

TEXT: 1 Samuel 7:3-17

TITLE: SECRET TO SUCCESSFUL LEADERSHIP

BIG IDEA:

STRONG SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP (SAMUEL) USES THE GIFT OF EXHORTATION AND THE WEAPON OF PRAYER TO ACCOMPLISH THE MINISTRY GOALS OF SPIRITUAL REVIVAL, DELIVERANCE FROM ENEMIES, PEACEFUL EXISTENCE, AND RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENTS

INTRODUCTION:

A strong spiritual leader needs to know how to motivate people and how to intercede on their behalf to the Lord of hosts. That is the secret to accomplishing ministry objectives.

I. (:3-6a) SPIRITUAL REVIVAL BASED ON REPENTANCE AND FASTING

A. (:3-4) Gift of Exhortation and the Response of Revival

1. (:3) Exhortation to Turn from Idols to Wholeheartedly Serve God Alone

“If you return to the Lord with all your heart, remove the foreign gods and the Ashtaroth from among you and direct your hearts to the Lord and serve Him alone . . .”

2. (:4) Response of Revival

“So the sons of Israel removed the Baals and the Ashtaroth and served the Lord alone.”

B. (:5-6) Weapon of Intercessory Prayer and the Response of Revival

1. (:5) Intercessory Prayer of Samuel

“Gather all Israel to Mizpah, and I will pray to the Lord for you”

Davis: Samuel was well-known for his emphasis upon prayer (8:6; 12:19, 23)

2. (:6a) Response of Revival

a. Repentance

“And they gathered to Mizpah, and drew water and poured it out before the Lord”

“We have sinned against the Lord”

b. Fasting

“and fasted on that day”

(:6b) Transition: People Submitted to God’s Appointed Spiritual Leadership

“And Samuel judged the sons of Israel at Mizpah”

II. (:6b-11) DELIVERANCE FROM ENEMIES BASED ON PERSISTENT INTERCESSION

- A. (:6b) Gift of Exhortation – Ongoing Pattern of Exhortation
“And Samuel judged the sons of Israel at Mizpah”

- B. (:7) Fear of Enemies Creates Need for Deliverance
“And when the sons of Israel heard it, they were afraid of the Philistines.”

- C. (:8-9) Weapon of Intercessory Prayer
 1. (:8) Pleading for Prayer
“Do not cease to cry to the Lord our God for us, that He may save us from the hand of the Philistines.”

 2. (:9a) Preparing for Prayer
“And Samuel took a suckling lamb and offered it for a whole burnt offering to the Lord”

 3. (:9b) Passion for Prayer
“and Samuel cried to the Lord for Israel and the Lord answered him.”

- D. (:10-11) Victory Through Prayer

III. (:12-14) PEACEFUL EXISTENCE BASED ON PROVIDENTIAL PROTECTION

- A. (:12) Gift of Exhortation Expressed by Way of Memorial
“Then Samuel took a stone and set it between Mizpah and Shen, and named it Ebenezer, saying, ‘Thus far the Lord has helped us.’”

(Illustration of buying new Camry)

- B. (:13) Providential Protection
“So the Philistines were subdued, and they did not come anymore within the border of Israel. And the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel.”

- C. (:14a) Providential Restoration
“And the cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron even to Gath; and Israel delivered their territory from the hand of the Philistines.”

- D. (:14b) Providential Peace
“So there was peace between Israel and the Amorites.”

IV. (:15-17) RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENTS BASED ON FAITHFULNESS IN WORSHIP AND SERVICE

A. (:15) Righteous Judgments

“Now Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life.”

B. (:16-17a) Faithfulness in Service

“And he used to go annually on circuit to Bethel and Gilgal and Mizpah, and he judged Israel in all these places. “Then his return was to Ramah, for his house was there, and there he judged Israel”

C. (:17b) Faithfulness in Worship

“and he built there an altar to the Lord.”

* * * * *

DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

- 1) How are we using our spiritual gifts to encourage and motivate other believers?
- 2) What principles can we glean from this passage to guide us in praying for revival in our own country?
- 3) Contrast the great power of the *hand of the Lord* compared to the limited and constrained power of the *hand of the Philistines*. Do we have confidence in the power of God working on our behalf to subdue our enemies?
- 4) What have been some of the famous circuit rider preachers down through church history who can look back to the pattern of the faithful service of Samuel throughout the land of Israel?

* * * * *

QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Blaikie: “It must have been with feelings very different from those of their last encounter, when the ark of God was carried into the battle, that the host of Israel now faced the Philistine army near Mizpah. Then they had only the symbol of God’s gracious presence, now they had the reality. Then their spiritual guides were the wicked Hophni and Phinehas; now their guide was holy Samuel. Then they had rushed into the fight in thoughtless unconcern about their sins; now they had confessed them, and through the blood of sprinkling they had obtained a sense of forgiveness. Then they were puffed up by a vain presumption; now they were animated by a calm but confident hope. Then their advance was hallowed by no prayer; now the cry of needy children had gone up from God’s faithful servant. In fact, the battle with the Philistines had already been fought by Samuel on his knees. There can be no more sure token of

success than this. Are we engaged in conflict with our own besetting sins? Or are we contending against scandalous transgression in the world around us? Let us first fight the battle on our knees. If we are victorious there we need have little fear of victory in the other battle.”

Davis: “One would expect a continued revival and spiritual growth among the people who had experienced such a reversal in political and military trends; however, such was not the case. As the Philistines and Ammonites began to apply additional pressure on the borders of Israel, rather than turning to God, the children of Israel sought out a human leader to provide military victory.”