**1 Samuel 7**

***A Victorious Heart!***

**Scripture:** 1 Samuel 7:1-17

**Memory Verse:** *“…Do not cease to cry out to the Lord our God for us that He may save us…”*

 1 Samuel 7:8

**Lesson Focus:** God gives victory to a heart that is His!

**Activities & Crafts:** Coloring pages, Work sheet

Craft for 1st & 2nd graders: The Victory Heart

1. Have the kids decorate their hearts
2. Have the kids cut out their hearts
3. Have the kids attach them to a string for a necklace.

**Introduction:** Hide the heart game.

 Cut out some hearts and hide them around the room. Write on the hearts these words:

1. God
2. Wants
3. Your
4. Heart

After the kids find them have them put them together to spell out the thought. Tell the kids that this is what out lesson is about today. God has always wanted one thing from us and that is for Him to have 1st place in our hearts.

**Bible Study:**

Remember how the last chapters of Samuel have dealt with the Ark and the heavy hand of God. No one wanted the ark because God judged them and their sin. God judged the Philistines and God judged the Israelites (1 Samuel 6:20-21.) God was judging sin and now in chapter 7 of Samuel we will see how God deals with the sin of the heart.

 **1 Samuel 7:1-2: “***the Ark Returns to Israel”*

 √ Where did the Ark return to?

 √ What is the Ark of the Lord?

 √ What does it mean that “all of Israel lamented after the Lord?” (They cried

 out to God.)

 √ Do you think that “lamenting” can be a good thing? Why or why not?

It seems like Israel has been in a 20 year waiting period. Samuel was waiting too. He was waiting to hear Israel lament and call out to God.

 **1 Samuel 7:3-4:** *“House Cleaning”*

√ How does Samuel tell the people to return to the Lord? (With all of their

hearts.) What does that mean? This is what Samuel had been waiting for. Only God can change the heart. We make a move toward God and He will hear us and forgive us and change our hearts to be totally His.

 √ Why are our hearts so important to God?

 √ How do our hearts get divided?

 √ What did Samuel ask them to “put away?” (foreign gods) (Ashtoroth is the

Canaanite goddess who was the wife of Baal.) Samuel knows that the people of Israel have accepted the Canaanite lifestyle and have allowed their worship of idols to seep into their home and hearts. They need to put away or get rid of all these things.

 √ What did Samuel ask them to prepare? (their hearts)

 √ How do you prepare your heart?

 √ How do you serve God only? This speaks of whole-hearted love for God and

 to serve Him only! No one else can be in the picture.

 √ When our hearts are right – what was the promise that God will do? (He will

 deliver you from the Philistines.)

 √ Did the children of Israel “house clean?” (1 Samuel 7:4)

 The children of Israel choose to obey God. They choose to put God first and

serve Him only. That was a choice that they made. For 20 years they had not obeyed God…this is an important moment in the life of Israel.

 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10, says, *“…how you turned to God from idols to serve the*

*living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.”*

 **1 Samuel 7:5-6:** “Prayer!”

 √ What did Samuel ask the people to do? (gather together)

 √ What did the people do?

1. They gathered together
2. They poured out water
3. They fasted

Pouring out of water and fasting where both expressions of Israel repenting before God.

√ What does it mean to repent? (to turn away from sin and to confess sin.)

1. They confessed their sin
2. Samuel judged the people – Samuel spoke God’s words to the people of Israel and called them out on their sin. Samuel was an effective leader that took the people back to God. In comparison to Eli and his sons that took the people’s hearts away from God.

**1 Samuel 7:7-11:** *The Challenge!*

Many times in our Christian walk with the Lord we will have times of confessing our sin and renewing our walk with Jesus. We will give Him our whole heart and serve Him only. That is usually when we are tested. The devil wants to see if we really believe and wants to trip us up. This is what is going to happen to Israel.

The Philistines hear that the people of Israel have all gathered in one place. What a great way to defeat them. They have defeated them in all of the other battles – why not come at them when they are all together.

√ How did the children of Israel respond? (they were afraid – but they asked Samuel to not cease to pray for them.) Even though they feared they went to God for delivery.

Samuel prays: - he makes an offering and prays for deliverance.

√ Did God answer him?

God answered Samuel as he was praying and offering up the sacrifice.

√ How did God defeat the Philistines?

1. Thunder
2. Confused them
3. Israel was able to defeat them

**1 Samuel 7:12:**

 √ So what did Samuel do? (He set up a stone to remember that God gave them

 the victory.)

 √ Why did Samuel say “thus far” the Lord has helped us?”

 Samuel knew that God’s is very willing to give us victory in our lives – but our

 hearts must belong totally to Him.

 **1 Samuel 7:13-14:**

√ What was the result of God’s victory?

1. Philistines were subdued
2. Philistines did not come anymore into Israel’s territory
3. Israel gained back all of their stolen cities
4. Peace for Israel

**1 Samuel 7:15-17:**

Samuel judged Israel all the days of His life. God gave peace to Israel all the days of Samuel. Samuel was God’s chosen leader. His mom had prayed for him and had dedicated him to the Lord. As a child he grew in the Lord. That means his heart became totally Gods.

**Conclusion:** God wants our hearts. We cannot serve God and the world.

 √ Who has the #1 place in your heart?

 √ How do you keep God #1 in your heart?

 Take time to pray about your hearts in the classroom.

God is #1

VICTORIOUS

HEART