

Title: Here I Raise My Ebenezer

Text: I Samuel 7: 7-15

Date: September 17, 2023

Place: SGBC, NJ

When we sing "Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing" in the second verse we sing:

Here I raise my Ebenezer;  
hither by thy help I'm come;  
and I hope, by thy good pleasure,  
safely to arrive at home.

Where do those words come from? "*Here I raise my Ebenezer*" What do they mean?

**1 Samuel 7: 12 Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the LORD helped us.**

Ebenezer means "stone of help." That is who Christ is for his people--our Stone of help. Samuel raised that stone to give God the glory for saving them from the Philistines. He raised it to be a reminder to Israel that they depended upon the Lord to deliver them in the future, the whole way, to the end. So the hymn writer got the message of this passage correct:

Here I raise my Ebenezer;  
hither by thy help I'm come;  
and I hope, by thy good pleasure,  
safely to arrive at home.

**I Samuel 7: 7: And when the Philistines heard that the children of Israel were gathered together to Mizpeh, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel. And when the children of Israel heard it, they were afraid of the Philistines.**

The Lord had just granted the children of Israel repentance. They were in a worship service at Mizpeh. Samuel told them that if they turned from their idols and worshipped God with all their heart, the Lord would deliver them from the hand of the Philistines. To every unbeliever and every believer that is our message: if you turn from every idol, from trusting your works to save you--and trust Christ with all your heart, the Lord will deliver you out of the hand of every enemy.

The Lord had revived the children of Israel--a true revival had taken place. When God works revival, he greatly humbles his child--the children of Israel were greatly humbled. At Mizpeh they poured out water to signify their own weakness--poured out like water

That is our gospel. We need to hear this over and over. "*All flesh is grass! Behold your God!*" Turn from trusting self; cease ye from man; deny your whole self as having any ability or any contribution to salvation. And believe on Christ from the heart--for eternal salvation, for salvation from every trial and temptation, for salvation to get you through today--believe on the Lord Jesus Christ from the heart. And he shall deliver us unto the end.

But think of what the Philistines saw! The Philistines saw Israel as weak. They saw them focused on worshipping the Lord and not paying any attention to this world. The Philistines thought, 'Now is the time to strike.' They thought now they could easily defeat them. But Samuel's message to the children of Israel was that if they cast all their care on the Lord then the Lord would fight for them--the Lord would deliver them from the hand of the Philistines. And with the children of Israel being humbled by the Lord--weaker than water poured out--the Lord was teaching them what he taught Paul. This is what the Lord is teaching us when he brings us to behold our total weakness.

2 Corinthians 12: 9...my strength is made perfect in weakness...[it is then] the power of Christ rests upon us...10: [therefore Paul said]...when I am weak then am I strong.

So things were not as they appeared to the carnal eye--without faith no man can see this. The Philistines could not see that by fighting the children of Israel they were fighting God Almighty! Child of God, when the devil or any enemy fights against you, they are fighting the LORD of hosts! The enemy has to go through Christ to get to his people. Christ is called "the Strength of Israel." He is the Strength of every elect, redeemed, regenerated child of God. The Lord taught David this. He wrote:

Psalm 27:1...the LORD *is* the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

Psalm 28:8: The LORD...*is* the saving strength of his anointed.

Psalm 20: 6: Now know I that the LORD saveth his anointed; he will hear him from his holy heaven with the saving strength of his right hand. 7: Some *trust* in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the

LORD our God. 8: They are brought down and fallen: but we are risen, and stand upright. 9: Save, LORD: let the King hear us when we call.

That is what the children of Israel did--they called out to the King of glory.

## CHRIST OUR INTERCESSOR

**I Samuel 7: 8: 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.**

Israel's strength is Christ our Intercessor. Samuel typifies Christ our Intercessor. Paul said, "Pray without ceasing." The children of Israel say to Samuel, "*Cease not to cry unto the Lord our God FOR US--he will save us...he will save us...*" Samuel is a type of Christ who Intercedes for his needy, strengthless people. We cannot come to holy God without Christ our High Priest to intercede for us. Christ is our Stone of Help--our Ebenezer--with God the Father. It is Christ ever living to make intercession for us by which we are saved. He said, "Because I live, thou shalt live." It is because he lives to intercede with the Father on behalf of his people. When the Spirit reveals Christ in us, he makes us know we are sinners that cannot come to holy God without Christ our Mediator, our Intercessor! The Spirit of God reveals we need Christ to intercede on our behalf and to deliver us the whole way. As the Psalmist wrote,

hither by thy help I'm come;  
and I hope, by thy good pleasure,  
safely to arrive at home

Here is the good news! Christ Jesus our great Intercessor "*ceases not to cry unto the Lord our God for us,...he will save us...*"

1 John 2: 1: My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: 2: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins* of the whole world.

Christ is our Advocate with the Father. Christ is our Advocate with the Father because he is Jesus Christ the Righteous. He is our only righteousness. Christ is the Propitiation for our sins. On the ark was the mercy seat. God told his people, "There will I meet with you." Christ is the Mercy Seat between us and God. Christ ceases not to intercede for his people.

