LOOK WHAT THE LORD HAS DONE!

SERIES BREAK

SPARKS

- Have you ever owned something but didn't really know how to use it?
- When assembling something, do you read the manual first or start putting things together?
- Is there something you didn't appreciate before but have learned to appreciate now?

WORD

"Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen. He named it Ebenezer, saying, 'Thus far the Lord has helped us.'"

1 Samuel 7:12
(Read also: 1 Samuel 7:1–13)

Have you ever wondered how you can trust God when you don't know what will happen next? Sometimes, trusting God is difficult because we want answers. We want to know how things will turn out, when our prayers will be answered, and what lies ahead.

In 1 Samuel 4–7, the Israelites experienced defeat against the Philistines. They even lost the Ark of the Covenant. But after many years, the people turned back to God under Samuel's leadership. When their enemies attacked again, they cried out to the Lord, and God gave them victory.

After the battle, Samuel set up a stone and called it Ebenezer, saying, "Thus far the Lord has helped us."

This story reminds us that we may not know what the future holds, but we can trust the God who has helped us this far. Let's look at three lessons from this story.

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1 .DON'T JUST DO THINGS FOR GOD. GIVE HIM YOUR HEART.

1 Samuel 4:3
"Let us bring the ark of the Lord's covenant from Shiloh, so that He may go with us and save us from the hand of our enemies."

When Israel was defeated by the Philistines, they thought bringing the Ark of the Covenant into battle would guarantee their victory. They treated it like a lucky charm, thinking that because they had the Ark, God would automatically fight for them. But they were defeated again, and the Ark was captured (1 Samuel 4:10–11).

1

We can make the same mistake. We may attend church, serve in ministry, read the Bible, and join church activities, but these things do not automatically mean we have a close relationship with God. God wants our hearts, not just our activities. Having the things of God is not the same as truly knowing and depending on Him. Are there areas in your life where you have become more focused on doing things for God than spending time with God?

2. WIN THE BATTLE ON YOUR KNEES FIRST.

1 Samuel 7:9
"Then Samuel took a suckling lamb and sacrificed it as a whole burnt offering to the Lord. He cried out to the Lord on Israel's behalf, and the Lord answered him."

2

When the Philistines prepared to attack again, the Israelites were afraid. But this time, they asked Samuel to pray to God for them. Samuel offered a sacrifice and cried out to the Lord. God answered by sending loud thunder that confused the Philistines (1 Samuel 7:7–10).

This time, Israel had turned back to God. They confessed their sins, left their idols, and committed themselves to serving Him alone. This reminds us that when we face battles and challenges, we should not depend only on our own strength. We need to pray, surrender, and seek God's help. Prayer should not be our last option when everything else fails. It should be our first response. When you face a difficult situation, what usually gets your attention first: the problem or the God who can help you?

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3 .REMEMBER HOW FAR GOD HAS BROUGHT YOU.

1 Samuel 7:12
"Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen. He named it Ebenezer, saying, 'Thus far the Lord has helped us.'"

After the victory over the Philistines, Samuel took a stone and set it up as a reminder of what God had done. He named it Ebenezer, saying, “Thus far the Lord has helped us.” Samuel wanted the Israelites to remember that their victory did not come from their own strength, but from God's faithfulness and help.
Just like the Israelites, we can sometimes become so focused on what lies ahead that we forget what God has already done. We may face new challenges, uncertainties, and unanswered questions, but we have a reason to keep trusting Him. Remembering His faithfulness in the past gives us confidence for the future. We may not know what tomorrow holds, but we know the God who has brought us this far. When you look back on your life, what is one moment or season that reminds you, “Thus far, the Lord has helped me”? How can remembering that help you trust Him with what lies ahead?

3

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LIVE IT!

- Learn to depend on God more than your own abilities and resources.
- Make prayer your first response, not your last resort.
- Take time to look back and recognize the ways God has helped you through different seasons of your life.

PRAYER

- Confess the times we have been busy doing things for God but have neglected our relationship with Him.
- Thank God that we can come to Him with every problem and concern. Ask Him to help us make prayer our first response in every situation.
- Thank God for His faithfulness and for carrying you through every season of your life. Commit to trusting Him with the future, knowing that the One who has brought you this far will continue to lead you.

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