

—{1}. **1 Samuel 7:12** **A Memorial**

A. Introduction — Memorials

1. a little while ago this morning, at 11:00, we paused and had a minute of silence, in which we remembered those who served in a number of past wars
 - a. some of these gave up a number of years of their life
 - b. others gave up, because of injury, the use of a hand, a foot, and many more serious losses
 - c. and some gave up their lives
 - d. so that what was patently and obviously evil could be defeated and that human freedoms could survive
 - e. and this little symbol, a poppy, is used as a memorial

2. then, in our reading in Mark 14,
 - a. we heard how in the house of Simon the leper, Mary the sister of Martha and Lazarus — being identified only in John's account — took oil of spikenard and anointed the Lord Jesus against the day of His burial
 - b. and we read how this act was to become, wherever the gospel was preached throughout the world, a memorial

3. and a little further along in that reading in Mark
 - a. the Lord Jesus as the Passover meal was ending
 - b. took bread and took the cup
 - c. applying to them a new meaning and import, that of the perfection of God's covenant with mankind
 - d. and left those two symbols as a memorial

4. and then we partook of the Lord's Supper
 - a. remembering Jesus Christ's suffering and death for us
 - b. looking forward to the day when He will return

B. Text and Context

1. before reading from 1 Samuel 7:2–13, let us note that

a. the Philistines had taken the ark of the covenant

(A) as a trophy of war

(B) in the day that God exercised His judgment against the house of Eli, the high priest

(C) so the Philistines put the ark in the house of their god, Dagon; with these idols falling down before the ark, and the Philistines being plagued (probably bubonic)

(D) so that, in fear, they returned it to Kirjath-Jearim

b. and Samuel became the last judge of Israel

2. so let us read, 1 Samuel 7:2–13 (NIV):

² It was a long time, twenty years in all, that the ark remained at Kiriath Jearim, and all the people of Israel mourned and sought after the LORD.

³ And Samuel said to the whole house of Israel, “If you are returning to the LORD with all your hearts, then rid yourselves of the foreign gods and the Ashtoreths and commit yourselves to the LORD and serve him only, and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines.” ⁴ So the Israelites put away their Baals and Ashtoreths, and served the LORD only. ⁵ Then Samuel said, “Assemble all Israel at Mizpah and I will intercede with the LORD for you.” ⁶ When they had assembled at Mizpah, they drew water and poured it out before the LORD. On that day they fasted and there they confessed, “We have sinned against the LORD.” And Samuel was leader of Israel at Mizpah.

⁷ When the Philistines heard that Israel had assembled at Mizpah, the rulers of the Philistines came up to attack them. And when the Israelites heard of it, they were afraid because of the Philistines. ⁸ They said to Samuel, “Do not stop crying out to the LORD our God for us, that he may rescue us from the hand of the Philistines.” ⁹ Then Samuel took a suckling lamb and offered it up as a whole burnt offering to the LORD. He cried out to the LORD on Israel’s behalf, and the LORD answered him. ¹⁰ While Samuel was sacrificing the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to engage Israel in battle. But that day the LORD thundered with loud thunder against the Philistines and threw them into such a panic that they were routed before the Israelites. ¹¹ The men of Israel rushed out of Mizpah and pursued the Philistines, slaughtering

them along the way to a point below Beth Car.¹² Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen. He named it Ebenezer, saying, "Thus far has the LORD helped us."

¹³ So the Philistines were subdued and did not invade Israelite territory again. Throughout Samuel's lifetime, the hand of the LORD was against the Philistines.