## CHRIST OUR BURNT OFFERING

**1 Samuel 7: 9: 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.**

God the Father always hears Christ because our Savior is the believer's burnt offering. Christ is typified in this burnt offering. It appears Samuel was in between the children of Israel and the Philistines when he made this burnt offering. Without a doubt, our Lord Jesus was lifted up between the God we offended and his poor people. He suffered God's wrath in our place.

That is the picture in this burnt offering. It was a sucking lamb--innocent. Then the lamb was killed and its blood poured out. Its body was cut up and burned. The children of Israel were saying "That is what we deserve." Christ Jesus knew no sin. But he took all the sin of God's people. His body was bruised. His blood was poured out. He suffered in place of his people. He bore what I deserved.

What did our Lord accomplish? Christ covered the sins of his people. Last week we saw how the Lord cursed the serpent in the garden. The devil is cursed for causing us to sin and being the accuser of the brethren, uncovering our sins to the Father. Noah's son, Ham, pictures the devil. He uncovered his father's nakedness. Rather than cursing Noah for his sin, the Lord cursed Ham because Ham uncovered his father's nakedness. The other two sons typify Christ. They went backward and covered their father's sin. On the cross Christ covered our sins.

Psalm 85: 2: Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people, thou hast covered all their sin. Selah.

Then Christ found us polluted in our blood like the baby cast out and Christ covered us through faith--the righteousness of Christ covering us through faith.

Ezekiel 16: 8: Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time *was* the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I sware unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord GOD, and thou becamest mine.

This is the very rejoicing of those given faith to trust Christ.

Isaiah 61: 10: I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh *himself* with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth *herself* with her jewels.

Notice, as Samuel offered this burnt offering, he prayed to the Lord for the children of Israel--"*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.*" Due to Christ's sin-atonement blood, due to Christ declaring God just and the justifier of his people, due to Christ being our Righteousness with the Father, God hears Christ Jesus our Advocate.

This is how Christ is the Propitiation for our sins. Christ is the Mercy Seat where God promised to meet with us in mercy. When we pray, it is Christ between us and the Father. And it is Christ our Father hears. Christ Jesus not only justified his people, he ever lives to intercede for us and it is for his sake God hears us.

Hebrews 10: 19: [we have] boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20: By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; 21: And *having* an high priest over the house of God;

## CHRIST OUR DELIVERER

**1 Samuel 7: 10: 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. 11: And the men of Israel went out of Mizpeh, and pursued the Philistines, and smote them, until *they came* under Bethcar... 13: So the Philistines were subdued, 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. 14 And the cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron even unto Gath; and the coasts thereof did Israel deliver out of the hands of the Philistines. And there was peace between Israel and the Amorites. 15: And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life.**

The Lord Jesus has defeated all the enemies of his people. He has delivered us and he shall deliver us from every enemy. Israel fought. We fight the fight of faith. But it was not Israel but the Lord who discomfited the Philistines. It is not us but the Lord Jesus who Delivered his people on the cross. The devil bruised our Savior's heel but Christ our God thundered on his head and discomfited him. Christ delivered God's elect from all our sins so that the devil has no more sin to accuse us with. On the cross, Christ delivered his elect from the devil's bondage when he delivered us from the curse of the law.

And Christ is the Deliverer who continues to deliver his saints. He alone delivered us from our sin-nature when he came with the gospel the first time and gave us faith--and he alone delivers us when we are taken captive by our sin-nature,

Romans 7: 24: O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? 25: I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Christ alone delivers us in every trial we face.

2 Corinthians 1: 8: For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life: 9: But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: 10: Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver *us*;

Christ shall deliver us from our greatest enemy--the grave.

1 Corinthians 15: 25: For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. 26: The last enemy *that* shall be destroyed *is* death... 55: O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory? 56: The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law. 57: But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Lord delivered the children of Israel that day and he did so all their days--he does the same for all who cast their care on him--"*So the Philistines were subdued, 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.*" The Philistines were fighting a losing battle. They were fighting against the Lord himself. The devil is fighting a losing battle. Every other enemy is fighting a losing battle. The hand of the LORD is against all the enemies of his anointed!

Romans 8: 33: Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It's God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It's Christ that died yea rather is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

Christ restored to his people more than we lost in Adam--"*And the cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron even unto Gath; and the coasts thereof did Israel deliver out of the hands of the Philistines.*" We have eternal restoration in Christ: eternal righteousness, eternal redemption and eternal life.

The Prince of peace is our Peace and Christ is our Judge who watches over his people and teaches us and protects us--  
*"And there was peace between Israel and the Amorites. And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life."*

Brethren, whatever your need run to Christ. Christ alone is our Strength. When Christ delivers he does it in such a way that we know Christ alone gets the glory. So Samuel gave God all the glory.

**1 Samuel 7: 12: Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.**

**Amen!**