

1 Samuel 7:1-17 **Ark of Yehowah at Kirjath Jearim 20 Years – Samuel Judged Israel**

Ark of the Lord at Kirjath Jearim 20 Years

1 Then the men of Kirjath Jearim came and took the ark of the Lord, and brought it into the house of Abinadab on the hill, and consecrated Eleazar his son to keep the ark of the Lord.

Samuel Judges Israel

2 So it was that the ark remained in Kirjath Jearim a long time; it was there twenty years. And all the house of Israel lamented after the Lord.

Samuel called Israel to repentance – and judged them at Mizpah

3 Then Samuel spoke to all the house of Israel, saying, "If you return to the Lord with all your hearts, then put away the foreign gods and the Ashtoreths from among you, and prepare your hearts for the Lord, and serve Him only; and He will deliver you from the hand of the Philistines."

4 So the children of Israel put away the Baals and the Ashtoreths, and served the Lord only.

5 And Samuel said, "Gather all Israel to Mizpah, and I will pray to the Lord for you." 6 So they gathered together at Mizpah, drew water, and poured it out before the Lord. And they fasted that day, and said there, "We have sinned against the Lord." And Samuel judged the children of Israel at Mizpah.

Philistines came against Israel at Mizpah

7 Now when the Philistines heard that the children of Israel had gathered together at Mizpah, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel. And when the children of Israel heard of it, they were afraid of the Philistines.

8 So the children of Israel said to Samuel, "Do not cease to cry out to the Lord our God for us, that He may save us from the hand of the Philistines."

9 And Samuel took a suckling lamb and offered it as a whole burnt offering to the Lord. Then Samuel cried out to the Lord for Israel, and the Lord answered him.

Philistines defeated from Mizpah

10 Now as Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel. But the Lord thundered with a loud thunder upon the Philistines that day, and so confused them that they were overcome before Israel.

11 And the men of Israel went out of Mizpah and pursued the Philistines, and drove them back as far as below Beth Car.

Ebenezer

12 Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen, and called its name Ebenezer, saying, "Thus far the Lord has helped us."

Philistines Subdued

13 So the Philistines were subdued, and they did not come anymore into the territory of Israel. And the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel.

¹⁴ Then the cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron to Gath; and Israel recovered its territory from the hands of the Philistines.

Also there was peace between Israel and the Amorites.

Samuel did a yearly circuit from Ramah

¹⁵ And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life. ¹⁶ He went from year to year on a circuit to Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah, and judged Israel in all those places. ¹⁷ But he always returned to Ramah, for his home was there. There he judged Israel, and there he built an altar to the Lord. NKJV

Facts Revealed:

Ark of the Lord at Kirjath Jearim 20 Years [1 Samuel 7:1-2]

- ✧ Then the men of Kirjath Jearim came and took the ark of the Lord, and brought it into the house of Abinadab on the hill, and consecrated Eleazar his son to keep the ark of the Lord. So it was that the ark remained in Kirjath Jearim a long time; it was there twenty years. And all the house of Israel lamented after the Lord.
- ✧ The Ark of God had been captured by the Philistines in the battle that killed the two sons of Eli according to the word of the Lord against Eli. [1 Samuel 2:27-34, 3:11-14, 4:10-11]
- ✧ Three cities of the Philistines (Ashdod, Gath, and Ekron) were decimated in seven months by God, when the Ark of God was in their midst, causing them to return the Ark of God to Israel with gold offerings to appease the God of Israel. [1 Samuel 5:1-12, 6:1-12]
- ✧ When the Ark of God was returned to Israel, 50,070 men of Beth Shemesh were killed for looking into the Ark of God, so they sent the Ark to Kirjath Jearim out of fear of the Ark saying, "Who is able to stand before this Holy God?" [1 Samuel 6:13-21]
- ✧ The death of the people who violated the sacredness of the article of God brought honor and respect to God both among the Philistines and the Children of Israel.
- ✧ This is the same honor God received in the eyes of the world when He defeated the powers of Egypt as He delivered the Children of Israel from bondage and made them a great nation. [Exodus 14:4, 15-18]
- ✧ The house of Abinadab in Kirjath Jearim was most likely the house of a priest living in Kirjath Jearim because only a priest could serve in the presence of the Ark of God. [Numbers 4:5-15, Leviticus 16:1-34]
- ✧ Eleazar his son was consecrated to keep the ark of the Lord.
- ✧ The Ark remained in his house at Kirjath Jearim 20 years.
- ✧ Israel had plenty cause to lament after the Lord because of the deaths of 30,000 in the battle with the Philistines when the Ark was captured, and 50,070 at Beth Shemesh when they looked into the Ark after the Philistines returned it. [1 Samuel 4:10-11, 6:13-21]

Samuel called Israel to repentance – and judged them at Mizpah [1 Samuel 7:3-6]

- ✧ Then Samuel spoke to all the house of Israel, saying, "If you return to the Lord with all your hearts, then put away the foreign gods and the Ashtoreths from among you, and prepare your hearts for the Lord, and serve Him only; and He will deliver you from the hand of the Philistines." [1 Samuel 7:3]
- ✧ Samuel, as a true prophet of God, does not encourage the people in their sins by showing tolerance toward their foreign religions and culture that has swept through the land.
- ✧ Idolatry of foreign gods and the Ashtoreths have again entrapped the people of Israel.

