



## **“Ebenezer: - the rock of defense” by Pastor Mboneni Rathiyaya, Wednesday Service, the 26<sup>th</sup> of September 2012.**

**Scripture reading: 1 Samuel 7:3-13 “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. 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. 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. 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." 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.” 1 Samuel 7:3-13 NKJV.**

I want to talk to people who are confused, people who were about to give up: there is a rock of help. The word of God says the Israelites had suffered enough; they were being tormented by the Philistines. It



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got so bad that the enemies had even taken the Ark of the Covenant from the Israelites. The bible says Israel was defeated; by the time they had lost their hope. When the Israelites lost the Ark of the Covenant they went to Samuel for help. They had tried everything but it was all in vain.

***"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." 1 Sam 7:3NKJV.***

### **1. If you return to the Lord with all your hearts.**

The bible says *"If you return to the Lord with all your hearts"*. Everybody is going through situations; there are many things, some very bad situations that you are facing, which are even taking your joy. The word of God is speaking tonight saying *"If we only return to God with all of your hearts"* then God will help us and arise for us.

What does it mean to return to God with all your heart? It means putting your trust in God; even if there is nothing in your life you can say there is something. If you will return to God with all your heart. What kind of heart is God looking for? God is looking for a blameless person who walks upright. A person who doesn't compromise. It is only if you return to the Lord with all your hearts that God will protect you.

### **2. Get rid of all your foreign gods.**

For you to give yourself up to God, you must forget about everything else and focus only on God. There are many things that have become our gods and God is against that. There are things that people don't take serious which take our time; things like our physical possessions can become our gods, when we spend most of our time on them and end up giving God a lesser time. Some people are worshiping their material things and they put them first above God number.

Samuel says *"if you only return to God with all your hearts and get rid of your*



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*gods, God will help you". Everything that you compare with God is your god.*

For you to stand one day and say *"Ebenezer! The stone of my protection"* you first need to get rid of all those things that don't please God. The word of God says when the Israelites were busy crying and repenting they poured out water as a symbol of showing that they are getting rid of anything and they want to serve God only. When your enemies are coming after your life and you are in a prayer, crying unto the Lord there is no way they can defeat you. Because the children of Israel were crying unto the Lord, God heard their prayer. God saw the Philistines when they were busy preparing to fight the Israelites and He arose on their behalf.

The bible says the Israelites confessed with their mouth, without doubt and said to Samuel *"We are returning to God with all our hearts."* Samuel used a young lamb for sacrifice because he wanted a lamb that had no spots.

***"59 Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear. 2 But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear."* Isa 59:1-2, NKJV.**

The bible says your inequities are preventing God from hearing your prayers. Samuel told the Israelites to forsake all their foreign gods and all things that do not please God and serve God alone and nothing else and that that would be the only time that God would protect them.

The bible says that when God arises all your enemies will flee. Look at what happened to Paul and Silas when they were in prison. The bible says when they were in the middle of the praise and worship session God arose. The bible says *"if you return to God with all your heart, your whole body and with all the love you have."*

What is that which was not going right in your heart? Search your



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heart, is your heart serving God? Ask yourself tonight *"What is it that is preventing God from hearing my prayers?"* The bible says *"If only you confess your sins and forsake them"* God will arise in your situations; God will arise in your attacks, the same way that God arose for the children of Israel. He can do the same for you if you follow Him and serve Him with all that you have.

The devil made a mistake by coming after the children of Israel when they were in a "big prayer". You know the philistines which are tormenting you in your life therefore you need to trap them by making a "big prayer" and confess all your sins to God and God will arise in your life, in your situation with a large thunder.

The Philistines never visited the territory of the Israel in all the days of Samuel. The reason why the Philistines were unable to engage into the territory of the Israel was because the hand of the Lord was upon them. The bible says after the Israelites had defeated the Philistines Samuel took a rock and placed it between the two tribes to show them what the Lord had done in their life. He called it *"Ebenezer, the rock of my help."*

God is not pleased with the prayer of a sinner. What pleases Him is when the sinner repents and serves Him completely. There is no god that is able to compete with our God.



## Prayer Points: Pastor Patricia Mavhandu.

### 01. Ask God for forgiveness

*“2 Bow down Your ear to me, Deliver me speedily; Be my rock of refuge, A fortress of defense to save me. 3 For You are my rock and my fortress; Therefore, for Your name's sake, Lead me and guide me.” Ps 31:2-3, NKJV.*

*“7 Answer me speedily, O Lord; My spirit fails! Do not hide Your face from me, Lest I be like those who go down into the pit.” Psalm 143:7, NKJV.*

### 02. Sick tongues

*“24 Put away from you a deceitful mouth, And put perverse lips far from you.” Proverbs 4:24, NKJV.*

Most people have a sick tongue, which does not speak life.

### 03. The spirit of anger

Let us pray against the spirit of anger because God is against that spirit so let us destroy this spirit because we cannot cross over the ocean with this spirit of anger.

### 04. Ask God to make a way where there is no way

### 05. Ask God to expose the things of the devil in our lives

### 06. Render all the weapons against our lives useless

### 07. Let us pray for our families

There is a spirit which is causing conflicts in the families, the spirit of disobedience, stubbornness

### 08. Let us claim back what the devil has stolen from our lives

### 09. Pray against your sicknesses

You know what the devil has brought into your life and you know what



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doesn't belong to you so you vomit it out.

### **10. Let us cry unto the Lord to fight for us**

***"9 When I cry out to You, Then my enemies will turn back; This I know, because God is for me." Psalm 56:9, NKJV.***

### **11. Let us close the gates of the devil into our lives for**

### **12. Let us pray against the spirit of hatred**

### **13. Let us re-build our walls**

Maybe in our sharing, praying we have fallen and we no longer have the love that Jesus gave us, so we have to rebuild them in Jesus name.

### **14. Let us pray for our leaders**

### **15. Let us pray for our children who are going to write their matric exams**

### **16. Let us pray for our pastor and his family**

### **17. Let us pray for the church members who have backslidden**

Let us ask God to give us wisdom and ears to know the purpose of God in our lives; to listen to Him and to pray for all people who have been stolen by the devil from the life of Christ.

### **18. Let us pray for our money**

Call your account to be filled with money and even the church account must be filled with money so that this money can serve God.

### **19. Let us pray for the pastor`s appreciation on 11/11/2012**

### **20. Thanksgiving**

Let's thank God for these prayers and the answers that He has released.



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***" 2 O You who hear prayer, To You all flesh will come."*** Psalm 65:2, NKJV.

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