3. a couple of weeks ago, we sang that hymn,
 "Come, Thou Fount of every blessing
 Tune my heart to sing Thy praise ..." ⁻⁽²⁾.
- a. when we came to the second verse, we sang these lines
 "Here I raise to Thee an altar—
 Hither by Thy help I'm come, ..."
- b. and if we had been using the Celebration hymnal, they would have been
 "Hitherto Thy love has blest me;
 Thou hast brought me to this place, ..." ⁻⁽³⁾.
- c. or, if we had used, "Hymns for the Family of God"
 "This my glad commemoration
 That 'til now I've safely come." ⁻⁽⁴⁾.
- d. but up until about 30–35 years ago, we would all have been singing the original words of the composer:
 "Here I raise mine Ebenezer;
 Hither by Thy help I'm come;"
- e. Now I'm not sure why these words were so changed
 - (A) maybe the only Ebenezer most people know is Scrooge in Dicken's "A Christmas Carol"
 - (B) perhaps the Old Testament is considered too obscure or unnecessary for Christians to be familiar
 - (C) or, perhaps, the altered words were thought to be more "seeker sensitive"
- f. now, having read that passage, you here know what those original words of that hymn meant:
 - (A) you know that "Ebenezer" was not an altar — we do not have an altar: the only altar for the Christian church is the cross of Christ where He was sacrificed
 - (B) no, "Ebenezer" was a memorial, a reminder
 - (C) because "Ebenezer" means "stone of help" and it was set up to remind the people of Israel of their

“Rock of Help”, or as we read in Psalm 18:2 (NKJV): “The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; My God, my strength, in whom I will trust; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.”

C. Samuel as a Type of Jesus Christ

1. in the Old Testament there are a number of men who are, in a particular way, prophetic models of Jesus Christ; for example
 - a. Melchizedek, living in the time of Abraham, is such a type of Christ, King of Salem and priest of the Most High God
 - b. Moses, as the deliverer of God’s people, has many parallels between his life and the life of Jesus Christ
 - c. and even the reluctant prophet, Jonah, is a type in his three days and nights in the deep, mirroring Christ’s time in the grave and then resurrection

2. now, Samuel is also such a man, a type of Jesus Christ
 - a. Samuel, from before his conception, was dedicated to the service of God for his life; so also with Jesus, who was born to serve and to save His people from their sin
 - b. Samuel was not of the priestly line, nor even of the tribe of Levi, and yet we find him carrying out priestly duties
 - (A) here he offers a whole burnt offering
 - (B) here he pleads on behalf of God’s people
 - (C) so it is with Christ; though of the tribe of Judah, yet he was a priest forever just as was Melchizedek in the Old Testament; and He, too, ever lives to make intercession for God’s people
 - c. and Samuel, in being instrumental in the salvation of the people of Israel from the Philistines, left for this people a memorial — using a stone, a common memorial in the Old Testament — a memorial of God’s saving help; so also, in the communion service, the Lord Jesus Christ has left us a memorial of God’s saving power through the death of God the Son on the cross of Calvary

D. Conclusion

1. Samuel left for the people of Israel to see, a very simple memorial; a stone ... a stone, "Ebenezer" which any of them passing by and seeing, would be reminded of God's help in delivering them from the Philistines
2. Jesus Christ has left for us, the Israel of God (Galatians 6: 16) a very simple memorial; a piece of bread, a cup of juice, that every time that we stop and partake of these we be reminded that by His death He delivered us from sin and guilt
3. take this memorial out with you into the world this week, being deeply mindful of the need of those all around you who need to hear and to accept this tremendous gospel of Christ; who need to come to know the Rock of Ages as their own

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Various English versions of the Holy Bible are used in this sermon. Some (for example, the AV, ASV, and NAS) seek to be strictly translations, while others (and especially PHIL) contain paraphrasing which involves a certain amount of subjective interpretation. Nevertheless, there is little material difference in meaning among these. Some prove slightly clearer on some verses than others. Looking at more than one version sometimes sheds additional light on any particular verse. Explanatory additions to the Bible text are shown in [square brackets]. The versions are identified as:

ASV	American Standard Version of 1901
AV	Authorized (King James) Version
NAS	New American Standard version © 1975 The Lockman Foundation
NIV	New International Version © 1984 by the International Bible Society
NKJV	New King James Version © 1979 Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers
PHIL	New Testament Translation © 1972 by J. B. Phillips
RSV	Revised Standard Version © 1946, 1952 by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.
WEY	The New Testament in Modern Speech © 1902, 1912 R. F. Weymouth

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2. Robert Robinson (1735–1790), with alterations
3. Adapted, E. Margaret Clarkson, 1973
4. Adapted, 1976, Jeff Redd