- ✧ This is the same problem that is sweeping through the nations of the world today, nations who were once well established in Christianity, now are open to all the foreign religions of the world and attempting to reestablish the old pagan cultures and religions of the past.
- ✧ It is astonishing to realize that people of God are so continually swayed into idolatry and paganism to their own destruction and need to be called back to repentance.
- ✧ Deliverance of God's people from their enemies is conditioned upon their choice to repent, turn from Idolatry, and whole heartedly return to the God of all Creation.
- ✧ So the children of Israel put away the Baals and the Ashtoreths, and served the Lord only. [1 Samuel 7:4]
- ✧ And Samuel said, "Gather all Israel to Mizpah, and I will pray to the Lord for you." So they gathered together at Mizpah, drew water, and poured it out before the Lord. And they fasted that day, and said there, "We have sinned against the Lord." And Samuel judged the children of Israel at Mizpah. [1 Samuel 7:5-6]
 - ✧ The beginning of repentance is the confession of sins.
 - ✧ Before Samuel would pray for the people of Israel, they were gathered together at Mizpah, fasted, pouring out water before the Lord, and confessed their sins.
 - ✧ Samuel judged them there.

Philistines came against Israel at Mizpah [1 Samuel 7:7-9]

- ✧ Now when the Philistines heard that the children of Israel had gathered together at Mizpah, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel. And when the children of Israel heard of it, they were afraid of the Philistines. [1 Samuel 7:7]
 - ✧ It is interesting to realize that the enemies of God take advantage of people who are attempting to reconcile their relationship with God.
 - ✧ It was at this crucial time that the Philistines chose to attack Israel.
- ✧ So the children of Israel said to Samuel, "Do not cease to cry out to the Lord our God for us, that He may save us from the hand of the Philistines." [1 Samuel 7:8]
 - ✧ The Children of Israel demonstrated their faith by asking Samuel to intercede for them, knowing only God could deliver them after the recent defeat at the hands of the Philistines. [1 Samuel 4:10-11]
- ✧ And Samuel took a suckling lamb and offered it as a whole burnt offering to the Lord. Then Samuel cried out to the Lord for Israel, and the Lord answered him. [1 Samuel 7:9]
 - ✧ The people had consecrated themselves before the Lord, so now is the time to approach God for help in the clear and present danger from the Philistines.
 - ✧ God responded to the plea indicating His acceptance of their repentance.

Philistines defeated from Mizpah [1 Samuel 7:10-11]

- ✧ Now as Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel. But the Lord thundered with a loud thunder upon the Philistines that day, and so confused them that they were overcome before Israel. And the men of Israel went out of Mizpah and pursued the Philistines, and drove them back as far as below Beth Car. [1 Samuel 7:10-11]
 - ✧ The Lord fought against the Philistines by loud thunder which so confused the Philistines that they were easily overcome before Israel.
 - ✧ Israel heard the same thunder but were not confused by it.
 - ✧ This is a spiritual battle of the mind being troubled by the Lord, demonstrating God's power to blind the minds of His enemies as God sent them strong delusion. [1 Thessalonians 2:11]

Ebenezer [1 Samuel 7:12]

- ✧ Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen, and called its name **Ebenezer**, saying, "**Thus far the Lord has helped us.**" [[1 Samuel 7:12](#)]
- ✧ Samuel recognized that the Lord had helped Israel to that point, but realized the tendency of mankind to forget and turn from God.
- ✧ There is always a question if the help will continue because the people may again forsake their God.
- ✧ The Lord is always able to help His people, but their sins will come between them and their God bringing on their own destruction as has happened so many times before and since. [[Isaiah 59:1-2](#)]
- ✧ The people have a tremendous need to hold fast to the Rock of their Salvation, just as Christians today need to guard and keep their faith to the end. [[Matthew 10:22](#), [24:13](#), [Mark 13:13](#)]

Philistines Subdued [[1 Samuel 7:13-14](#)]

- ✧ So the Philistines were subdued, and they did not come anymore into the territory of Israel. And the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel. Then the cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron to Gath; and Israel recovered its territory from the hands of the Philistines. Also there was peace between Israel and the Amorites. [[1 Samuel 7:14](#)]
- ✧ When a man's ways please the Lord, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him. [[Proverbs 16:7](#)]
- ✧ This goes for nations as well as individuals as demonstrated during the reign of Solomon. [[1 Chronicles 22:7-9](#), [12-13](#), [1 Kings 2:1-4](#), [Deuteronomy 29:9](#), [Joshua 1:7-8](#)]
- ✧ The Lord gives Peace when a nation keeps His commandments and does righteousness and justice according to the laws of God.

Samuel did a yearly circuit from Ramah [[1 Samuel 7:15-17](#)]

- ✧ And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life. He went from year to year on a circuit to Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah, and judged Israel in all those places. But he always returned to Ramah, for his home was there. There he judged Israel, and there he built an altar to the Lord. [[1 Samuel 7:15-17](#)]
- ✧ Samuel was the last of the Judges over Israel and the one who gave them a king at their request because they rejected the Lord God of Israel from being their king. [[1 Samuel 8:7](#)]