of the assembly for him, [00:21:02] and there in that house they were gathered together praying. You know, they didn't even believe when the Lord answered their prayer, but he answered it. And so it shows the importance of the saints gathering for prayer. Then when we come to the 20th chapter, we have a similar expression used.

On the first day of the week, the saints came together, when we came together to break bread, they were assembled as an assembly to break bread. So there we have the meeting for the breaking of bread. The assembly gathered together to remember the Lord. So these are, we might say, three important scriptures, that let us see the importance of the saints assembling, and putting the Lord first. Suppose we neglect these things. Here we are, the Lord has saved our souls, he's shown us the

precious truth of gathering together, and we say, well, after all, you know, I don't like brother so-and-so. [00:22:01] When he gets up and ministers he talks too long, or they say somebody else talks too short, or we start finding some fault with our brethren. We say, well, I'm not going to go along to the meeting. Is that the right attitude for us to show? No. What does the Lord think about that? That we are staying away from the meeting just because we have some personal reason for it. Or maybe we're feeling tired. You know what I've noticed, that even after busy days work, and I might feel well, if it wasn't meeting night, I think I'd stay home and go to bed because I feel so tired. And you make an effort to go to the meeting, you feel refreshed afterwards, you feel afterwards, well, now, if I hadn't gone to the meeting tonight, I'd have missed something. We just had some special portion before us tonight that was really helpful. And when you get home, you find as if your tiredness is gone. At least that's been my experience, that it seems that the Lord makes it up to one sometimes [00:23:01] when we might think we have a legitimate excuse not to go. And sometimes there are legitimate excuses and one doesn't want to find fault with anyone who for legitimate and real reasons cannot attend the meetings. One's not talking about that. But there are many things that perhaps that might come in to hinder us.

And if we put those things on one side and don't let them hinder us, I'm sure that the Lord always makes it up to us. Now supposing, no, we start deciding that we're not going to the meetings and we're going to stay away. What's going to happen?

Something else has got to come in to take the place. We cannot neglect the Lord's things, brethren, and not find that something else comes in.

Well, that's what happened with Israel. So the prophet says here, he says, now, if you're really returning to the Lord, if you really want to return to the Lord and return to the Lord with all your heart, [00:24:03] put away the strange gods and Ashtoreth.

Put these things out of your life. God is saying something to you.

You've neglected the Lord. The Lord has allowed the Philistines to take the Ark because you didn't give the Lord His place as your center.

And He allowed the visible sign of Him as the center to go. Now He's let the Ark come back into your land again. But the Ark still isn't in its right place. David finally took it up to its right place. He tried to take it up in the Philistine way, and the Lord had to speak to him about that. He tried to take it up on a cart. It was all right for the Philistines to send it back on a cart. They didn't know any better, but David should have known that the priests had to carry the Ark. And so David tries to take it up on a cart, and a man loses his life over this.

And David is very, very greatly humbled over the whole matter. But finally he gets before the Lord, [00:25:02] and the Ark is taken up in the right way and put into the place there in Jerusalem where the temple was afterwards built, where the Ark was put as God's center for Israel. So the Ark eventually got back. But this is the beginning, as it were, of the restoration and of the right conditions that needed to come into Israel for the Ark to be set up in its proper place. And then it says, and serve him only, and serve him only, at the end of verse 2, and he will deliver you out of the hands of the Philistines. It's just that the Lord says, well now, you put me first, and I'll see that you get delivered out of the hands of the Philistines. But you've got to do that. You've got to put the idols away. The Lord, in that sense, the Lord says he's a jealous God.

The Lord will not have any other thing to take the place in the hearts of his people that he should have. [00:26:04] The Lord must have the first place. The Lord must have the preeminent place in our lives. And it says in verse 4, then the children of Israel did put away Balaam and Ashtaroth and served the Lord only.

They put away these idols. They destroyed these idols. Very possible that they broke them up and they had quite an idol-breaking celebration.

They got rid of all these idols. They said, that's right, we've got to get rid of these idols. They put the idols away and they served the Lord alone. Now we come to the next step. The first step was that they lamented after the Lord. The second step was to put away the strange gods. The third says in verse 5, then Samuel said, and Samuel said, gather all Israel to Mishpe and I will pray for you unto the Lord.

