

EBENEZER

The scriptures in 1 Samuel 7 record a remarkable episode in the history of God's people when Samuel judged Israel. As the nation was returning to the Lord from idolatry, they came under the threat of their vile enemy, the Philistines. Long story short, they were rescued from the Philistines by the power of God. As a result, Samuel placed an upright stone and called it Ebenezer, meaning "stone of help." Personally, I think he was reflecting on another story.

In an earlier event in the history of God's people, the 12 tribes crossed the Jordan River. This, too, marked a time of renewed allegiance and restored obedience to the Lord. As commanded, a man from each tribe took a large stone across the river to the long-awaited "promised land." It was declared, "*So these stones shall be to the people of Israel a memorial forever.*" (Joshua 4:7b)"

Joshua 4:9

And Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of the Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests bearing the ark of the covenant had stood; and they are there to this day.

I don't think it is a coincidence that Jesus likened our choice to be his disciple to the building of a house (Matthew 7:21). This building being the action of placing stone upon stone with one cornerstone holding them all upright (Mark 12:10). Moreover, it is a process in which the builder is to count the cost (Luke 14:28).

Jesus, during his ministry here on earth, addressed that men build both temples (Mark 13) and tombs (Matthew 23). However, his appeal was to build (set up) a life/building that stands, not one that enables us to "relax, eat, drink, be merry (Luke 12:13-21)" or construct aimlessly (Luke 17). Instead, we should build an Ebenezer of stacked stones (representing life), reflecting that Jesus Christ is our Lord and help.

When someone looks at the sum of your life, what will they see?

What will others say? Will they reflect on what you have built, or will they say, "Wow, look at what God has done!"?

May our life constantly be something that glorifies the goodness of God's grace and the power of his hand!

*Here I raise my Ebenezer
Here by Thy great help I've come
And I hope by Thy good pleasure
Safely to arrive at home*

Blessings in your building,
Ryan.