Gather all Israel to Mishpe [00:27:01] and I will pray for you unto the Lord. Now here I think we have the next step. The next step is prayer. Mishpe, the word Mishpe means the watchtower.

And we know from the New Testament that watching and praying go together. The Lord said to Peter and James and John when they were not able to watch with him one hour in the garden of Gethsemane, he says, watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation. Watch and pray.

So Samuel says, gather together to Mishpe and I'll pray for you.

They needed Samuel's prayer for them. But I think that Samuel here in a certain sense is a picture of the Lord Jesus. When the Lord sees that the hearts of his people are toward him, then we realize the value of the Lord's work for us.

[00:28:02] He is there in the glory as our great high priest. He's the one who is there too as our advocate.

He's the one who represents us in the presence of the Father. You know what the Lord said to Peter? He says, Peter, Simon he says, Satan's desire to have you that he may sift you as wheat. Now when the Lord says that to Peter, Satan's desire to have you, he means all of you.

Because you know in the Bible, the old English distinguishes between you which is plural and thou and thee which is singular.

He says, Satan's desire to have you apostles that he might sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for thee.

I prayed for you, Peter.

I prayed for thee, he said. That is, he signaled out Peter as the one he prayed for. Satan's desire to sift all the apostles. But Peter came in for special attention of Satan [00:29:01] and because no doubt he was the prominent one. Wherever you get the list of the apostles, Peter heads the list.

And he was, as it were, the one who spoke out. He was the spokesman. So he was the object of a special attack of Satan.

Satan thought, if I can only get Peter to deny him, I'm going to get Judas to betray him. But of course, Judas never did belong to the Lord. Judas was a hypocrite from the beginning. He was allowed to be an apostle because the Lord had to be betrayed by one of his own. But the Lord knew who he was all along. The Lord says, we get that in the Lord's prayer. He says, none of them is lost but the son of perdition that the scripture might be fulfilled. But Peter was the Lord's real servant. But Satan desired to sift the apostles.

But the Lord says, Peter, I prayed for thee. And when thou had converted, strengthen my brethren. Peter denied the Lord.

But he got converted. That is, he got restored. That's what the word means. [00:30:01] And he was able to strengthen his brethren. So the Lord prayed for Peter. And beloved, the Lord prays for us. And especially when the Lord sees his people going astray, when they turn back to him, we have the consciousness of the Lord's work for us. He's the one who is our advocate.

If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father. And also is our great high priest who's able to be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. But on our part also, we need to pray. Watch and pray.

So not only is we find Samuel praying, but we find that there was prayer needed on their part also. Now the next step is, it says, he gathered together a misper in verse 6 and drew water and poured it out before the Lord and fasted on that day and said, we have sinned against the Lord.

Samuel judged the children of Israel in misper. [00:31:03] And you say, well, now what does this mean that he drew water? What was the pouring the water out before the Lord? Well, you know, the pouring out of the water is really a picture of abject weakness.

I just forget what the connection was, but there's a mention there where it says, we are as water spilled upon the ground that cannot be gathered up. You pour some water out on the ground and then try and gather it up again. It's an impossible thing. And that water poured out on the ground, it's gone. It's just the picture of complete weakness. That's what we are before God. And this was for Israel, a recognition of what they were. Samuel poured the water out. And then it says that they, they poured it out before the Lord and fasted on that day. They poured the water out, they fasted, [00:32:01] which goes along with prayer and repentance and abstaining from necessary things. And they said, we've sinned against the Lord. And it says Samuel judged them. Now, I think that means when it says Samuel judged them, it means that they came to Samuel and they came to Samuel recognizing their faults. They told, when Samuel judged them, this is, as it were, a recognition on their part of the wrongs that they've done.

They say, yes, we've done wrong. This man would come up and say, Samuel, I publicly own before the Lord this day that I set up that idol in my house and that I led my whole household astray. And now I see the wrong of what I've done. This was, as it were, a public repentance on the part of the people of Israel as a whole as to the way that they departed from the Lord. [00:33:01] A very lovely thing to see it. And it's good for us if we've been, if we've made mistakes or we've done wrong or we realize we've been in error to recognize it. And if we've done wrong to some brother, to go and tell him and tell him that we've done him wrong or that we've had wrong thoughts about him or something like that.

If there's anything that's wrong and the Lord speaks to us about it, we'll never really be right until we

put the thing right. When we put the thing right, then we get the joy of the Lord back in our souls. So that's what they did. They said, we've sinned against the Lord. So that's the fourth step. Then the last is that we find that when the Philistines heard that they were all gathered together at Mizpah, they thought, this is our chance. There they are all together. They've forsaken their place. They don't have any arms to defend themselves with. We'll go along there and we'll finish them off altogether. So the Philistines gather themselves all around them and they're going to annihilate the children of Israel.

[00:34:05] And it says, they gathered themselves. Verse 7, when the Philistines heard that the children of Israel were gathered together at Mizpah, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel. And when the children of Israel heard it, they were afraid of the Philistines. And the children of Israel said to Samuel, cease not to cry unto the Lord our God for us, that he will save us out of the hand of the Philistines. You think these Philistines would have learned a lesson when the Lord sent the plague among them because they had the ark in their midst and they'd seen the hand of the Lord and realized who the Lord was. The Lord had to teach them a lesson. Well, but he had to teach his people a lesson too. And his people are in a condition now for the Lord to manifest himself. They're humble.

They're repenting of their sins. They put away the strange gods. And finally, Samuel, when they asked Samuel to pray for them that the Philistines won't take them, [00:35:02] what does Samuel do? Does he say, well, run and get your gun, run and get your arms, and we'll beat them in battle? No. It says, Samuel took a sucking lamb and offered it for a bird offering, holy unto the Lord.

And Samuel cried unto the Lord for Israel, and the Lord heard him.

What weaker thing could Samuel take to offer up than a sucking lamb?

A little lamb that wasn't yet weaned from its mother. Just a frail...

Why, the sheep itself is a very frail animal.

And to take just a little lamb, a still unweaned lamb, it was a picture of weakness.

But it also speaks of bringing in, I believe, the Lord Jesus Christ.

You know, there's a hymn we sing sometimes, by all that seem defeat, he won the Medan crown, [00:36:02] trod all our foes beneath his feet by being trodden down.

Christianity, in Christianity, strength is in weakness.

It's when we realize that we're nothing, when we realize our weakness, that's where the strength. Because the Lord gained his great victory through weakness. He was crucified in weakness, and yet he liveth by the power of God. The Lord's great victory was won, not by resisting, but by submitting.

He submitted himself to the will of God, and went down into death, and it's in the resurrection that is the great triumph. And so I think that's the thought here. Samuel offers the sucking lamb. This is the recognition of utter weakness. It's really saying to the Lord, Lord, we have no strength at all of our own, but we're trusting in thee. And in offering the lamb, [00:37:01] it brings in, we might say, the value of the work of Christ.

We're identifying ourselves with the one who took the low place, and whom God exalted in his own time, and we're looking to the Lord to exalt us in his own time. The victory will be his, and then the victory won't be ours. That's exactly what happened here. The Lord came in. The Lord thundered on the Philistines. The Lord sent a great thunderstorm on them, and they realized this was the hand of the Lord. It says that, as verse 10, as Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel. But the Lord thundered with a great thunder upon, that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them, and they were smitten before Israel. And the men of Israel went out of mischief, and pursued the Philistines, and smote them until they came to Beth-kar. So the Lord brought the victory. The Lord thundered on the Philistines, and they saw the hand of God, [00:38:04] and they fled, and the children of Israel after them, and it was a great victory. But it was the Lord's victory. The Lord came in and gave the victory, because they gave the Lord the right place. And this is the lesson for us, for each of us individually, and as a gathering of his people, that if we give the Lord the place in our lives that we should, then we can count on the Lord's blessing. And it says in verse 12, Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpah and Shem, and called the name of it Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.

Yes, up till now, he says, hitherto the Lord has helped us. And if they were trusting the Lord to have helped them now, he was going to help them in the future. And it says to close, in verse 13, So the Philistines were subdued, [00:39:01] and they came no more into the coast of Israel. And the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel.

So as long as Samuel was there, the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines. And so the Lord shows his hand in victory over the enemy when his people sought to give him the right place.

The Lord had to, the idols had to go out that the Lord might have his place in the hearts of his people, and then the Lord could manifest his presence with them. And that's the principle of this whole thing is just as true for us today as it was for Israel in.

Thank you.